

Media alert

21 July 2022 | Please cascade to all media staff

Safe reporting reminder: Release of ABS National Study of Mental Health and Wellbeing

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) will tomorrow release the 2020-21 National Study of Mental Health and Wellbeing. This is the first time this survey has been conducted since 2007.

The report provides data on a range of issues including mental illness and suicide. Research shows that prominent and sensationalised media reporting about these themes can be stigmatising and reduce the likelihood of help-seeking behaviours by those who may be personally impacted or in need of support.

Media and communications professionals reporting on the data and findings included in this report are encouraged to be thoughtful, responsible and accurate to reduce the risk of harm or stigma for those in the community with lived experience of mental ill-health and suicide.

Recommendations for reporting about mental ill-health and suicide:

- **Consider the context**

It is important to note that there are a number of considerations when it comes to using and referencing statistics around mental ill-health and related issues. Avoid speculation and take care to frame statistics, trends and other study findings in their appropriate context. *Mindframe* has helpful advice on how to communicate about these kind of [data and statistics](#).

- **Seek expert commentary**

The *Mindframe* [Expert Directory](#) connects media professionals with experienced individuals who can provide commentary relating to mental health and wellbeing to support safe, responsible, contextualised and accurate reporting and communication.

- **Consult *Mindframe* guidelines**

Mindframe has a series of [guidelines](#) and resources freely available for use by media including specific advice relating to the safe and accurate reporting on issues including [mental ill-health](#), [suicide](#), [disordered eating](#), and the use of [alcohol and other drugs](#).

- **Use safe, sensitive, and non-stigmatising language**

Inaccurate language can have a serious and negative impact on public understanding and perceptions about these issues, may unfairly affect how those with lived experience are viewed by society, and discourage help-seeking behaviours. Read more about safe and non-stigmatising language [here](#).

- **Always include help-seeking information when communicating about mental ill-health and suicide**

The inclusion of help-seeking information encourages individuals to seek help and support when it's needed. When discussing mental ill-health and suicide, it is important to include links or contact details for population groups that may be prominently featured in articles or coverage e.g., youth-based services that operate 24/7. *Mindframe* guidelines recommend including at least two services. More: mindframe.org.au/help-seeking

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

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

Other resources

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

Life in Mind: suicide prevention portal
lifeinmind.org.au

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

Support for media

For free support when reporting on or communicating publicly about mental ill-health call 02 4924 6900, visit mindframe.org.au or email mindframe@health.nsw.gov.au

To report stigmatising content in the media visit <https://www.sane.org/services/stigmawatch/report-a-media-item-to-stigmawatch>

Media self-care

Reporting suicide and mental illness can also impact to the welfare of journalists. To support media professionals *Mindframe*, in consultation with the [DART Centre Asia Pacific](#), has developed journalism self-care resources for media professionals reporting suicide and mental illness. These resources can be found [here](#).

Contact

Everymind staff are available to support media professionals when reporting on topics relating to mental ill-health and suicide to help ensure quality reporting as well as safe and accurate portrayal of these themes.

Mindframe representative for support on reporting:

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