

## How AFFIRM works

AFFIRM is an affirmative cognitive-behavioural (TA\_CBT) coping skills group intervention targeting youth with sexual and/or gender diverse identities. It was developed by Dr Ashley Austin and Dr Shelly Craig following research efforts.

TA-CBT is a version of CBT that has been adapted to ensure:

- An affirming stance toward gender diversity
- Recognition and awareness of transgender-specific sources of stress (e.g. transphobia, gender dysphoria)
- The delivery of CBT content within an affirming and trauma-informed framework

## Locations

The **AFFIRM** groups are held at:

Ipswich Health Plaza  
21 Bell Street  
Ipswich  
(Paid parking available)

Goodna Community Health  
81 Queen Street  
Goodna  
(Free parking available)

AFFIRM has potential to operate over Microsoft Teams (Telehealth).

Contact your treating team for details on how to obtain a referral for this group.

# AFFIRM

## Cognitive Behaviour Therapy



## Aims of the AFFIRM group:

- To understand relationships between thoughts, feelings and behaviours
- To understand the role of homo/bi/transphobia and transgender-specific sources of stress on thoughts and feelings
- To learn strategies to decrease negative feelings and increase positive feelings
- To learn effective strategies to cope with stress

## Time and Format

AFFIRM runs over eight weeks during school terms. Some Terms we offer the group at Goodna Health Plaza, other terms are based at Ipswich Health Plaza.

Sessions run for 90 minutes and involve discussion and written activities.

## What are some of the topics?

AFFIRM runs over eight weeks and includes the following sessions:

1. Introduction to Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT), exploring identities and understanding minority stress
2. Understanding the effect of LGBTI+ discrimination on stress
3. Exploring how thoughts affect feelings
4. Using thoughts to change feelings
5. Linking feelings and activities
6. Overcoming negative thoughts and feelings by setting goals
7. Developing safe and supportive networks
8. Putting it all together and celebrating our learning

## Is this group right for me?

AFFIRM has been developed to provide a safe and supportive environment that recognises and celebrates diversity.

The idea of group therapy programs can be overwhelming for many people, so our AFFIRM facilitators will take the time to meet you before the group is scheduled to start to discuss the program and any particular needs you might have.

AFFIRM is open to any current consumer of CYMHS, AMYOS or ETS who is:

- Between ages 13 and 18
- Identifies within the rainbow community (LGBTI+)
- Is experiencing challenges related to feeling comfortable with your identity