

Voices Vic



Youth Information Pack

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Voices Vic



Who Are Voices Vic?

Uniting's Voices Vic is an award winning and research supported specialist program improving the wellbeing and recovery of people who hear voices. Led by peers with lived experience in hearing voices & mental health, Voices Vic provides dynamic recovery groups and one-on-one support. Our team also facilitates training across Australia for organisations and individuals who work with voice hearers.

Hearing Voices Approach:

- Hearing voices is a common human experience
- Recovery is about changing the relationship with the voices and transforming the voice hearers' experiences to acceptance
- The experience of hearing voices is meaningful
- We define 'hearing voices' as an umbrella term used to refer to auditory, visual, olfactory sensory experiences, and beliefs that others around them do not experience

Our Services

Voices Vic has been delivering training, information sessions, one on one sessions and providing support to the voice hearing community in Australia for over ten years. Our team of professionals have lived experience of hearing voices and mental health recovery. We offer a range of trainings for individuals, mental health professionals, peer workers, voice hearers and family members. We also offer specialised external training packages for clinics, hospitals and other health organisations.

'The Hearing Voices Approach' training is endorsed by the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) and the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses (ACMHN) for contribution towards their professional development.

Our trainings are delivered in person and online.

To enquire about Voices Vic training please contact: vvtraining@vt.uniting.org

Free Information Sessions

We offer a free half hour Information Sessions via Zoom or in person (depending on location).

Voices Vic Youth Program



Uniting's Voices Vic Youth Program is designed to improve the wellbeing and recovery of young adults who hear voices aged 16-25 across Melbourne and regional Victoria.

We Provide:

Information sessions

We provide free 30-minute information sessions for organisations, clinicians, mental health professionals, voice hearers, family, friends & carers and support workers who work with young adult voice hearers.

Training

Voices Vic Youth Program provides free Youth focused training for organisations, individuals and carers to build capacity for voices recovery work.

- We are delighted to be offering our first Youth focused Hearing Voices Approach Training in June 2021.

Note: This training is available for services that work with young people, carers and family members and young adult voice hearers aged 16-25 .

Our trainings are delivered in person and online.

To enquire about Voices Vic Youth program training, please contact:

vyouth@vt.uniting.org

What's Covered In Training?

Our training teaches the foundation to the *Hearing Voices Approach*.

The first two days gives a solid understanding how to apply the approach in many practical settings, either for yourself, in your work as a mental health professional or in your family/home environment.

The third day covers *Voice Profiling* - a set of accessible strategies that help build greater awareness and understanding of a person's voices.

The final day provides the setup tools & strategies for getting a Hearing Voices support group started as well as facilitation skills.

Young Adult Support Groups



Young Adult Hearing Voices Support Group

Lead by peers with lived experience in mental health, Voices Vic Youth Program provides dynamic peer support groups for young adult voice hearers age 16-25.

If you or someone you know might be interested please contact one of our Youth Facilitators, Marie Njang or Amy Barker for more information.

The Young Adults Hearing Voices Group is open to anyone aged 16-25 who hears voices or has other sensory experiences that others around them do not.

The Group will:

- Provide a safe space to share what it's like to hear voices amongst people with similar experiences
- Look at different ways to make sense of hearing voices
- Discuss different ways of coping with voices & distress
- Encourage peer support & social connections
-

Group topics include:

- What the voices have been saying this week
- Past experiences with voices
- Associated thoughts and emotions
- Setting boundaries with voices
- Finding meaning and making sense of the voice hearing experience
- Sharing recovery stories
- Exploring hopes and dreams

Start Date	15 th March 2021
Day	Mondays
Time	4:00pm
Venue	Online via zoom

To enquire about Voices Vic Young Adult Hearing Voices Group, please contact:
vyouth@vt.uniting.org

Groups are available for young adults aged 16-25, who live within Victoria or the Melbourne metro area.

Mentoring & Support



Mentoring

Voices Vic Youth Program offers specialised external mentoring packages for organisations and individuals across metro Melbourne and regional Victoria who work with young adult voice hearers after completing the hearing voices approach facilitator training, to ensure the Hearing Voices Approach practices are embedded into services.

The Voices Vic Youth Program mentoring package provides 3 months of follow mentoring support, which includes:

- 1 hour mentoring sessions fortnightly with one of our youth facilitators (via teams or zoom)
- 1 x contact visit of groups in person or via Teams
- A PDF resource kit
- Phone and email support
- Opportunity to visit our Hearing Voices groups
- A mentoring summary at the end of the 3 month period
- Updated research and information

To enquire about Voices Vic Youth Mentoring Program, please contact:
vyouth@vt.uniting.org

Additional Services



The Voices Vic Youth Program was developed to transform the perception of voice hearing, reduce stigma and provide tools for young voice hearers to change the relationship with their voices from distress, confusion and fear to acceptance and understanding resulting in improved recovery outcomes.

