



Press Release

20<sup>th</sup> Sept 2019

## **BLUE TREE PROJECT**

### **'Paint a tree blue to help raise awareness around mental wellbeing'.**

The aim of this project is to encourage people to start the difficult conversations and open up if they are suffering from depression and/or anxiety.

This project was inspired by a story that was told at Jayden Whyte's funeral on 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2018. Jayden painted a tree blue one night on his family farm, in Mukinbudin after sneaking out, wondering just how long it would be before anyone noticed the deep blue tree on the horizon. This tree was painted out of love, mischief and friendship. It was painted with a special friend Tjarda Tiedeken on February 14<sup>th</sup> 2014. What a shock it would be when his dad came across the tree standing in the middle of the paddock proud and blue he thought.

Jayden was close with family and friends, highly intelligent and driven. Many would say he had 'a promising life ahead'. He was extremely loved and anyone would be there in a heartbeat if he needed. Unfortunately, loved ones weren't aware of the extent of his mental health issues and did not have the opportunity to support him in a time that would prove critical.

Jayden presented himself to hospital twice within one day fearing for what he might do. The first time calling 000, where a policeman attended the scene until an ambulance arrived. He was then taken to hospital and discharged 2 hours later. He then took himself back to the same hospital later that evening at a time that would have been pivotal for him. Where he was once again released, this time into the dark at 11pm, to find his own way home, where it ended in tragic circumstances.

It's believed Jayden tried calling his parents' home phone on the day but they were not nearby. They are obviously experiencing immense grief due to the fact no one from the hospital spoke with them directly and he was sent home alone during this crucial time.

Jayden was overlooked in an overwhelmed system which is not made for modern society's mental health issues. With this project, we hope to raise awareness but also become a part of the change to help better inform our health system of where people are being let down. We need to raise the alarm that the current health departments dealing with mental health issues is in no way good enough and serious action is needed. Problems can be fixed but people can't be replaced.

The blue tree now holds a whole new meaning and we hope to spread a message of hope by having people paint a tree in need of a 'blue' lease on life. We believe these blue trees that are painted across the nation and the world can act as a visual reminder to check in with a loved one, a friend that's having a rough time or a mate having a blue day.

By spreading the paint and spreading the message that it's OK to not be OK we can help break down the stigma that's still largely attached to mental health. Inform people that we all have blue days but there will always be someone who you can talk to, and someone who will listen.

**Current painted tree count:** around 350 trees

-ENDS-

For more information, please contact:

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#### **Blue Tree Project's Notes**

Website: [www.bluetreeproject.com.au](http://www.bluetreeproject.com.au)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/bluetreeproject.com.au>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/bluetreeproject>

High Res Photos here: [https://drive.google.com/open?id=14WkQJWhXO7AvVAo\\_3Q0-ZepVK\\_8Wlc7Y](https://drive.google.com/open?id=14WkQJWhXO7AvVAo_3Q0-ZepVK_8Wlc7Y)

#bluetreeproject