

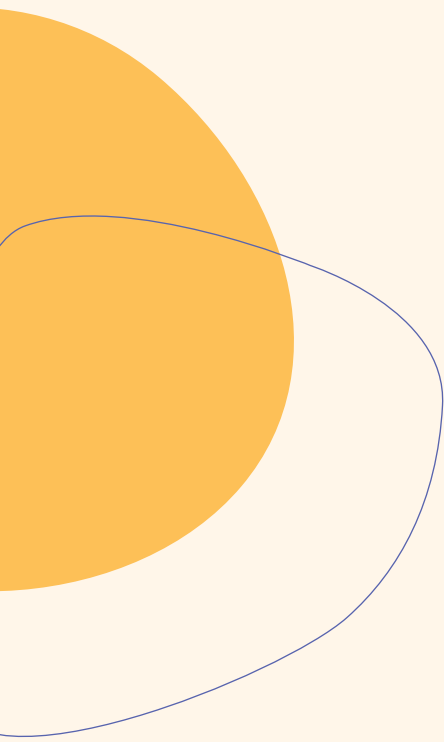
# #chatsafe for educators: How educators can support safe online communication about self-harm and suicide

Edition two



  
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# **#chatsafe for educators:** **How educators can support safe online communication about self-harm and suicide**

**Edition two**





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# What is #chatsafe?



#chatsafe is a suicide prevention program that aims to equip young people with the skills and knowledge to communicate safely online about self-harm and suicide.

In 2018, Orygen developed the world's first evidence-informed guidelines for young people to communicate safely online about suicide [1]. The guidelines were developed in partnership with young people, media professionals and suicide prevention experts. In 2019, over 200 young people from across Australia helped us turn the guidelines into a social media campaign [2]. The campaign was found to be effective in increasing confidence and perceived safety when communicating online about suicide [3, 4, 5]. This suggests that it can be helpful for young people to find information on social media about suicide prevention, and that social media can be an acceptable way of reaching young people with information about mental health and suicide.

Even though young people liked the guidelines and social media campaign and found them to be helpful, we felt that they were missing important

guidance on communicating about self-harm. Self-harm involves any intentional self-injury or self-poisoning, regardless of the person's reason for harming themselves or whether they have suicidal intent [6]. To fill this gap and to keep up with the fast-changing nature of social media, we have released the second edition of the #chatsafe guidelines, which includes new information about self-harm and social media trends [7].

The social media campaign is doing a great job of reaching young people with #chatsafe information, but we also know that many adults play an instrumental role in supporting the safety and wellbeing of young people in their care. For that reason, #chatsafe also includes resources that aim to give adults the knowledge and skills they need to support the young people in their lives to communicate safely online about self-harm and suicide.

All #chatsafe resources that have been developed for young people and adults are available on the #chatsafe website: [www.orygen.org.au/chatsafe](http://www.orygen.org.au/chatsafe).

# #chatsafe for educators

Research tells us that high-school aged young people experience some of the highest rates of self-harm and suicidal thoughts and behaviours, and many mental health problems emerge during adolescence [8].

We also know that young people are hesitant to seek help for their mental health from formal sources (e.g. GPs or psychologists) and often turn to their peers or the internet for information and support [9].

School communities are well-placed to identify self-harm and suicide risk among their students, however, it is common for educators to feel ill-equipped in dealing with these matters.

Educators may be aware that conversations about self-harm and suicide are happening online, but often do not know how to respond.

Understandably, many educators avoid discussing self-harm and suicide due to fears about the potential for harm. However, research has shown that talking about suicide with young people does not increase the risk of harm. In fact, when done safely and with care, communicating about suicide can reduce risk for young people who are already experiencing distress but feel they cannot safely express it.

It is therefore important that educators have the knowledge and confidence to talk to young people about self-harm and suicide in ways that are safe and promote online safety among students. We know that these conversations can feel uncomfortable or overwhelming, and it can be difficult to know where to begin. That is where #chatsafe can help.

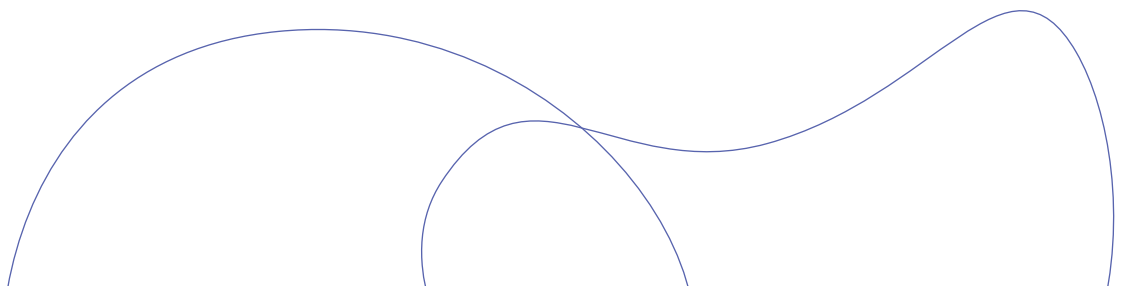
**We have created #chatsafe for educators to help school communities feel better equipped to support young people to communicate safely online about self-harm and suicide.**

This resource provides information about how educators can model safe language when communicating to students about self-harm and suicide. It steps educators through how they can support students to keep themselves and their peers safe when communicating online about self-harm or suicide, or when coming across self-harm or suicide-related content.

