

# Gympie teenagers *Brainstorm* to top spot with national film award

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Stop freaking out, the storm's going to pass is a message echoed in the film *Brainstorm*, which won the regional and national awards in the Young Film Maker category at the Heart of Gold International Short Film Festival in Gympie over the weekend.

One of the film's directors, Ande Foster from Gympie Flexible Learning Centre said the team of 33 students who participated in the production of *Brainstorm* had done an incredible job.

"*Brainstorm* is about the young people's experiences facing mental health challenges and overcoming them. Their honesty is powerful and inspiring.

"When we wrote our submission we never imagined the film would see such resounding success.

"The Heart of Gold Film Festival gave our students the opportunity to attend professional masterclasses in cinematography and editing.

"The young people have done an incredible job sharing an inspirational look at recovery and the power of never giving up," Mr Foster said.

Seventeen year old Tom Logan who helped write, film, edit and voice *Brainstorm* said his personal experience with depression had influenced his decision to take on the challenge of mental health.

"*Brainstorm* gave us the chance to tell our stories in a way that raises awareness and says you aren't alone in this, things really do get better.

"If you're struggling, you should be proud of everything you accomplish. It doesn't matter if you can't stick to it, you've started that journey."

Tom said the film was also an opportunity to challenge the stigma associated with mental ill health.

"Stigma sucks, you're constantly wondering about whether someone will judge you. It adds to the doubt you already feel and makes it harder to get the help you need.

"With our different experiences we had a lot of inspiration for the film and could start to challenge those perceptions of people who are struggling.

Australian data shows Tom isn't the only one experiencing mental health challenges, as on average around one-in-four young people aged between 16 and 24 each year are affected by mental ill health.

*Brainstorm* was funded by a grant from the Queensland Mental Health Commission and was supported by a number of local organisations including Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN, United Synergies and Gympie Regional Council.

PHN Senior Manager Robb Major said more than 5,000 young people, aged between 12 and 24, lived in the Gympie region.

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“*Brainstorm* tells a story that relates to people not just in Gympie, but across our whole region.

“It’s great to see young people leading the conversation around mental health and encouraging others to speak up and get help.

“We know that getting help early can make a huge difference in reducing the impact and duration of mental ill health,” Mr Major said.

headspace Maroochydore and Gympie Manager Deb Blakeney said research showed one in four young people experienced a mental health concern each year, and that around 75% of mental health issues emerged before the age of 25.

“By treating these issues early we can reduce the risk of them developing into more serious problems.

headspace Gympie will be hosting a free screening of *Brainstorm* from 4pm on Wednesday, 10 October 2018. RSVP by texting name and the word “Brainstorm” to 0400 002 030.

“headspace Gympie is proud to be involved in showcasing the movie *Brainstorm* and we invite the local community to come and watch and be part of the conversation in helping to educate the wider community about youth mental health,” Ms Blakeney said.

You can now view *Brainstorm* in full on YouTube [youtu.be/bWYagKU-PMI](https://youtu.be/bWYagKU-PMI).

For access to free advice and online mental health services you can visit [headtohealth.gov.au](http://headtohealth.gov.au).

**National 24/7 crisis services:**

- Lifeline 13 11 14 [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)
- Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800 [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)

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