

MEDIA RELEASE



Subject: **Blue Tree Project**

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A colourful reminder about the importance of conversations around mental wellbeing is emerging as the Blue Tree Project makes its way to Murray Bridge.

The Blue Tree Project is a mental health charity that has flourished from a grass-roots movement in regional Western Australia. The mission of the charity is to help spark difficult conversations and break down the stigma of mental health by giving dead trees "a blue lease on life".

This project is a joint collaboration between the Murray Bridge Wellbeing Hub, the Murray Bridge Suicide Network and Silent Ripples, all of which share a common goal of raising awareness of mental health and wellbeing for all within the Murray Bridge region.

Rural City of Murray Bridge Mayor, Wayne Thorley, strongly encourages community participation and looks forward to seeing the completed product.

"You never know where a simple conversation can lead. We want to continue the mission of the Blue Tree Project, to raise mental health awareness and hope this initiative encourages the community to begin that conversation", said Mayor Thorley.

A community painting day is scheduled for 10am on Tuesday 14 May, at the southern end of Sturt Reserve. Bridgette Syrus, Murray Bridge Wellbeing Hub Officer, invites everyone to participate.

"Together, our community can ignite meaningful conversations and dismantle the stigma often associated with mental health issues," she said.

With over 1,000 registered trees worldwide, the Blue Tree Project serves as a visual prompt for individuals to check in on loved ones who might be struggling.

Cathy Smith, Chair of the Murray Bridge Suicide Prevention Network and a support worker at Skylight Mental Health, is optimistic about the initiative's potential.

"A conversation can save lives, and having the Blue Tree as a conversation starter can only enhance our ability to engage in these sometimes difficult discussions", said Cathy.

Participants are encouraged to wear blue for the painting day. For more details, please contact Bridgette Syrus at the Murray Bridge Wellbeing Hub via email at wellbeinghub@mbcci.org.au or by phone at 0468 640 800.

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This is a joint project between The Rural City of Murray Bridge, Murray Bridge Community Centre and Preventive Health SA. Proudly supported by Murray Bridge Suicide Prevention Network and Silent Ripples.

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