By increasing your own knowledge and confidence to communicate safely about self-harm and suicide, you can encourage the young people in your school community to do the same - both online and offline.

**Information in this resource is not intended to replace any individual school or university policy, nor replace advice provided by the Department of Education (or other relevant regulatory body). #chatsafe content has been developed for those aged 12-25 years, and we encourage a consideration of the ages/year levels of the students you are working with when discussing #chatsafe content.**

**Throughout this resource, you will find direct links to the #chatsafe website and #chatsafe Instagram page. We have also included links to youth-friendly animated videos that speak to the topics presented in this resource. You may want to share these with your students or use them as conversation starters.**



1

## General tips





## Myths about self-harm and suicide

Self-harm and suicide are highly stigmatised. Many people avoid talking about these topics because they are afraid to say the wrong thing, or believe that talking about it will increase risk. However, this is not the case, and talking about these topics safely can be protective.

The table below challenges some common myths and misconceptions about self-harm and suicide. More information about myths and misconceptions is available in the [#chatsafe guidelines](#).

Table 1. Myths and facts about self-harm and suicide

Myth...	Fact...
Self-harm is an attempt at suicide or means that the person is suicidal.	Self-harm is often a coping mechanism, and people self-harm for a range of reasons. It is not necessarily a suicide attempt, and does not always mean the person is thinking about suicide. However, people who self-harm are at increased risk of future suicide. A person can also accidentally harm themselves more seriously than they intended, which can put their life at risk.
Self-harm is attention seeking.	Most people who self-harm are not trying to get attention. In fact, many people try very hard to hide their self-harm behaviour.
It is not a good idea to ask someone if they are feeling suicidal.	Using the word ‘suicide’ and asking a person directly about suicidal thoughts or attempts does not increase feelings of distress or risk of harm.
Talking about suicide will put the idea in someone’s head or encourage them to attempt suicide.	Talking about suicide safely does not put ideas into someone’s head or increase the likelihood of suicidal thoughts or behaviours, and avoiding talking about suicide does not make it go away. In fact, giving a person the opportunity to talk about their thoughts, feelings, or behaviours related to suicide can be helpful for them, and can reduce the risk of harm.
Only certain people will feel suicidal in their lifetime, for example, people experiencing mental ill-health.	While lots of factors can make a person vulnerable to suicidal thoughts or behaviours, suicide can affect anyone.
Suicide is the result of a single cause or event.	Suicide is a complex issue and cannot be explained by any single cause or event. Most often, several risk factors contribute to a person’s vulnerability to suicide. These risk factors will impact each person differently, and a risk factor for one person may not be the same for someone else.
People who experience suicidal thoughts or attempts are determined to die.	Sometimes people who experience suicidal thoughts or make a suicide attempt do not necessarily want to die. Instead, they may believe that they have no other options or ways to cope. Getting support at the right time can reduce this distress and prevent suicide.
There is nothing anyone can do to stop suicide. Suicide attempts and death happen without warning.	Suicide is preventable. Appropriate help is very effective at preventing suicide attempts and deaths. It is important to know how to recognise when a person is at risk, and to be able to support them to seek help.

## Conversations about self-harm or suicide in a school setting

There are several reasons why topics of self-harm and suicide might arise in the classroom, or why you may want to initiate a conversation about these topics within your school community. These might include:

- You are worried about a student and their safety,
- A student has disclosed self-harm or suicide thoughts or behaviours to you,
- A suicide has occurred in your school or local community,
- A public figure or celebrity has died by suicide and is being discussed in the media or classroom,
- Information about self-harm or suicide is being shared in your school or community,
- A school text covers the topic of self-harm or suicide, or
- A TV show or movie that your students have seen mentions or depicts self-harm or suicide.

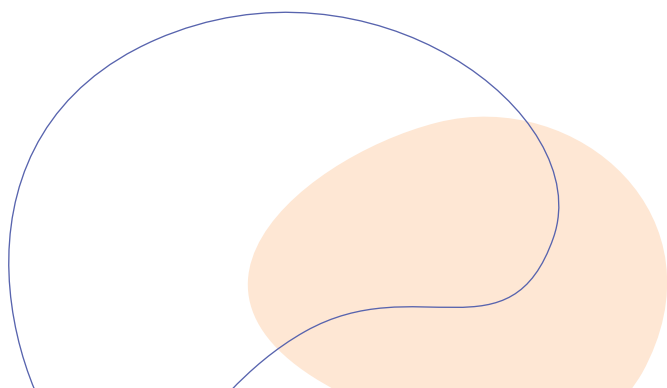
When these things happen, it is important that you feel comfortable and confident talking about self-harm or suicide with your students. Ignoring or avoiding these topics when they arise can increase stigma and may lead young people to think that they should also avoid talking about self-harm or suicide [10], which might prevent them from seeking help when they need it.

## Creating a safe space

Many young people want to have open discussions about self-harm and suicide. It is common for them to be curious about these topics, and to seek information from various sources. Creating open communication is a valuable way of providing support to young people and can help keep them safe.

