

**Mindframe reminder for responsible reporting on commentary linking mass shootings in the United States to mental illness****5 August 2019****Please cascade to all media staff**

*Mindframe* reminds Australian media to be cautious when using or repeating overseas commentary and media coverage linking recent mass shootings in the United States to mental illness, as doing so may result in stigma.

When reporting on this story, *Mindframe* advises the following:

- **Refrain from linking violent acts to mental illness.** Research shows that less than 4% of mass shootings have any links to mental illness. Making this link can result in stigma. Many violent people have no history of mental illness and most people with a mental illness have no history of violence.
- **Refrain from speculation around the perpetrator's state of mind or mental health** until these have been officially confirmed by authorities.
- **Avoid using colloquial language** such as 'crazed gunman' and 'psychopath' as this can also contribute to stigma. Certain language and stereotypes can lead to negative community attitudes and stigmatise people living with a mental illness, as well as present inaccuracies about [mental illness](#) or mental health care.
- **Omit explicit details** of method and location when describing how perpetrators of past shootings took their own life e.g. description of specific weapons.
- **Include help-seeking:** Include help-seeking information for potentially distressed viewer. See below for further information.

*Mindframe* would like to remind all journalists and those working in the media that these tragic incidents can also have an impact on the welfare of those covering the story. To support media professionals *Mindframe*, in consultation with the [DART Centre Asia Pacific](#), has developed journalism self-care resources which include helpful tips for journalists as well as advice for editors and line managers. [More info here](#)

Any coverage of this incident should include details of [help-seeking](#) resources below.

More information on reporting guidelines can be found on the [Mindframe](#) website.

## Help-seeking information

Adding help-seeking information to stories (online, print and broadcast) can provide somewhere for people who may be adversely impacted by the coverage to find professional support.

### National 24/7 crisis services

**Lifeline:** 13 11 14 [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

**Suicide Call Back Service:** 1300 659 467 [www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

**MensLine Australia:** 1300 78 99 79 [www.mensline.org.au](http://www.mensline.org.au)

**Beyond Blue:** 1300 22 4636 [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)



## Support services

### Adult

**Lifeline:** 13 11 14

[lifeline.org.au](http://lifeline.org.au)

**Suicide Call Back Service:** 1300 659 467

[suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

**Beyond Blue:** 1300 224 636

[beyondblue.org.au/forums](http://beyondblue.org.au/forums)

**MensLine Australia:** 1300 789 978

[mensline.org.au](http://mensline.org.au)

### Youth

**Kids Helpline:** 1800 551 800

[kidshelpline.com.au](http://kidshelpline.com.au)

**headspace:** 1800 650 890

[headspace.org.au](http://headspace.org.au)

**ReachOut:** [au.reachout.com](http://au.reachout.com)

### Other resources

**Head to Health:** mental health portal

[headtohealth.gov.au](http://headtohealth.gov.au)

**Life in Mind:** suicide prevention portal

[lifeinmindaustralia.com.au](http://lifeinmindaustralia.com.au)

**SANE:** online forums [saneforums.org](http://saneforums.org)

[healthinonet.ecu.edu.au](http://healthinonet.ecu.edu.au) - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

1800 184 527 [qlife.org.au](http://qlife.org.au) - Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex

[mhima.org.au](http://mhima.org.au) - Culturally and linguistically diverse



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Mindframe

[mindframe.org.au](http://mindframe.org.au)

### The Mindframe project team

Tel: 02 4924 6900 or 0427 227 503

Email: [mindframe@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mindframe@health.nsw.gov.au)

Twitter: @MindframeMedia



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