



Hey Sport,  
**R U OK?**<sup>™</sup>

**A guide to hosting an R U OK? Round**

[ruok.org.au/sport](http://ruok.org.au/sport)

This toolkit contains tips and resources to help you host an R U OK? Round that will inspire players, coaches, staff and supporters to connect and have regular meaningful conversations.



The 'Hey Sport, R U OK?' campaign is backed by the QBE Foundation – a major partner of R U OK?

## About R U OK?

R U OK? is a national suicide prevention charity dedicated to encouraging and empowering everyone to genuinely ask, “Are you OK?” and support anyone struggling with life.

R U OK? encourages everyone to start a conversation when they notice a change, no matter how small, in what someone’s saying or doing or if they know there is something going on in their life.

### We promote 4 conversation steps:



#### 1. Ask



#### 2. Listen



#### 3. Encourage action



#### 4. Check in

By promoting regular meaningful conversations, we hope to contribute to a world where we’re all connected and are protected from suicide.

Learn more at [ruok.org.au](https://ruok.org.au)

# Hey Sport, this is your R U OK? culture

An R U OK? culture is one built on mutual respect, trust, authenticity and a willingness to support those in your world who might be struggling.

Building that culture isn't down to one person, it's a team effort.

The ten principles listed on the following page are your guide to the values and behaviours that create an R U OK? culture in your sport.



- 1 Coaches, officials and athletes demonstrate improvements in life skills and self-esteem
- 2 Athletes like and feel supported by their coach and peers
- 3 Coaches, officials and athletes exhibit kindness towards others
- 4 Sport is a positive and enjoyable experience for all involved
- 5 Coaches, officials and athletes promote a team environment based on mutual respect and positive relationships
- 6 Coaches, officials and administrators create a physically and emotionally safe environment
- 7 Coaches encourage athletes to work with and support members of their sporting community
- 8 Coaches, officials and athletes are confident they can spot the signs someone in their sporting community might be struggling with life
- 9 Coaches, officials and athletes feel confident and willing to have a meaningful R U OK? conversation
- 10 Coaches, officials and athletes feel a sense of connection and belonging within their sport community

# Hosting an R U OK? Round can make a difference

Organising an R U OK? Round can help create a sense of camaraderie and rapport between the people involved, so that they get to know one another a bit better. Some of the best conversations are the ones which take place between people who trust and know one another.

An R U OK? Round is also an opportunity to get everyone in your sporting community ready to trust the signs, ask “Are you OK?” and start a conversation that could change, or even save, a life.

## Register your R U OK? Round

Register your R U OK? Round with us and we'll help by sending you a digital kit including posters and more.

Register your event at [ruok.org.au/events](https://ruok.org.au/events)

## Ideas to get you started

Here are some ideas to get you started but feel free to add your own twist!

- Organise a special edition team kit or get athletes to wear yellow socks or armbands
- Encourage supporters to wear something yellow
- Put up R U OK? posters and signage
- Print our conversation cards and share them with spectators
- Have a conversation led warm up/cool down at a training session
- Organise for ground announcers to talk about R U OK? and the power of a conversation

- Organise some giveaways (items including wristbands or conversation cards can be purchased at [store.ruok.org.au](https://store.ruok.org.au))
- Have roving “R U OK? Reporters” interview people and create content that demonstrates the difference regular meaningful conversations can make. Questions could include: “What’s the best conversation you’ve ever had?” “Who’s the person you know you can turn to in a tough situation?” “What are the ingredients for a caring and supportive conversation?” “Where do you like to head to for a chat with a mate?”

## Add a splash of yellow

R U OK? merchandise is a great way to share the message. We’ve got socks, laces, t-shirts, wristbands and more to add a splash of yellow in training, competition, on game day and all year round.