Some ways that you can create a safe space include:

- **Be clear and direct in your language.** While it can feel confronting to say the word “suicide”, using the word directly and without judgment can model helpful behaviour and reduce stigma.
- **Be honest.** It is okay to be open if you feel like the conversation is awkward or uncomfortable. They may also feel that way, so by talking about your feelings, you can show that it is safe for them to do the same.
- **Address unsafe language or gestures.** We know that some young people might express frustration, overwhelm, or other feelings through jokes, inappropriate comments, or gestures that relate to self-harm or suicide. It can be helpful to call out this behaviour by talking about why it may be harmful to others in the school community, and reminding everyone that there are other ways to express what they are feeling.
- **Let them know about support services and resources that can help.** This could include having a visible list of support services on display in your classroom, and normalising using these services to seek help or support. We have included some support services in section 4 of this resource, and have a downloadable support services poster available here: [orygen.org.au/chatsafe/Resources/Support-services-poster/Australia-English](https://orygen.org.au/chatsafe/Resources/Support-services-poster/Australia-English)
- **Leave conversations about self-harm or suicide in a supportive way.** Let your students know that you appreciate them sharing their thoughts and feelings about these topics. Emphasise that suicide is preventable, and that help is available.



## Be mindful of trends

In recent years, information about self-harm and suicide-related games, pacts, hoaxes, and communities has circulated widely in the media and online. While it can be helpful to stay informed about current events or trends related to self-harm and suicide, school communities should be mindful that information about these topics can spread quickly and cause panic or confusion, even if it has not been confirmed to be accurate or truthful.

To avoid causing panic or confusion when talking about self-harm or suicide trends, it can be helpful to:

- Only share information that comes from a credible source or that you know to be true,
- Avoid talking about self-harm or suicide in a sensationalised way, and
- Correct any misinformation you hear about these topics.

More information about online safety for self-harm and suicide-related livestreams, games, pacts, hoaxes and communities is available in the [#chatsafe guidelines](#).



## Responding to potential risk of harm in a student

Educators are well placed to notice behaviours that may indicate a risk of harm in their students, and may be trusted adults who students turn to when they want to disclose thoughts or behaviours related to self-harm or suicide.

You can provide invaluable support to your students by identifying when they might be at risk, expressing your concerns, listening without judgement, and encouraging them to seek help from a trusted adult. However, it is important to remember the boundaries of your role, and to refer the student to an appropriate service (e.g. the school counsellor or wellbeing coordinator) for further support.

Additionally, each school will have its own policy and procedures related to student safety, which should be followed at all times.

### Responding to disclosures

When expressing your concerns to a student or responding to a disclosure of self-harm or suicide-related thoughts or behaviours, it can be helpful to:

- Use safe and non-judgmental language.
- Give the student time to express themselves.
- Try not to be reactive or panic.
- Remember that you don't need to have a solution.
- Take any disclosures or behaviours that may indicate a risk of harm seriously, and encourage or assist the student to seek appropriate professional support.

### Responding to risk

- **If a student has indicated that they, or another student, are at immediate risk of harm, call emergency services (000) and follow any relevant school policy or procedure.**
- If you are concerned about a student but there is **no immediate risk of harm**, you can follow any relevant school policy or procedure, or notify the school counsellor or wellbeing coordinator if you are unsure of what to do.

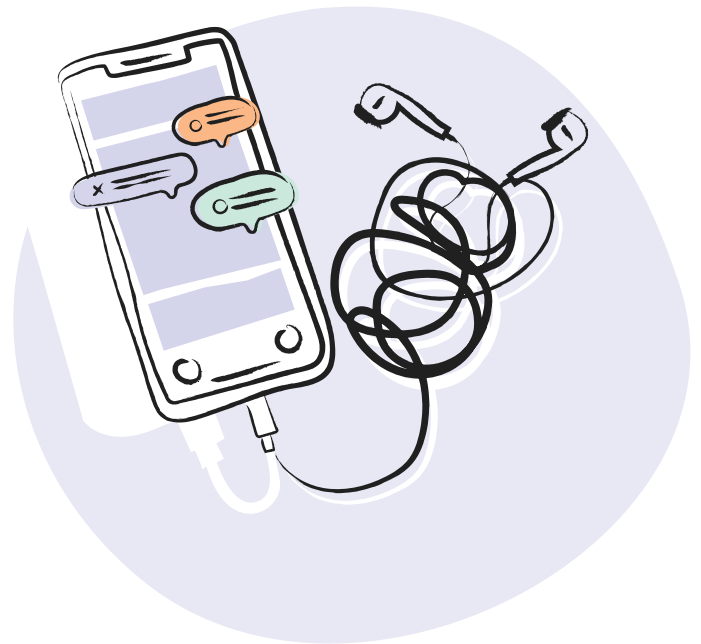
# 2

**What does safe  
online communication  
about self-harm  
and suicide look like?**



This section provides information about safe and unsafe language, and how young people can safely create and respond to online content about self-harm and suicide. Educators can use this information to model safe behaviour and support their students to stay safe online.

You may wish to use this as a starting point for conversations with your students about how they engage with self-harm and suicide-related content online, and how to do so safely.



## **Social media can be an important source of support for young people**

Young people are spending an increasing amount of time on social media, and we know that they often see online platforms as safe places to talk about their thoughts and feelings. Because of this, some young people may turn to social media to communicate about self-harm and suicide. It is the goal of #chatsafe to keep these communications safe, helpful, and appropriate.

Young people have told us that social media:

- Allows them to build a sense of community and social connection,
- Provides an accessible and appropriate way to seek help and find information, and
- Is a platform for them to discuss their feelings in a non-stigmatised way.

