How to Trust the Signs,
Trust your Gut & Ask R U OK?

Schools Pack
R U OK? Day 2019

R U OK? Day is Thursday 12 September. It’s our national day of action dedicated to reminding everyone to ask, “Are you OK?” and to remember every day of the year to support people who may be struggling with life’s ups and downs.

R U OK? Day is an initiative of national suicide prevention charity R U OK? Our mission is to inspire and empower everyone to meaningfully connect with people around them and support anyone struggling with life.

This year in the build-up to R U OK? Day we’re encouraging everyone to Trust the Signs, Trust their Gut and & R U OK?

We want everyone to feel confident they know the signs what someone might be saying or doing and what might be going on in their life - when they’re struggling. Any time you notice these signs, we want you to trust your gut and start an R U OK? conversation.

This pack is full of tips, ideas and resources to get everyone in your school involved and ready to trust the signs and start a conversation that could change a life.

It’s time to ask R U OK? if you notice a change, no matter how small

Do they seem:
- Confused or irrational
- Moody
- Overwhelmed
- Anxious
- Lonely or lack self-esteem
- Trapped or in pain
- Worried about the future
- Concerned they’re a burden

Are they:
- Experiencing mood swings
- Withdrawing
- Changing behaviour online
- Losing interest in what they love
- Unable to concentrate
- Less interested in their appearance
- Behaving recklessly
- Sleeping more or less

What’s going on in their life:
- Relationship issues or breakdown
- Grief
- Loss of someone or something they love
- Work stress or constant stress
- Major health issues

What are they saying?

What are they doing?
How to Ask:

1. **Ask R U OK?**
   - Pick the right time and place to start the conversation.
   - Mention specific things that have made you concerned for them, like “You seem less chatty than usual. How are you going?”

2. **Listen**
   - Take what they say seriously and don’t interrupt or rush the conversation.
   - Encourage them to explain: “How are you feeling about that?” or “How long have you felt that way?”
   - Show that you’re listening by repeating back what you’ve heard (in your own words) and ask if you’ve understood them properly.

3. **Encourage action**
   - Help them think of next steps they could take to help them manage their situation.
   - If they’ve been down for more than 2 weeks, encourage them to see a health professional.
   - Be positive about the role of professionals in getting through tough times.

4. **Check in**
   - Schedule a reminder to call them in a couple of weeks. If they’re really struggling, follow up with them sooner.
   - Stay in touch and be there for them. Genuine care and concern can make a real difference.

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Why is the R U OK? message important for schools

For schools, it’s about creating an environment where students look out for one another, feel supported by their peers and are able to access support when they need it. That’s why we’ve developed kits, resources and ideas to help you create a connected, empathetic and supportive school community: www.ruok.org.au/education

Let’s not forget that schools are workplaces too and teachers need to look out for one another. You can use our workplace resources to encourage staff to look for signs or changes in a colleague’s behaviour and start a conversation: www.ruok.org.au/work

Find more conversation tips at ruok.org.au
Activity ideas:

- Promote R U OK? Day to your school community through your newsletter and social media channels.
- R U OK? Day as an opportunity to spread the message that we need to look out for each other. A high impact way to do this in the classroom is to share one of our videos which you can download from Vimeo at vimeo.com/ruokday.
- Create a Conversation Corner. Make a dedicated space where students can have meaningful conversations. You can either order an R U OK? bench or convert an existing bench into a space where students are encouraged to chat. Find out how you can create a Conversation Corner and get all the tips you need to involve the whole school community in this project.
- Host an R U OK? breakfast or morning tea to provide an event for staff and students to learn when and how to ask R U OK?
- Encourage everyone to wear yellow and orange on the day.
- Use our ‘Spot the Difference’ activity sheets in your classroom to help your students understand the importance of noticing changes, no matter how subtle, in what our friends are saying, doing or what’s going on in their life.

Hosting an event?

Hosting an event is a great way to bring your school community together and share the R U OK? message. Register your R U OK? event with us and we’ll help by sending you a digital kit including posters, event ideas, and more.

