

## Western Australia

Suicide is one of the largest killers in Australia and yet it remains hidden and rarely talked about. Over the last 20 years suicide has claimed the lives of approximately 2,500 Australians a year.

At this level, suicide claims more lives than the national road toll, assaults and murders and more than Australia's 'national' cancer – skin cancer.

In Western Australia alone we lose approximately 245 lives each year, while nationally we lose an average of 7 lives each day.

**To help prevent this tragic toll, we must learn how to respond to those in need.**

### Get to know the signs and how to help

**Sign 1:** Discussing a desire for suicide, 'ending it' or plans to take one's own life.

**Sign 2:** Feelings of hopelessness, helplessness or worthlessness, including feeling that others would be 'better off if I'm not around'.

**Sign 3:** A sharp decline or change in mood and 'not acting like themselves' – this can also coincide with a decline in seeking social interactions and job absenteeism.

**Sign 4:** A number of mood identifiers such as: depression, insomnia, anxiety, panic attacks and impaired concentration and loss of rational thinking often accompany suicidal ideation or attempts.

**Sign 5:** A desire to 'tie up loose ends' – the compiling of a will or the sudden distribution of belongings to friends and family.

**Sign 6:** Increased and unusual risky behaviour including destructive drug and alcohol use.

**Sign 7:** Recent traumatic events or losses that create unresolved distress.

**Sign 8:** A mental illness combined with other signs.

**Sign 9:** A recent or past attempt to take their own life or harm themselves.

**Every situation is different, but one or a combination of these signs may be indicative of imminent risk. Rather than avoid the issue, start a conversation. You could save a life.**

**VISIT [WWW.WSPD.ORG.AU](http://WWW.WSPD.ORG.AU)  
TO FIND OUT MORE AND TO ACCESS OUR RESOURCES**

## How to help:

- Let them know your concern.
- Ask the person if they are suicidal. They may be relieved that they can talk to you about it.
- Listen without judgement.
- Sensitively advise them to get professional help, support them through that process.
- Provide personal support.
- Get further information and support for them and yourself from a GP, psychologist, crisis service, friends, family or the internet.
- If someone is at imminent risk call your local mental health emergency team or '000'.

## Seven Facts about Suicide

**Fact #1:** Suicide results from intense psychological pain.

**Fact #2:** People who talk about suicide are at serious risk and should be taken seriously.

**Fact #3:** People often give signs before they attempt suicide. Get to know these signs so that you can recognise risk.

**Fact #4:** Suicide can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, income, relationship status, education or ethnicity.

**Fact #5:** Talking about suicide with a person will not put them at risk.

**Fact #6:** Suicide is preventable and people can fully recover after feeling suicidal.

**Fact #7:** A person who has attempted suicide once may be at risk of doing it again.

## What is Western Australia doing to support and prevent suicide

In 2009 the Western Australian Department of Health released the WA Suicide Prevention Strategy 2009 – 2013. The Strategy allocates \$13 million for state and community implementation of the strategy, and established the Ministry for Mental Health. Centacare Australia have been appointed to implement the strategy, guided and coordinated by the Ministerial Council for Suicide Prevention.

The Strategy prioritises; improving the evidence base and understanding of suicide prevention, building individual and community resilience and capacity, coordination, targeted activities and implementing standards and quality in suicide prevention.

Find the Western Australian Strategy at <http://wspd.org.au/resources>

## How to get help and support in Western Australia

### Lifeline:

As one of the most trusted organisations in Australia, Lifeline provides access to a range of crisis support, suicide prevention and mental health support services. Their core support service (13 11 14) is available 24 hours 7 days a week.

Find more information at: [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

### OzHelp:

Is a workplace based early intervention suicide prevention and social capacity building program. It is built on a vision to enhance the resilience of workers, and strengthen the influence and support of leaders, within industry and community groups.

Find more information at: [www.ozhelp.org.au](http://www.ozhelp.org.au)

### The Samaritans:

The Samaritans Crisis Line endeavours to help people who find themselves overwhelmed with their current life situation, no matter what that may be, and want to share their personal crisis with someone willing to listen. You can find out more by calling:

08 9381 5555 or their Country toll free on 1800 198 313

### Youth Focus:

Youth Focus are committed to making a difference in the lives of young people who are suffering and those who see no hope on the horizon. As a unique independent not for profit organisation Youth Focus offer a range of free mental health services to support vulnerable young people in Western Australia.

Find more information at: [www.youthfocus.com.au](http://www.youthfocus.com.au)