We know that exposure to self-harm and suicide content online can be distressing to young people, especially if information is shared in an unsafe or unhelpful way [11]. For example, content that includes graphic information or images may be upsetting or lead young people to imitate what they see or read about [12]. However, research has shown that suicide rates can reduce when information about suicide in mainstream media is shared responsibly and sensitively.

## **Words matter**

Safe online communication is key to #chatsafe, and includes things like the language young people use, the types of information they share online, and the support young people can provide to each other.

It is helpful for educators to know the difference between safe and unsafe language, and to practice safe communication themselves – both online and offline. This is because young people might copy the language we use, and while safe communication can reduce stigma around self-harm and suicide, unsafe language can reinforce harmful stigma [13]. Modelling safe language can also open up conversation and invite young people to reach out if they are feeling unsafe.

Examples of safe and unsafe language related to self-harm and suicide are included in the table below. We know that in some places it is very common for people to use language that we have listed below as being unsafe, and that it can be difficult to change these habits. However, we encourage educators to use safe language when talking about these topics, and to understand why this is important.

Table 2. Unsafe and safe language

Unsafe language	Safe alternatives	Why?
Describing suicide as criminal or sinful, for example, “committed suicide”.	Use non-judgemental language, for example, “took their own life”, “died by suicide”, or “suicide death”.	Describing suicide as criminal or sinful increases stigma for those with lived experience of suicide thoughts or attempts, and for people who have lost someone to suicide. This can also be isolating for people who are at risk and may discourage them from seeking help.
Describing suicide as a “solution” to life problems, stressors, or mental health disorders. For example, “they are in a better place now” or “their suffering has ended”.	Emphasise help, hope, and recovery. Be clear that suicide is preventable and not inevitable.	Describing suicide as a “solution” can make it appealing. This can also encourage people who are at risk to see suicide as a real option, instead of using coping strategies, support, and professional help.
Describing suicide as glamorous, romantic, or appealing, for example, “joining a loved one”.	Use neutral language, for example, “suicide attempt” or “suicide death”.	Glamourising suicide can influence people who are at risk to think it is appealing. Talking about someone who has died by suicide using this unsafe language may encourage others to imitate their suicide behaviour or attempt.
Talking about suicide in ways that make it seem like it is not serious and complex. For example, blaming a suicide death on one single event or implying suicide was the result of a single cause, such as bullying or depression.	Talk about warning signs for suicide and remind people that there is no single cause. Be mindful not to speculate about the specific causes or risk factors that may have led to a particular suicide death. Gossiping in this context can be intrusive and harmful.	Suicide is a complex issue and is rarely the result of a single cause. Oversimplifying suicide can contribute to harmful stereotypes and make it more difficult for people to become aware of different warning signs and risk factors. Simplifying causes of suicide can also put people who identify with a specific cause at increased risk.
Sensationalising suicide, for example, “suicide epidemic”, or “skyrocketing rates” or “everyone is killing themselves”.	Use more neutral and accurate language, for example, “increasing rates of suicide”. Emphasise that suicide is preventable.	Exaggerated or sensationalising language can make suicide feel like an expected or unstoppable outcome, which may create a sense of hopelessness for people who are at risk.
Being judgemental and repeating myths, stigma, or stereotypes. For example, “suicide is for cowards”, or “it is a trend, fashion, or emo or goth thing”.	Use non-judgemental language and provide facts about suicide to combat myths or stereotypes.	Myths and stereotypes about suicide may stop you from recognising when someone is actually at risk. Stigma also contributes to harmful ideas about people who are vulnerable to suicide risk and can make them feel isolated or discouraged from seeking help.

Table continued on next page

Unsafe language	Safe alternatives	Why?
Providing detailed information about a suicide or suicide attempt. For example, information about the method or location.	Reconsider whether it is necessary to mention any details about a suicide death or suicide attempt. Use broad or general terms instead.	Detailed information about self-harm or suicide can be upsetting to people who view it. It may also lead some people to imitate what they see or read about.
Describing suicide as a desired outcome, for example, “successful”, “unsuccessful”, or “failed attempts”.	Use neutral language such as “died by suicide”, “suicide attempt” or “non-fatal attempt”.	Saying that a suicide was “successful” suggests that something positive has been achieved, even though suicide is a tragic outcome. On the other hand, “unsuccessful” or “failed attempts” suggests that the person has not achieved a desired outcome, which can lead to people using more lethal methods.
Labelling the person. For example, as an “attention seeker” or “liar”.	Take conversations about suicide seriously and use non-judgemental language when talking about someone who has made a suicide attempt.	People who talk about suicide are often experiencing severe distress or hopelessness. Stigmatising or judgemental language can make people who are at risk feel more isolated, but support at the right time can prevent a suicide attempt.

## Visuals matter

Like words, certain visual content can also be harmful. Visual content refers to photos, videos, pre-recorded and live streams, GIFS, memes, stories, reels, animations, emojis, stickers, and other image-based content.

The [#chatsafe guidelines](#) provide information about different types of unsafe visual content that may have a negative effect on those who create and view them. For example, unsafe images can violate privacy, cause distress, promote certain methods or locations of self-harm and suicide, and influence people who are at risk to copy self-harm or suicide behaviours.