Register your event at www.ruok.org.au/events
Materials to download and print:

- How to Trust the Signs, Trust your Gut & Ask R U OK? guide
- Posters
- Screen saver
- Email signature
- TV Screen artwork
- Social media tiles
- Spot the difference activity sheets

Download these materials at www.ruok.org.au/join-r-u-ok-day

Messages to share

General:

- In the build-up to R U OK? Day on Thursday 12 September, R U OK? are calling on Australians to trust the signs that someone might be struggling with life.
- When you notice a change, no matter how small, trust your gut, ask R U OK? and start a conversation that could change a life.
- When something’s going on in their life, or you notice a change in what they’re doing or saying, trust these signs and ask, “Are you OK?”
- Learn the signs and how to ask at www.ruok.org.au

Staff:

- As part of our commitment to the wellbeing of everyone in our school community, we’re supporting the national suicide prevention charity R U OK?
- In the build-up to R U OK? Day on Thursday 12 September we’ll be encouraging everyone to Trust the Signs, Trust their Gut and Ask R U OK?
- As staff, it’s important we look out for our students and one another. If we know there’s something going on in someone’s life or we notice a change, no matter how small, in what they’re saying or doing, we need to take the time to ask R U OK?
- By asking, “Are you OK?” we can show them they’re supported and encourage them to access help sooner

Add a splash of yellow

Add a splash of yellow to your school and reinforce the power of a conversation at your event.

Check out R U OK?’s merchandise here: https://store.ruok.org.au

Learn the signs and how to ask at ruok.org.au
Students:

- We can all make a difference to anyone who’s struggling by having regular, meaningful conversations about life up’s and down’s.
- If you feel like something’s up with someone you know – there’s something going on in their life or you notice a change in what they’re doing or saying - trust that gut instinct and take the time to ask them “Are you OK?”
- You don’t have to be an expert to have a caring, meaningful conversation. Follow R U OK?’s four steps: Ask R U OK?, Listen with an open mind, Encourage action and Check in.
- Learn the signs and how to ask R U OK? at www.ruok.org.au

Parents:

- Thursday 12 September is R U OK? Day – a day dedicated to inspiring and empowering everyone to meaningfully connect with people around them by asking the simple question “Are you OK?”
- Now is a great time to ask your child “Are you OK?” and support them if they’re struggling.
- We know talking to your child can be tough. That’s why R U OK? has conversation tips and resources to help you navigate the conversation. Access them at www.ruok.org.au

Social media:

- Any time we notice changes or just feel that something’s not quite right with a friend, classmate or loved one we need to trust these signs, trust our gut and ask R U OK? Learn the signs and how to ask at www.ruok.org.au #RUOK
- When you see the signs someone’s struggling, take the time to ask R U OK?, listen, encourage action and check in. Learn how at www.ruok.org.au #RUOK
- R U OK? Day is Thursday 12 September. Get involved and learn how to trust the signs, trust your gut and ask R U OK? at www.ruok.org.au #RUOK
- We’re supporting R U OK? Day on Thursday 12 September because we believe conversations can change lives. This year we’re learning the signs that could indicate someone’s struggling with life and it’s time to ask R U OK? You can too! Visit www.ruok.org.au #RUOK
Thursday 12 September is R U OK? Day – a day when we’re reminded to ask, “Are you OK?” and to remember every day of the year to support people who may be struggling with life’s ups and downs.

At [School Name], we know that regular meaningful conversations can make a difference. And you don’t have to be an expert to ask how someone’s going. Just a great mate and a good listener.

This year in the build-up to R U OK? Day we’re shining a light on the times we should be asking our friends and loved ones this important question. We want everyone in our school community to know that if something’s up with someone you know – there’s something going on in their life or you notice a change in what they’re doing or saying – it’s time to trust that gut instinct and ask them “Are you OK?”

To spread this message, we’ll be:

[If you are running an event or activity, you can include the information about it here].

R U OK? is a national charity dedicated to inspiring all of us to have regular, meaningful conversations to support anyone struggling with life.

You can learn more about the signs and how to ask R U OK? at www.ruok.org.au

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**Useful contacts for someone who’s not OK**

Sometimes conversations are too big for teachers, friends and family. At these times, it can help to call upon these organisations:

**Lifeline (24/7)**
13 11 14
lifeline.org.au

**Kids Helpline (24/7)**
1800 55 1800
kidshelpline.com.au

**headspace**
headspace.org.au

When sharing the R U OK? message we would encourage you to highlight the support tools that you currently offer within your school and these national helplines. Find more services and tools at ruok.org.au/findhelp

**For more information and resources:**

www.ruok.org.au

facebook /ruokday
instagram @ruokday
twitter @ruokday
RUOK?
A conversation could change a life.
ruok.org.au