

Frequently Asked Questions

FOR PARENTS

Get to know us a little better and find the answers you're looking for below.

What is Livewire?

Livewire, a program of the Starlight Children's Foundation, is an online community to help young people aged 12 to 20 years, and their siblings, cope with the impact of a serious illness, mental illness, chronic health condition or disability. It's available to young people living in Australia and New Zealand.

Livewire has two registration options:

1. **Members:** The Member community is a safe online environment for young people, Livewire in New Zealand and Australia, aged between 12 and 20 years, living with a serious illness, mental illness, chronic health condition or disability, and their siblings. It's a place for them to meet new friends, share experiences, creatively express themselves and know that they are not alone in their situation.
2. **Not-For-Profits:** Livewire works with not-for-profits both in Australia and New Zealand, enabling organisations to set up their own Livewire Group. This provides a safe online platform for organisations to connect with young people that utilise their services, providing them with event updates, resource information and support relevant to their condition.

What is the need for livewire?

- Serious illness, chronic health condition or disability can profoundly affect the everyday lives of young people by increasing their risk of social isolation, disconnection, lower peer acceptance and lower emotional well-being. These problems are compounded by long and frequent stays in hospital.
- The siblings and young carers of people living with a serious illness or disability face their own unique teenage challenges - often suffering from social and emotional isolation in addition to the constant demands of caring for a family member.
- Many families struggle to cope with a child living with a serious illness, chronic health condition or disability. Parents and carers often suffer a heavy emotional burden, physical stress and financial pressure.
- A research study conducted by Murdoch University has found that Livewire's unique combination of moderated chat, safety and entertainment has created a reliable point of social connection for young people aged 12-20 years that often lack opportunities to socially interact with others their age due to a serious illness, chronic health condition or disability. Livewire allows members to find a balance in their lives, despite disruptions such as time in hospital or time away from school, by encouraging social connection, friendship and community. (Third, A., & Richardson, I. (2009). *Analysing the impacts of social networking for young people living with chronic illness, a serious condition or a disability: An evaluation of the Livewire Online Community*. Murdoch University, Centre for Everyday Life, Perth WA.)

Livewire mission

To connect, support and empower young people and their siblings affected by a serious illness, chronic health condition or disability.

What are the product features of livewire?

Livewire is a tailored and moderated community combining a range of unique features:

- Update personal profiles and connect with other members with similar interests
- A fully-moderated chat room open 12pm – 12 am (AEST) providing our members with the opportunity to stay connected to other members who share similar experiences and meet new friends
- Post updates and share their thoughts
- Read articles created just for them
- Create a group or join a group tailored to their interests or needs
- Events – online quiz nights and special guests in the chat room (such as TV personalities, high profile sports people or well-known authors)
- Participate in live streaming events (starting this year!)

How is Livewire kept safe and secure?

Ensuring that Livewire remains safe and secure is a top priority and is Livewire's key point of difference:

- Livewire chat hosts are trained moderators and constitute a unique feature of the livewire 'chat' facility. Chat hosts are active participants, directly engaging in conversations and facilitating activities with the members. Their presence provides a more integrated and fun community, while ensuring livewire.org.au members are having a, positive, enjoyable and safe experience.
- Livewire has a comprehensive registration process and every livewire member is validated by our membership services team. Young people under 18 require a proof of identification check from their parent or guardian in order to gain ongoing unrestricted access to the community.

How do young people join Livewire?

It's easy! Just visit www.livewire.org.au or www.livewire.org.nz and register online.

Contact Us

Do you have a question? Would you like to know more about livewire?

Please contact the Livewire support team.

In Australia

Phone: (02) 8425 5971 - 9am to 5pm (AEST) Monday to Friday

Or email us at: livewire@starlight.org.au

In New Zealand

Phone: (free call) 0800 000 680 - 11am to 7pm Monday to Friday

Or email us at: livewire@starlight.org.au

