**NGYF – Interview – Sebastian Robertson – CC**

My name is Sebastian Robertson, I’m the Founder of BATYR which is an organisation focused on preventative mental health education for young people.

I started it 4 years ago, and the idea is to start positive conversations around mental health and education in schools and universities.

The work that we do is really important because of the needed conversation around mental health and young people.

For every Australian classroom on average of 30 students 7 will have a serious mental illness of those seven, two will seek help. So 5 people are suffering in silence.

Our work is really important around trying to address and change the stigma surrounding mental health and mental illness and we do that by training young people aged 18-30 who have a lived experience of some form of mental illness, and that could be: social anxiety, anxiety, eating disorders, depression, and bi-polar – training them to share their story effectively within a safe environment to know how their story can help someone else out.

What we do with those individuals is that we then take them back to schools and universities and use them as the central message point of peer-to-peer education about how you can seek help, what it means to go and seek help, and why that help was so vital on their story.

So I guess what we are trying to do is, creative a positive conversation about the benefits of reaching out to seek help.

If I could tell the world one thing it would be to not wait for someone else to do it, have a go, give it a crack, if you find an issue do something about it.

I think we sit around and observe too much these days and don’t recognise that we’re actually in a very strong position to do something ourselves, so be active, and be proactive