

Mindframe media alert**Media reminder – suicide memorial warning and safe reporting of Dolly Everett****12 January 2018*****Please cascade to all media staff***

Mindframe urgently reminds media and those commenting in media/social media to ensure responsible discussion of youth suicide in the wake of today's funeral for Amy 'Dolly' Jayne Everett.

While the media can play a powerful role in raising awareness of suicide and suicide prevention, media stories about suicide also have the potential to do harm. Stories profiling someone who has died by suicide appear to carry the greatest risk, as people who are vulnerable may identify with the individual.

Young people also have a greater risk of contagion due to exposure to suicide deaths

Mindframe has concerns about a video memorialising the passing of Dolly that is being shared across multiple media platforms.

Mindframe Program Manager Marc Bryant said that the promotion of public memorials such as this should be avoided.

"Promotion of memorials, including online memorials, may inadvertently reinforce suicide as a desired outcome for those who are experiencing similar life circumstances or who have suicidal thoughts," he said.

A headspace spokesperson added: "headspace would like to acknowledge the complex nature of circumstances that lead to suicide. It is very important that the key messages we share in this very sad time are ones of help-seeking and caring for each other. headspace wants to ensure the Australian media approach the topic of youth suicide and commentary about youth suicide in a sensitive, careful, and considered way."

As media continue to cover the subject, other emerging issues to consider include:

- Take care not to imply that the death was spontaneous or preceded by a single event. Research suggests that most people who die by suicide have underlying risk factors, including mental health issues or other social influences.
- Consider how many stories about suicide have been run recently, as research suggests that a succession of stories about suicide can reinforce suicidal behaviour for people who are

vulnerable. This is called hyper exposure and may put vulnerable viewers at risk by reinforcing their suicidal behaviour and normalising their thoughts.

- A story may be improved by obtaining the views of suicide prevention experts. They can assist by providing comment and placing situations in context to avoid sensationalising, reactionary comment. As this is a youth suicide issue, agencies such as headspace, Kids Helpline and Reachout.Com have experts in informing the community about youth suicide and pathways to support and information.

As always, we urge media to consider *Mindframe* [guidelines](#) when reporting about suicide. Refrain from speculating on specific methods and locations, avoid stigmatising language and encourage help-seeking.

Suicide and cyberbullying-specific resources that can be promoted to the community include:

- **Everymind's** Conversations Matter resources on safe community discussion of suicide:
 - [Communities affected by suicide](#)
 - [Conversations with those bereaved by suicide](#)
- Beyondblue
 - [Healthy families](#)
 - [Worried about suicide](#)
 - [Understanding suicide and grief](#)
 - [After you lose someone to suicide](#)
- Kids Helpline
 - [Cyberbullying](#)
 - [Supporting a child who is thinking of suicide](#)
- ReachOut.com
 - [Cyberbullying](#)
 - [Teenagers and cyberbullying](#)
- headspace
 - [Understanding bullying – for family and friends](#)
 - [Social media advice – for families](#)
 - [How to start the conversation](#)
- Australian Government eSafety commissioner
 - [Cyberbullying support tool](#)
 - [Online safety](#)
 - [Is your child at risk of self-harm or suicide?](#)
- [Communities Matter](#)

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.

Key national youth support services include:

- Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800 www.kidshelpline.com.au
- headspace 1800 650 890 www.headspace.org.au
- ReachOut.com (WEBSITE)

Key national 24/7 crisis support services include:

- Lifeline 13 11 14 www.lifeline.org.au
- Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467 www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au
- MensLine Australia 1300 789 978 www.mensline.org.au
- *beyondblue* 1300 224 636 www.beyondblue.org.au

The *Mindframe* National Media Initiative can provide media comment or expert advice on media reporting of suicide and/or mental illness. Our spokesperson is: Marc Bryant, Program Manager *Mindframe*.

For further information or advice, please visit the [Mindframe website](#) or contact:

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