Unsafe visual content can be reported to the platform or the eSafety Commissioner. More information about reporting is provided on page 19.



## Important social media reminders

When talking about self-harm and suicide in the context of social media, it can be helpful to remind your students of the following:


- Pause and reflect before posting.
- The internet can be permanent: 'once on the internet, always on the internet'.
- Posts can go viral. They might not be able to control who sees their content, and anyone and everyone could possibly see their content. Other people may also share, download, screenshot, screen record, or alter their content. This can have long-lasting effects, and may negatively impact them, their relationships, and their career.
- Inaccurate, stigmatising or unsafe content could have a negative impact on others.
- Their social media algorithms could be influenced by a) their posts, and b) the content that they engage with. This means that they may see more self-harm and suicide-related content if they post about or engage with these topics.
- To have a plan in place, in case they don't feel good after creating their own content or viewing or responding to someone else's.
- If they come across distressing or unsafe content or find themselves in online communities that promote self-harm or suicide, they can choose to disengage (e.g. unfollow, unfriend, mute, hide, block, or delete people/content) and report this to the platform.

▶


"Before you post, pause and reflect"



Watch the full video


[@chatsafe\\_au](https://www.instagram.com/chatsafe_au)




[#chatsafe AU](https://www.youtube.com/hashtag/chatsafeAU)



## Posting about themselves

Before posting content, the #chatsafe guidelines encourage young people to take some time to think about the information they might want to share online, and why they want to share it. The following questions may be helpful:

- How will sharing your experience online make you feel? Would it help to ask a friend or family member to read it first?
- What do you hope to achieve by sharing your experience? Do you want to raise awareness or are you looking for support? Are there more effective ways of achieving those things?
- Do you need help? Who is the best person to help you? Do you think you would benefit from speaking to a mental health professional? What resources, people or friends are available to you?
- What do you feel comfortable sharing? What would you prefer to leave out or keep private?
- Who will see your post? For example, are you posting on a professional mental health site, an anonymous forum or a public platform?
- How might your post affect your friends, family members and peers?
- Are there any other consequences of sharing? Do the pros outweigh the cons?



## Sharing their story

If they choose to create and share content about their own experiences, young people should emphasise help, hope, and recovery. For example, they could include:

- Things that stopped them from acting on their thoughts or urges.
- The people, places, strategies, and personal strengths that helped them cope.
- Things they have achieved.
- Positive experiences of help-seeking, for example, talking to a friend or family member.
- That recovery is an up and down process and can look different for everyone.
- Messages that encourage help-seeking.
- Links to helplines.

It is important to be mindful of the impact that self-harm and suicide-related content can have on others. To reduce this risk, content that is graphic, detailed, or depicts/encourages self-harm or suicide acts should not be shared.

We have included examples of safe and unsafe online posts about a person's experience with suicide below. More information about how young people can safely create content about their own experiences can be found in section 2 of the [#chatsafe guidelines](#).

### Safe and unsafe communication examples:

#### Unsafe communication example

*The term "commit" has criminal and sinful connotations and reinforces harmful stigma*

*This is unhelpful because suicide is often due to more than one event*

"Last year, **I was being bullied** and it made me want to **commit suicide**. I couldn't talk to anyone, I thought no one would understand. I didn't know where to turn. I thought these thoughts would never go away, but **everything is fine now.**"

*It would be helpful to instead point out some specific things that helped in managing suicidal thoughts*

*Different types of help are available (e.g. call a helpline)*

#### Safe communication example

*This is safe language*

*Suicide is complex and not the result of one thing*

*It's important to reach out if you're worried about someone*

"Last year, **a lot was going on**. I was **thinking of suicide**. My friend **asked if I was okay**, and when I told them I wasn't, **they helped me to speak with my GP**. It was hard to talk about, but I was glad I did. **I found the support I needed**. **If you're struggling, reach out.**"

*Encourage others to seek support*

*Highlight helpful experiences*

## How can students reach out to someone they're worried about?

Reaching out to others online can be an important source of validation, connection and support. If a young person is concerned about someone because of something they saw online, the #chatsafe guidelines encourage them to talk to that person directly, either online or offline. It would also be helpful for them to inform a trusted adult and seek professional advice where possible.

If one of your students is thinking of using social media to reach out to someone who they are worried about, here are some things to remind them of.



"Has a friend posted something that's made you worry about them? If you think they're at risk, there's a few things you can do to help"



Watch the full video

 @chatsafe\_au



 #chatsafe AU



### Before reaching out to a friend

Young people should always take any content that suggests a person may be thinking about suicide seriously, but make sure to set boundaries about the type of support they are able to offer and when they are able to offer it.

Before reaching out, young people should check in with themselves first by considering:

- How am I feeling?
- Am I able to provide support to this person?
- Do I know where to seek support if it's needed?
- Will this make me feel unsafe or upset?

If the content they see is distressing or if the young person does not feel comfortable responding, that's okay. Young people must recognise the limits of the support they can provide and understand that someone else's safety is not their responsibility. It is important for young people to know that they do not need to keep these conversations secret.

If they need support in this situation, young people should:

- Inform a trusted adult.
- Seek professional advice.
- Report the content to the relevant platform.

