**Instructions:**

Use this guide as a script for your Mental Fitness Round announcers, weaving in these key messages during the event.

*Content in this Guide covers topics related to mental health, including suicide which can be confronting and distressing. Please consider your needs when reading.*

**WHY WE’RE HERE TODAY:**

* Welcome to the Gotcha4Life Mental Fitness Round between \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Today, our communities come together with a shared vision: to ignite vital conversations about mental fitness, show our support for one another - both on and off the field - and to raise funds for life-changing mental fitness programs.
* Just like we need to be physically fit to play \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, our mental fitness is just as important.. That’s why we’re hosting this Gotcha4Life Mental Fitness Round.
* Although we’re in different jerseys on the field, when it comes to mental fitness we’re all on the same team.
* Funds raised today help Gotcha4Life deliver and develop life-changing programs and initiatives in sports clubs, schools, and communities around Australia.

**DURING BREAKS**

* Just remember, today is all about igniting vital conversations on mental fitness. Having the courage to share what’s going on for you is a real strength. We can all work on building deeper connections with those in our support ‘village’ - those people we care about and who care about us too.
* Don’t forget today’s game is part of a Gotcha4Life Mental Fitness Round, raising much needed funds to build mental fitness so no one worries alone.

**CONSIDER A LIVE INTERVIEW**

(See if a coach or club member is open to being interviewed or to share their own personal mental fitness story.)

* Let’s take this opportunity to hear directly from our community members. Let's ask the tough questions about mental fitness, because the dialogue we start today can be a lifeline for someone tomorrow.
  + “As a sports person, we work hard on our physical fitness. Why is building our mental fitness just as important?”
  + “It’s easy to talk tactics on the field. Why do you think it’s sometimes harder for us to talk about what’s going on in our lives off the field?”
  + “We all face challenges at times. Who is in your support ‘village’ that you reach out to when things don’t go to plan?”

**FUNDRAISING REMINDERS**

(Make sure to specify the location of merchandise, raffle tickets, BBQ, canteen or other fundraising spots to make it easy for attendees to contribute.)

* Don’t forget Gotcha4Life merchandise is available today at ………….. and funds raised will be put back into life-changing mental fitness programs.
* Don’t forget to buy your raffle tickets at ……………………… for the chance to win ………….. - funds raised will be put back into life-changing mental fitness programs.
* Today, our BBQ and Canteen takings are being donated to Gotcha4Life. I recommend heading over and buying a sausage for yourself and a mate – because the best conversations happen over a shared Sanga.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL FITNESS:**

* I’m going to talk about some harsh statistics which may be hard to hear for some, so I’m letting you know in advance. If you need support, please come and talk to us.
* Over 3000 Australians lose their life to suicide each year. That’s 9 lives lost to suicide each day - 7 men and 2 women. (1)
* 75% of mental health challenges develop before the age of 25. (2)
* It’s a stark reminder of why we must work on our mental fitness.
* The role of sport and our club has never been more important. We have the opportunity to help proactively build mental fitness in our community.
* Gotcha4Life inspires and enables Aussies to take action to build their mental fitness, so that no-one worries alone. Gotcha4Life’s mental fitness programs are focused on mental health promotion and prevention by teaching people the skills to reach out, speak up and connect with others before getting to a crisis point.

**WHEN ADDRESSING LOSS:**

For sports clubs and teams that would like to remember and honor those lives lost in their community to suicide, here are some messages that can be shared at a suitable time, such as during a One Minute for Mental Fitness moment before the game.

* We acknowledge that some of us have felt the deep impact of losing a teammate, a friend, or a family member to suicide. These losses deeply affect us. They reinforce why creating supportive networks within our club is so vital. Today, as we come together, we remember them in our hearts and in the spirit of our games.
* Today, our commitment to mental fitness is also a tribute to the lives lost. We honor their memory by fostering a community where everyone feels they can reach out for support. Let's continue to strengthen our bonds, encourage open conversations, and ensure that no one worries alone.

**WHEN HELP IS NEEDED:**

While the Gotcha4Life Mental Fitness Round is about fostering conversations, connection and support, we recognise that it may also highlight the need for mental health support for an individual.

**If someone reveals they need help:**

1. Listen without judgment:
   * Show empathy and listen actively. Acknowledge their feelings and reassure them that it's okay to share. Listening is one of the most important things you can do.
2. Provide information on where to get help:
   * Encourage them to speak to a trusted friend or family member, GP or mental health professional. You could say: “Talking to someone who understands can really help. Would you like some contact information for mental health services?”
   * Keep a list of these professional, free mental health support services handy.

**Lifeline - 13 11 14** Call anytime for crisis support and suicide prevention services.

**1800RESPECT - 1800 737 732** Counselling, information, and referrals for sexual assault, domestic and family violence, available 24/7.

**Beyond Blue - 1300 224 636** Available 24/7 to talk or chat online. Connect with trained mental health professionals for advice and support.

**Kids Helpline - 1800 551 800** A private and confidential phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25, available 24/7.

**QLife - 1800 184 527** Anonymous and free LGBTIQ+ peer support and referral.

**13YARN - 13 92 76** An Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders crisis support line. Available 24/7. No shame, no judgement, safe place to yarn.

**REFERENCES FOR STATISTICS:**

1. Australian Institute of Health & Welfare; National Study of Mental Health and Wellbeing
2. Kessler, RD et al. (2005). [Lifetime prevalence and age-of-onset distributions of DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15939837). Archives of General Psychiatry, 62: p. 593-602.