Research conducted in Australia by Bevan (2016) showed that the majority of people who attended a Hearing Voices Group:

- Had fewer hospital admissions
- Felt less isolated
- Were better able to talk about their experiences
- Were less afraid of their voices
- Some people found that their voices became more positive

The emphasis is not on eliminating the voices, but rather on transforming the voice hearer's experiences from confusion and fear to acceptance and recovery. This aims to provide the skills to shift the power balance in a positive direction.

Research

By the end of 2021, Voices Vic Youth Program will be conducting and designing qualitative research on the implementation of Hearing Voices Approach within organisations, peer support groups and with individual who work with young adult voice hearers. This is to explore, in a general population sample, the content, strategies for coping and impact of voice hearing for young people.

Skill Building

Voices Vic Youth Program will be working closely with young voice hearers to Develop a 6-week skill-building course for young adult voice hearers age 16-25. This course will be delivered through youth services who work with youth age 16-25. We will then evaluate outcomes of the course.

Coping Skills for Voice Hearers



It's not about getting rid of your voices. It's about changing your relationship with them.

It's helpful to listen to your voices – but not all the time. Set a reasonable time limit for listening (e.g. one hour per day), and stick to it.

Listen, but don't obey your voices. Your actions must always be your choice.

You always have more control than the voices – without you they wouldn't exist.

Talk with your voices as well as listening. A good relationship takes two (at least)!

Speak to your voices with compassion and respect – how you wish they spoke to you.

It can help to remember that voices usually have good intentions. They give voice to a part of you that is hurting and can't express itself any other way. In a way, they are like a hurt child, crying out.

Challenge your voices if they make threats. Threats can be frightening but remember that voices lie about their power. To prove this to yourself, set them a simple task such as "go and wash the dishes" or "trim my nails". We think they'll fail. If it feels scary to challenge the voices, ask someone you trust to sit with you.

How to change your relationship with your voices.

Read other people's recovery stories.

Don't argue with voices – they usually win!

Don't take your voices too literally. Voices often don't mean what they say, or they talk in metaphors. E.g., violent suggestions from voices could mean you need to change something that's not right in your life or that you're feeling angry or scared.

Do your voices have names? If not, find out what their names are and use them - you'll reduce your fear and increase your control. If the voices won't tell you, then you can give them names.

Recognise trauma from your past. Most voice hearers have difficult experiences in their past – you are not alone. What was happening in your life when you first started hearing voices? Your voices may be a sign that it's time to try counselling, or to talk with someone you trust.

Join a Hearing Voices group. Share your experiences and learn with others who have been there too.

Give yourself time and hope. We know these are not easy changes to make. It takes heaps of practice and support. But you can do it. Believing in yourself is the first step.

Coping Skills for Voice Hearers



Strategies and techniques for managing voices.

Make a deal - tell the voices you'll listen later if they give you peace now. Try writing down their messages to clear your head and read later when you feel stronger.

Set boundaries - Respect: Tell the voices you will only listen if they speak to you with respect. Time: Set a time limit, they only have 5 minutes and then the rest of the time is for you.

Distraction techniques - Listen to different styles of music using headphones, wear ear plugs, call or visit a friend, talk to others in a support group, watch TV, read a book, do housework, puzzles, cook a nice meal for yourself, or take a shower or bath.

Creative release approach – Put on music and dance it out, write poetry or other creative writing, draw, paint, make something out of clay, go to an exercise class, go for a walk or run, watch a movie you love.

My own strategies...

Resources



Information for Friends, Family & Carers

Being the friend, family member or carer of someone who hears voices can feel confusing, frightening and isolating. Here are some tools and ideas using the philosophy of the Hearing Voices approach we recommend for thinking about voices:

Accept The Voices Are Real:

- Denying the reality of a voice hearer or advising the voice hearer to ignore them promotes denial – whereas acceptance of their reality gives permission to start actively dealing with them and experiencing recovery.

Self-Care:

- We believe that no person can do the recovery work for another, no matter how much we love them. As friends, family members and carers, we need to ensure we have support, people to share and debrief with, an ability to let go and have a healthy balanced life.

Changing The Relationship To The Voices:

- Focus on helping the person to build understanding and get control, rather than only focusing on getting rid of the voices. Many voice hearers have learnt to focus on their positive voices, set strong boundaries with their voices or found new ways to interpret and make sense of what the voices say.

Other Resources

The International Hearing Voices Network

www.intervoiceonline.org

Strategies for Coping Skills by Indigo Daya (founding member of Voices Vic)

[Download PDF](#)

Working to Recovery UK – books and personal recovery stories

www.workingto_recovery.co.uk

Rufus May – Holistic Approaches to Mental Health

www.rufusmay.com

The Voice Collective – Young Voice Hearers

<http://www.voicecollective.co.uk/>

Contact us



Speaking Engagements & Presentations

Our team members regularly get invited to speak at conferences and events to talk about Voices Vic, the hearing voices approach, myths & facts about hearing voices and how recovery may look for some young voice hearers.

To book one of our facilitators, please contact: vvyouth@vt.uniting.org

Learn More

www.unitingvictas.org.au

Get in touch

Phone: 9692 9500

Youth Program Training Enquiries: vvyouth@vt.uniting.org

General Enquiries: vvadmin@vt.uniting.org