## What should they do next?

If someone is at **immediate risk** of serious harm or suicide, or in the process of making a suicide attempt, the young person should do the following:

- **If they are not already engaged in conversation with the person, if the person is not open to receiving help, or there is no time to spare, call emergency services (000) immediately.**
- **If they are already engaged in conversation with the person, and it is appropriate, the young person can encourage them to call emergency services.**
- **After emergency services have been contacted, and if it is possible, the young person should contact the person's friends or family and let them know what has happened.**

If the person is **not at immediate risk** of serious harm or suicide, but the young person is still worried, they can:

- Respond only if they feel able and willing to do so. There are different levels of responding. For example, they can react, send a one-off comment with links to helplines and well wishes, or engage in a conversation. The young person should only engage in a conversation if they feel comfortable.
- Encourage the person to call a helpline or seek professional help. This can include providing links to national helplines or local supports.
- Report the content to the relevant social media platform. Do not assume someone else has done this.

Remember that if someone has posted about self-harm, they may not necessarily be in immediate danger, but might need information and support.

## Reporting

Most social media companies have safety policies and procedures, and their platforms have reporting features as well as safety or help centres. Some of these are listed in the [#chatsafe guidelines](#).

**Students, educators, and others in the school community can all support online safety by reporting unsafe or distressing content to the platform, or to eSafety.**

Some young people might avoid reporting content if they worry that it will get someone else in trouble. You can remind them that this is not the case, and that reporting content can help the person get support, as well as keeping other people safe.

Reporting alerts the platform to content that they may need to review, and allows them to take action. Platforms may send resources to the person who created the content, such as information about helplines or services, or may remove content that is potentially harmful, which can prevent others from seeing it.

Australians can also report unsafe online content to eSafety: [esafety.gov.au](https://www.esafety.gov.au). The eSafety Commissioner is Australia's independent regulator for online safety.



3

## Postvention in school communities



## Online communication after a suicide death has occurred

When a suicide death occurs within a school community, it is very common for information to circulate quickly, and it can be hard to know what to say or how to talk about the death safely. Here are some things for school communities to remember.

### These conversations are likely to be happening online

If there has been a suicide death within your school or if a prominent death is being discussed in the media, students in your school community will want to speak about it with their friends and trusted adults, and are likely to do so online.

### These conversations can be safe and helpful

Communicating online about a suicide death can help young people share their feelings and make sense of what has happened. Educators and school communities can do a few things to facilitate safe conversations:

- Model safe language.
- Create safe spaces and encourage young people to talk about what they are feeling.
- Remind young people that support is always available, and provide information about helplines, online resources, and school-based services.

### These conversations can be an important way to monitor students' wellbeing and prevent further suicidal behaviour

Although social media can provide an opportunity for students to talk about their feelings, it is important that this is done in a safe way to avoid the potential of further harm.

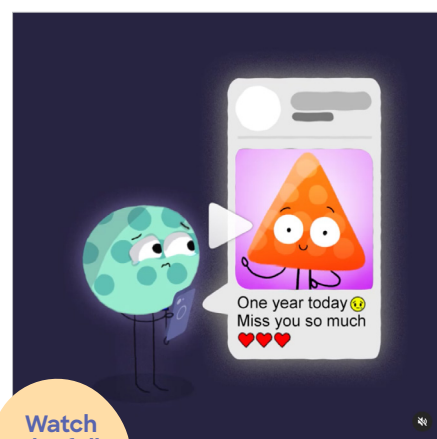
If students are communicating about a suicide death using online platforms that are public or specifically for your school community, schools can monitor for signs that may indicate a risk of harm and can report unsafe behaviour or harmful content to the platform or eSafety.

## Tips for supporting safe communication about a suicide death

When communicating online about a suicide death, students and adults in a school community should consider:

- Posting and sharing only what they know to be true, for example, that the person has died, without sharing any graphic details about how and where.
- Correcting untrue information and encouraging others to post only what they know to be true.
- Avoiding speculating about how and why the person died.
- Asking others to show respect and empathy when communicating about the person who has died.
- Providing links to helplines or support services.
- Posting or sharing content that educates others about suicide prevention. For example, that help is available, suicide is preventable, and many people have experienced suicidal thoughts that have later stopped or reduced, or never acted on them.

“Remembering someone who has died by suicide does not have to be a dark time”



Watch the full video

 [@chatsafe\\_au](https://www.instagram.com/chatsafe_au)

 [#chatsafe AU](https://www.youtube.com/chatsafeAU)



## Trigger warnings

Grief is complex and can be experienced in many different ways. While some young people might want to talk about the suicide death, other young people might not feel equipped to have those conversations. For this reason, #chatsafe encourages the use of trigger warnings when sharing content that is related to suicidal thoughts, feelings, or behaviour. This gives other users a 'heads up' and lets them be in control of the information that they see online. #chatsafe has provided some example trigger warnings that students [can download and use](#).

## Postvention resources for school communities

The following toolkits provide information about what schools can do in the days and weeks following a suicide death, to reduce the risk of harm to others and support the school community to recover:

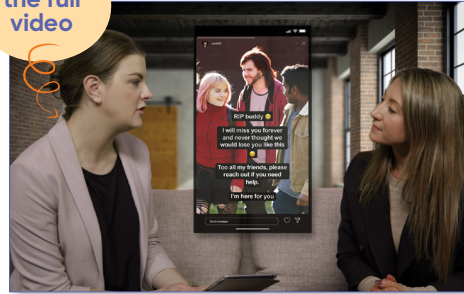
- [headspace postvention toolkit](#)
- [BeYou postvention toolkit](#)

### Using social media for postvention

Social media can be a safe and effective way of reaching students and other young people in the school community with suicide prevention content following a suicide death. Schools can share postvention content directly from the #chatsafe social media channels, or use the information provided in the #chatsafe guidelines and associated resources as a starting point to create their own postvention content.

