

## Helping family and friends to support someone with their mental health

Over 100 family and friends who support someone with their mental health took part in the successful pilot study of the *Minds Together* program in 2020.

### **Key findings**

Participants who completed the program had higher levels of coping self-efficacy (one's self-belief that they can cope in their caregiving role) and lower levels of perceived strain. The research found that the program is a feasible and acceptable way to support someone experiencing depressive or anxiety symptoms, is safe to use, and is ready to undergo a full research trial.

Family and friends told us:

- They enjoyed the program content and found it relevant to their experience.
- The language was accessible and easy to understand.
- The case studies and videos of family and friends were relatable.
- The program highlighted their support role and the crucial part they play in the life of the family or friends they support.
- The program strengthened their motivation for self-care.

### **Who is supporting their family and friends with their mental health?**

- 108 people over 16 years old participated in this research trial
- 89% were female
- The average age was 50 years old
- 84% were born in Australia
- 5% were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- 34% supported their child, 31% supported their partner, and 22% supported their parent. Others supported friends, siblings or other family members.
- 80% supported a person experiencing both depression and anxiety symptoms, 14% supported someone only experiencing anxiety symptoms, and 6% supported someone experiencing only depression symptoms.



## Future directions

Following this successful pilot study, Everymind conducted a full trial of the *Minds Together* program in 2022. These research findings also informed the adaptation of the program for other communities including:

- Family and friends supporting someone who has attempted suicide
- Family and friends supporting the mental health of paramedics.

We intend to continue expanding the *Minds Together* program for different support contexts. Our consultations also suggest that those with lived and living experience want more peer support options. Our future research will also include understanding how best to embed additional peer support options in our online programs.

*Minds Together* for family and friends supporting someone with their mental health is being updated based on the research findings and will be available in the future on the *Minds Together* [digital portal](#).