

This guide helps racehorse trainers, stable managers, and forepersons use the Racing Mates framework to foster a supportive stable culture. By promoting mental health awareness and accessible support, you can address staff stressors and build a more resilient, cohesive team.

Your leadership role

As a stable manager, your actions are critical in shaping the culture of your stable.

- **Lead by example:** Your openness to discuss mental health and well-being can set a powerful precedent for your staff.
- **Normalise conversations:** Actively encouraging a team environment where it's okay to not be okay helps remove stigma.
- **Protect your team:** Implement clear policies against bullying, harassment, and discrimination to ensure your stable is a psychologically safe environment.





Actions for stable managers

DAILY OPERATIONS

- **Morning check-ins:** Have brief, informal conversations to show care and open the door for serious discussions.
- **Monitor workload:** Hold regular one-on-ones to review tasks, training and well-being. Adjust duties to prevent overwhelm.
- **Recognise and reward:** Acknowledge achievements through praise or formal rewards to boost morale.
- **Promote work-life balance:** Encourage breaks and lead by example.

TRAINING AND AWARENESS

- **Mental Health First Aid:** Train key staff as "Racing Mates" to provide first-line support.
- **Awareness events:** Use days like R U OK? Day to normalise discussions about mental health.
- **Information sharing:** Display resources such as Racing Mates, Lifeline and helplines on a stable noticeboard.

BUILDING PEER SUPPORT

- **Designate a Racing Mate:** Choose a trusted, trained team member to guide colleagues to professional help.
- **Encourage social connections:** Organise small social events to strengthen team bonds and reduce isolation.





Crisis response

In a highly physical and demanding environment like a stable, critical incidents can occur.

- Have a plan for responding to serious injuries or horse fatalities.
- Debrief the team with a trained Racing Mate.
- Ensure support service and counsellor contacts are accessible.
- Hold a safe team discussion to allow staff to share feelings.



Key industry resources

Keep these resources accessible for your stable team:

- **Racing Mates:** Peer support within the racing industry - 02 6332 4186
- **Beyond Blue:** 24/7 support for depression and anxiety - 1300 224 636
- **Lifeline:** 24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention - 13 11 14



'Let's Talk'

racingmates.com.au