More information about bereavement and communicating about someone who has died by suicide can be found in section 7 of the [#chatsafe guidelines](#).

Watch the full video



Postvention video

 [#chatsafe AU](#)



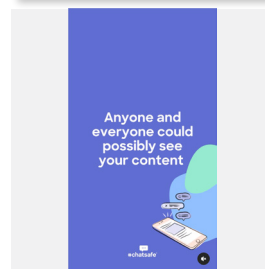
## Examples of #chatsafe postvention content



Post 1



Post 2



Post 3



 [@chatsafe\\_au](#)



4

## Self-care and taking control of the content you see online





# Looking after yourself

#chatsafe advocates for practicing self-care and always checking in on your own well-being. This applies to students, educators, and others in the school community.

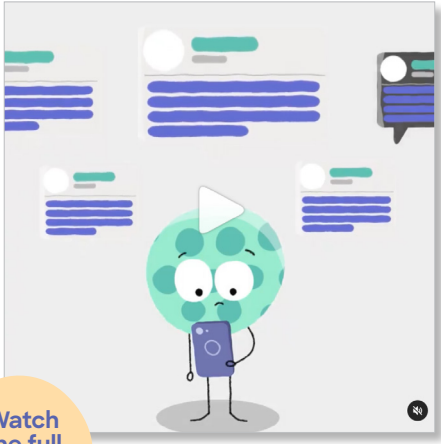
Here are some general things that you can do to look after yourself, or that you can encourage your students to do, when things are feeling a bit too much:

- **Take some time to engage in self-care activities.** Helpful behaviours include getting enough sleep, eating nutritious meals, moving your body, spending time in nature, spending time with friends, and doing activities you enjoy.
- **Connect with others.** It might be helpful to talk or spend some time with your friends and family, online or offline.
- **Consider engaging in professional help.** You may also need some extra support from a mental health professional or your general practitioner (GP).

You can also practice self-care in an online setting. It can be helpful to:

- **Notice the signs that indicate your online activity is negatively impacting you.** These can look different for each person, but common signs include comparing yourself unfavourably with others online, experiencing online abuse, spending too much time online at the expense of doing other things, anxiety, lower mood, feeling overwhelmed by what other people are posting, and feeling stuck in conversations.
- **Reduce your time online.** This can involve taking a break and physically stepping away for a while, limiting time spent online, turning off or muting notifications, logging out of apps, or temporarily turning off devices.
- **Limit exposure to unhelpful or harmful content.** You can unfollow, unfriend, mute, hide, block, or delete people/content. Follow accounts that make you feel good about yourself. These actions will also inform social media algorithms that you do not want to see certain types of content.



“When things are feeling too much, remember to practice self-care”



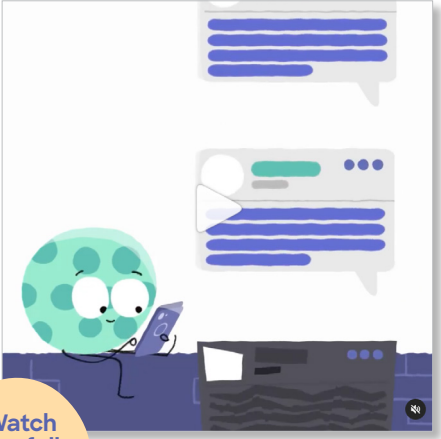
Watch the full video

@chatsafe\_au

#chatsafe AU



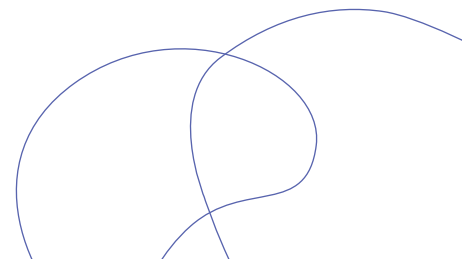
“It’s good to know your options online, and you can take control of your newsfeed”



Watch the full video

@chatsafe\_au

#chatsafe AU

## Support services that are available in-person, online or over the phone

If a young person in your school community needs support, reaching out for help can feel daunting. However, there are a range of services that are there to provide support, and reaching out is often the first step towards feeling better. Enlisting the help of the school counsellor or wellbeing coordinator is a great place to start.

We have included the details of a few Australian helplines and services below, which can support educators, students, parents, and others in the school community. This is not an exhaustive list, but more services can be found on the 'find a helpline' website: <https://findahelpline.com/> or Head to Health: <https://www.headtohealth.gov.au/>

If at any point you, or somebody else, is at immediate risk of harm, call emergency services (000), and follow any relevant policy or procedure that is in place at your school.



### Services for everyone

- Emergency services (000)
- Hospital emergency department
- GP

#### Lifeline Australia

Provides free online and phone crisis support to all Australians.

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

Call: 13 11 14 (available 24/7)

#### Beyond Blue

Beyond Blue provides information as well as online and telephone support to help all Australians achieve their best possible mental health.

