



Reporting on suicide and mental illness responsibly Policy

1. Suicide is a prominent public health issue in Australia with over 2,000 people dying by suicide each year.

- Some important facts about suicide are:
- Rates of suicide are generally three to four times higher among males than females
Many more people attempt than die by suicide with hospital admissions for intentional self injury about ten times as common as deaths by suicide
- Migrants in Australia show similar suicide rates to those in their country of origin People in any form of custody have a suicide rate three times higher than the general population.
- Mental illness is a major risk factor for suicide with psychological autopsy studies showing that up to 90% of people who suicide may have been experiencing mental disorder at the time of their death.

Issues to consider when reporting

- Should I run the story?
- Be careful with the language you use
- Don't be explicit about the method or location of suicide
- Discussion of celebrity suicide can glamorise suicide
- Consider the angle (or positioning) of the story
- Should you interview the bereaved? Is it necessary?
- Place the story in context
- Include helpline contacts in your story.

The Mindframe Media and Mental Health (MMMh) project is one of a suite of projects on suicide, mental illness and the media developed as part of the national media strategy. MMMh aims to build a collaborative relationship with the Australian media and mental health systems to enable a more accurate and sensitive portrayal of suicide and mental health issues across all news media in Australia. A key activity of MMMh is the development of a resource kit for use by media professionals which is available from: www.mindframe-media.info

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Created in consultation with The Community Broadcasting Association Australia



A resource kit has been created and can be accessed by visiting the following link
[Triple H 100.1FM Reporting Suicide and Mental Illness resource Kit](#)

During or after your story you should refer your audience to some of the relevant links below:

Kids Helpline | Phone Counselling Service | 1800 55 1800

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/>

Lifeline Australia - 13 11 14 - Crisis Support and Suicide Prevention

<https://www.lifeline.org.au/>

Headspace National Youth Mental Health Foundation (Contains an online chat)

<https://headspace.org.au/>

Local Headspace to visit:

253 Old Northern Road Castle Hill

(02) 8820 9995

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