

Media alert

30 April 2024 | Please cascade to all media staff

Safe and sensitive reporting regarding the recent tragic events in Boolaroo, NSW.

Australian media professionals are reminded to apply *Mindframe* guidelines when reporting on the tragic events that have taken place in Boolaroo involving the death of a minor.

It is recommended to avoid speculation about the mental health status of those involved. Given that media portrayals of mental illness linked to violence and crime can be among the most stigmatising, it is vital that media professionals ensure that this incident is covered safely and responsibly.

Other recommendations for media in reporting on the incident in Boolaroo:

- Rely on authoritative sources (e.g. Police statements, mental health professionals) when reporting.
- Avoid connecting this incident with other recent events and keep in mind that while there may be similar elements involved, they are not necessarily causal or directly linked.
- Limit the use of graphic descriptions or depictions of such incidents to help limit further distress.
- Remain mindful around naming or identifying minors.
- Take care to ensure that any promoted content, including automated articles that may appear with your coverage online due to linked keywords, is appropriate and not likely to cause distress.
- Take care when providing platforms or forums for public discussion of these events such as comments sections and call-back radio. This may involve closer monitoring of, or potentially limiting, online comments.
- Remain mindful that negative reports about mental health services might discourage help-seeking by others with a living experience of mental health concerns – while such reports may be in the public interest, it's important to be accurate about issues so as not to give a negative or alarmingly exaggerated perception of all services.
- Provide contact details of relevant support services, including youth focused services, for anyone who may be distressed by this incident.
- Consider the prominence and volume of reporting being released, as prolonged and sustained reporting can have significant lasting negative impacts on the community and the families of those involved.

Please refer to the *Mindframe Guidelines on media reporting of severe mental illness in the context of violence and crime*. Further language guidance can be found in the *Our words matter: Guidelines for language use along with guidance for the use of images* when illustrating stories relating to mental health concerns.

Mindframe support for media

For free support in reporting safely on complex mental illness in the context of violence and crime, call 02 4924 6900, visit mindframe.org.au or email mindframe@health.nsw.gov.au

Everymind would also like to remind all journalists and managers supporting journalists that this tragic incident can impact on the welfare of those reporting the story, especially for local media in the Lake Macquarie and Hunter region. Everymind, in consultation with the DART Centre Asia Pacific, provides [self-care tips for journalists](#) as well as advice for editors and line managers.

Support services

Adult

Lifeline: 13 11 14 | Text 0477 13 11 14
lifeline.org.au

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467
suicidecallbackservice.org.au

Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636
beyondblue.org.au/forums

MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978
mensline.org.au

StandBy Support After Suicide
1300 727 247

Youth

Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800
kidshelpline.com.au

headspace: 1800 650 890
headspace.org.au

ReachOut: ReachOut.com

Other resources

Head to Health: mental health portal
headtohealth.gov.au

Life in Mind: suicide prevention portal
lifeinmindaustralia.com.au

SANE: 1800 187 263 (10am-10pm)
online forums: saneforums.org

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander: 13YARN.org.au or 13 92 76

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex: 1800 184 527 qlife.org.au

Culturally and linguistically diverse: embracementalhealth.org.au

For more information including free advice for media, please contact **Mindframe:**

mindframe@health.nsw.gov.au | Twitter: [@MindframeMedia](https://twitter.com/MindframeMedia) | 02 4924 6900