

## Introducing Freya, Youth Mentor of the Month.

Hi, I'm Freya, 22, and I'm currently living in the wonderful Edithvale. I grew up in a small mining town in northern WA and after moving around between Queensland and overseas I moved to Melbourne in January. Apart from the cold I love it! I finished a Bachelor of International Relations in 2018 and am currently studying a Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Masters of Primary Education. I've experienced PTSD, anxiety and depression first hand.

### **Favourite Colour**

I've always found it hard to pick a favourite colour but if I had to it would be the colour of the ocean in summer. I've always loved the beach and everything to do with water, so that colour brings me so much happiness. It's so calming too.

### **My Lived Experience**

When I was first diagnosed with PTSD, depression and anxiety I was lucky enough to have an amazing support network of friends and teachers, and in the past few years friends in particular and my amazing boyfriend have made me an even stronger person. I would love to be able to have that impact on someone's life. I know how important it is to have even just one person that you know will always care and support you no matter what. There's something pretty amazing about being able to give back so positively.

### **Youth Mentor Goal**

My main goal I guess would be to become a person that a mentee can rely on. Someone that they will be able to call and know their day will get better just by having that support. I would love to be able to form a strong connection with a mentee that would last years.

### **Difference of this Service**

APTF is very different to anything I've seen before. Kirstie is very hands on and matches the mentees and mentors to everything from their lived experience to their hobbies. The mentor program is also one-on-one and designed to be flexible in that you meet in a setting designed to make everyone comfortable. It's about forming a support network in a unique way.

### **My Support**

My normal job is working with children, so having that background is a huge help. Having PTSD is not all that common and is seen as something for war veterans, so it has a lot of stigma particularly for young people, so I'll be able to provide a lot of information and support. My experiences have been directly related to mental health challenges in my family, so my understanding of that, as well as my own, creates an empathy for young people with a multitude of challenges.