Purchase your R U OK? merchandise at [www.store.ruok.org.au](https://www.store.ruok.org.au)








## Promoting your event

### Create your own club poster

Simply email your club logo and up to four high quality photos to **hello@ruok.org.au** and the R U OK? team will send you back posters you can print and use to promote your round – it's that easy.

## Email template

 New message — ↗ ✕

**Subject line:** R U OK? Round

**Copy:** Dear <First name>

On <insert date of round>, <insert club's name> will be hosting an R U OK? Round.

It's all about inspiring people to ask that simple but important question, "Are you OK?"

Conversations geared towards helping people feel supported and connected do make a difference. When teammates, family, friends and supporters show tolerance and understanding, it can make it easier for people to speak up, seek help if needed, and access it before small things become big issues.

Join us for our R U OK? Round.

Where:

Date:









Time:

We hope to see you there.

Best wishes,

<insert name>

SEND

⋮

**When explaining and promoting the purpose and importance of the R U OK? Round use the following key messages:**

## Club level

We can all make a difference to anyone who's struggling by having regular, meaningful conversations about life's ups and downs.

By taking part in the R U OK? Round we can be part of a national movement dedicated to helping create sports clubs and communities where players, supporters, coaches and staff feel a sense of connection and belonging.

## Coach/Team Manager level

We all have a responsibility to help our team feel safe and supported.

We want to give you the confidence to encourage your team to turn to each other and talk about life's ups and downs, and this may include giving them the confidence to talk to you.

We're hosting an R U OK? Round to encourage players, supporters, friends and families to meaningfully ask "Are you OK?", strengthen connections and support one another through life's ups and downs.

## Player level

If your gut says something's not quite right with someone you know, take the time to ask them how they're going.

You don't have to be an expert to have an R U OK? conversation.

Once you ask them "Are you OK?", listen with an open mind, encourage action and make sure you check in with them again soon.

You don't have to solve their problems or have all the answers, simply showing you care can help them feel supported.

By taking part in an R U OK? Round we're encouraging regular, meaningful conversations and committing to learn when and how to ask "Are you OK?" so we can support our teammates, friends and families.



### Got a question?

If we haven't covered your query in this guide, please drop us a line at [hello@ruok.org.au](mailto:hello@ruok.org.au)

If you've noticed a change, no matter how small, trust your gut instinct and ask R U OK?



## The signs it might be time to start an R U OK? conversation

It won't always be obvious when someone's not doing so well but these are changes you can look out for that might signal they need some extra support.

### WHAT ARE THEY

#### SAYING?

##### Do they sound:

- Confused or irrational
- Moody
- Unable to switch off
- Concerned about the future
- Concerned they're a burden
- Lonely or lacking self-esteem
- Concerned they're trapped or in pain

### WHAT ARE THEY

#### DOING

##### Are they:

- Experiencing mood swings
- Dismissive or defensive
- Self-medicating
- Becoming withdrawn
- Not training or competing in the way you would normally expect
- Changing their online behaviour
- Behaving recklessly
- Unable to concentrate
- Losing interest in what they used to love
- Less interested in their appearance and personal hygiene
- Changing their sleep patterns
- Changing their appearance

### WHAT'S GOING ON IN THEIR

#### LIFE

##### Have they experienced:

- A traumatic incident
- A change in work circumstances or job responsibilities
- Issues at school
- Increased pressure from relocation or changed living arrangements
- Conflict at work, at home or at training
- Relationship issues
- Becoming a parent
- Major health issues or an injury
- Constant stress
- Financial difficulty
- Loss of someone or something they care about

# Simple steps to an R U OK? conversation

## Getting ready to ask



**Be ready**



**Be prepared**



**Pick your moment**

## Having the conversation



**1. Ask R U OK?**



**3. Encourage Action**



**2. Listen**



**4. Check In**

# Getting ready to ask



**Be ready**

- Are you in a good headspace?
- Can you give as much time as needed?
- Are you willing to genuinely listen?



