



Saints and Movember launch 'Spud's Game' for mental health

Tuesday 9 March, 2021

St Kilda Football Club is proud to launch *Spud's Game: Time 2 Talk*, a groundbreaking new initiative designed to tackle mental health issues within the community.

The special tribute match will take place in Round 2 and has been established in honour of the late Danny 'Spud' Frawley.

Frawley was a fierce advocate for destigmatising mental ill-health and a trailblazer in starting a broader conversation about mental health.

The announcement comes in the wake of Victoria's Royal Commission into Mental Health, which uncovered both the concerning prevalence of mental ill-health and the need for more community focussed care.

Almost half of all Australians aged 16 to 85 years — 7.3 million people — will experience a mental illness at some point in their life.

One quarter of Australians aged 16 to 85 years — 4.2 million people — will experience an anxiety condition during their lifetime. It's also estimated that in any one year, around 1 million Australian adults have depression, and over 2 million suffer from anxiety.

Spud's Game will be brought to life by a host of big names celebrating the life and influence of their mate, Spud. Through a series of powerful videos, we'll witness his closest family and friends courageously open up and have the conversation that's been so hard to start.

Spud's Game: Time 2 Talk sees St Kilda partner with global mental health juggernaut Movember to deliver research-based community mental health programs, such as Movember's *Ahead of the Game*.

Movember Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Program Lead Owen Brigstock-Barron said the charity was honoured to be part of such a significant and game-changing match.

"We take hope in knowing that Spud's legacy – putting your hand up and speaking up – will continue to spark conversations and play a pivotal role in normalising Australians talking about mental health more openly," Brigstock-Barron said.

"Funds raised during Spud's Game will help to ensure that *Ahead of the Game*, an evidence-based mental fitness and resilience program, can reach even more junior footballers, their coaches and parents, helping them to deal with mental health challenges both on and off the field."



Alongside Movember, the Saints will set about changing the face of mental health, with a focus on fostering mateship and connection to aid early intervention and detection, thereby improving outcomes for the community.

Spud's Game will not only encourage greater connection within the community, but it will also raise crucial funds to support mental health programs through the Danny Frawley Centre for Health and Wellbeing as well as Movember.

The Centre will host dedicated mental health facilities, shared work areas for program development and research, an education room to host prevention and training programs, as well as casual meeting spaces for the community.

Anita Frawley said the potential for her late husband's legacy to make a real difference was incredibly powerful.

"This means the world to our family. It gives us hope that Danny's legacy is being honoured in such a meaningful way, and we know this will help to improve the lives of Australians living with or supporting someone who suffers from mental ill-health," Anita said.

"Danny would be so proud to have a mental health game in his honour. He spoke so openly about his struggles in the hope that he could encourage others to do the same. To have St Kilda Football Club continue his legacy by encouraging this vulnerability is extremely powerful.

"We hope that this match not only raises funds for community-based mental health prevention and intervention programs, but it raises the importance of mental health awareness within the industry as a whole, because it's time to talk."

St Kilda CEO Matt Finnis echoed Anita's sentiments, adding how proud the entire football club was to continue Danny's work in mental health.

"Danny was a giant of St Kilda, and we are immensely proud to be able to honour him in such a significant way," Finnis said.

"Danny's legacy transcends the football field. He was more than just a footballer and entertainer – he was a father, husband, mental health warrior and the ultimate mate to those who knew him.

"He was so committed to destigmatising mental ill-health and was never scared of speaking up or being vulnerable. He proudly wore his heart on his sleeve and encouraged others to do the same.

"Spud's Game is our chance to not only celebrate Spud's legacy but promote a national conversation that can help lead to early intervention and tackle the prevalence of mental ill-health within the community."

Funds will be raised through [movember.com/spud](https://www.movember.com/spud) with special edition caps and tees also available for purchase, while fans can lock in priority access to Spud's Game by purchasing a 2021 membership.

All funds raised support mental health programs through the Danny Frawley Centre for Health and Wellbeing and Movember's Ahead of the Game.



Round 2 is scheduled for 27 March when St Kilda is set to face Melbourne at Marvel Stadium for what will be an emotion-charged tribute fixture.

If you or anyone you know needs support, contact Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Beyond Blue on 1300 224 636.

Australian media, communications and public relations professionals play an important role in influencing social attitudes and perceptions of suicide and mental ill-health. [Click here for Mindframe's Media Industry Hub.](#)