**Be prepared**

- Remember that you won't have all the answers (which is OK)
- Listening is one of the most important things you can do
- If someone is talking about personal struggles this can be difficult and they might be emotional, embarrassed or upset



**Pick your moment**

- Have you chosen somewhere relatively private and informal?
- What time will be good for them to chat? Ideally try and put aside 30 minutes so the conversation isn't rushed
- You might find that before or after training, competition or games are good times to chat
- If they can't talk when you approach them, suggest another time to have a conversation
- It might be more comfortable for the person to be side-by-side with you (e.g. walking together or driving rather than face-to-face)



# Having the conversation



## 1. Ask R U OK?

- Be relaxed
- Help them open up by asking questions like “How are you going?” Or “What’s been happening?” Or “I’ve noticed you’re not quite yourself lately. How are you travelling?”
- Make an observation. Mention specific things that have made you concerned about them, like “I’ve noticed you seem really tired” or “You seem less chatty than usual. How are you going?”



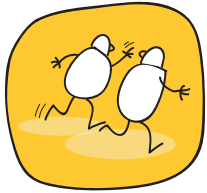
## 2. Listen with an open mind

- Take what they say seriously
- Don’t interrupt or rush the conversation
- If they need time to think, try and sit patiently with the silence and don’t jump in with solutions
- Encourage them to explain
- If they get angry or upset, stay calm and don’t take it personally
- Let them know you’re asking because you’re concerned



## What if they don’t want to talk to me?

- Try not to take it personally if they don’t want to talk. They might not be ready to talk or it might take them time to realise that you genuinely care.
- Respect their decision not to talk; don’t force them into it or criticise them.
- Focus on some things they might be comfortable talking about like, “I know you’ve had trouble sleeping and concentrating lately. Can we talk about that?”
- Suggest they talk to someone they trust, like a family member or friend. You could say, “You can always call me if you ever want to chat. But is there someone else you’d rather talk to?”
- Ask if you can check in with them again soon.



### 3. Encourage action

- Ask them: "Where do you think we can go from here?"
- Ask: "What would be a good first step we can take?"
- Ask: "What do you need from me? How can I help you right now?"
- Ask: "Has anything or anyone helped in the past?"
- Suggest they do something they know helps them relax or brings them joy (e.g. go for a walk, see a movie, have a bath, swim etc.)
- Once they've opened up, encourage them to access support or to do something that might lighten the load
- Good options for action might include talking to family, a trusted friend, their doctor, the sport's welfare or member protection officer or a trusted health professional



### 4. Check in

- Remember to check in a few days later to see how the person is doing
- Ask if they've found a better way to manage the situation
- If they haven't done anything, keep encouraging them and remind them you're always there if they need a chat
- Understand that sometimes it can take a long time for someone to be ready to see a professional
- Try to reinforce the benefits of seeking professional help and trying different avenues
- You could ask, "Do you think it would be useful if we looked into finding some professional or other support?"

## Useful contacts for someone who's not OK

Encourage them to call on these Australian crisis lines and professionals:

#### **Beyond Blue (24/7)**

1300 224 636  
beyondblue.org.au

#### **Lifeline (24/7)**

13 11 14  
lifeline.org.au

#### **Suicide Call Back Service (24/7)**

1300 659 467  
suicidecallbackservice.org.au

#### **Kids Helpline (24/7)**

1800 55 1800  
kidshelpline.com.au

#### **MensLine (24/7)**

1300 78 99 78  
mensline.org.au

#### **More contacts:**

ruok.org.au/findhelp

### Local contacts

- Record the contact details for any support services recommended by your club or association:  
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- Record the contact details for a local GP, external local health service or helpline:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Record the contact details for an appropriate sport administrator or member protection officer for your club or association:  
\_\_\_\_\_

# R U OK?™

A conversation could change a life.

[ruok.org.au/sport](https://ruok.org.au/sport)

 **QBE** | Foundation

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