Visit: [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

Call: 1300 22 46 36 (available 24/7)

### Services for young people

#### Kids Helpline

Provides free and confidential phone and online counselling for children and young people aged between five and 25 years.

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

Call: 1800 55 1800 (available 24/7)

#### eheadspace

Provides email, chat and phone counselling for young people aged 12 to 25 years, and their family and friends. Parents or carers of a young person can also request an online or telephone appointment with a family clinician.

Visit: [www.headspace.org.au/eheadspace](http://www.headspace.org.au/eheadspace)

Call: 1800 650 890

(available between 9:00am - 1:00am AEST, 7 days)

## Services for parents

### Parentline ACT

Visit: [www.parentlineact.org.au](http://www.parentlineact.org.au)  
Call: (02) 6287 3833  
(available 9:00am to 4:00pm,  
Monday–Friday, excluding public holidays)

### Parentline QLD and NT

Visit: [parentline.com.au](http://parentline.com.au)  
Call: 1300 30 1300  
(available 8:00am to 10:00pm, 7 days)

### Parent Line NSW

Visit: [www.parentline.org.au](http://www.parentline.org.au)  
Call: 1300 1300 52 (available 9:00am to  
9:00pm on Monday to Friday, and 4:00pm  
to 9:00pm on Saturday and Sunday)

### Parent Helpline SA

Visit: [www.cafhs.sa.gov.au/services/parent-helpline](http://www.cafhs.sa.gov.au/services/parent-helpline)  
Call: 1300 364 100 (available 24/7)

### Parent Line TAS

Visit: [www.findhelptas.org.au/  
program/24-hour-parenting-line](http://www.findhelptas.org.au/program/24-hour-parenting-line)  
Call: 1300 808 178 (available 24/7)

### Parentline VIC

Visit: [services.dffh.vic.gov.au/parentline](http://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/parentline)  
Call: 13 22 89 (available 8:00am to 12:00am, 7 days)

### Ngala Parenting Line WA

Visit: [www.ngala.com.au/parenting-line](http://www.ngala.com.au/parenting-line)  
Call: (08) 9368 9368 or 1800 111 546  
(available 8:00am to 8:00pm, 7 days)

## Support for educators

### headspace Schools & Communities

headspace Schools & Communities is a national workforce that supports, engages and partners with education and health sectors across Australia, to build the mental health literacy and capacity of workforces. The headspace schools website includes information about their supports and initiatives, including support for schools currently responding to or recovering from a suicide or attempted suicide.

Visit: [headspace.org.au/professionals-and-educators/educators/programs-in-schools/](http://headspace.org.au/professionals-and-educators/educators/programs-in-schools/)

## Services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

### 13YARN

13YARN provides free and culturally safe crisis support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Crisis supporters are all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

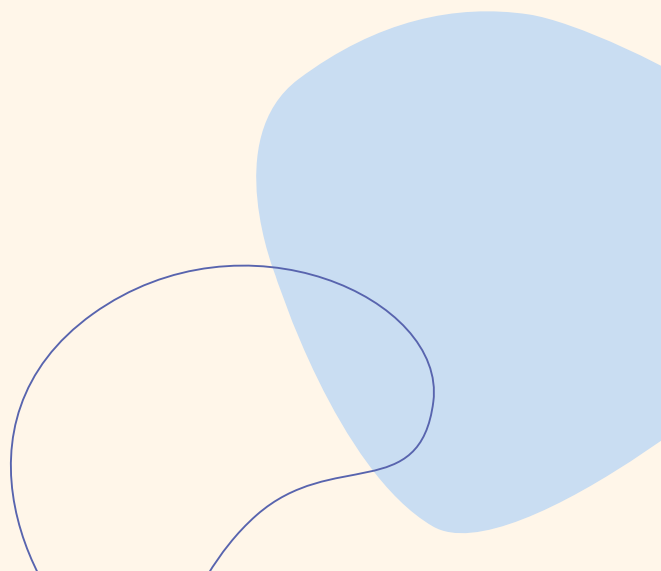
Visit: [13yarn.org.au](http://13yarn.org.au)  
Call: 13 92 76 (available 24/7)

## Services for the LGBTIQ+ community

### Qlife

QLife provides anonymous and free LGBTIQ+ peer support as well as referral for people in Australia wanting to talk about sexuality, identity, gender, bodies, feelings, or relationships.

Visit: [qlife.org.au](http://qlife.org.au)  
Call: 1800 184 527  
(available 3:00pm to 12:00am, 7 days)



## Extra resources that you might find helpful

### Coping with self-harm: A guide for parents and carers

Link: [www.orygen.org.au/copingwithselfharm](http://www.orygen.org.au/copingwithselfharm)

### Supporting young Aboriginal people who self-harm

Link: [www.orygen.org.au/https://www-orygen-org-au/Training/Resources/Self-harm-and-suicide-prevention/Guidelines/Supporting-young-Aboriginal-people-who-self-harm-a?utm\\_source=News%20story&utm\\_medium=Orygen%20website&utm\\_campaign=campaign](https://www.orygen.org.au/https://www-orygen-org-au/Training/Resources/Self-harm-and-suicide-prevention/Guidelines/Supporting-young-Aboriginal-people-who-self-harm-a?utm_source=News%20story&utm_medium=Orygen%20website&utm_campaign=campaign)

### #chatsafe for parents and carers

Link: [www.orygen.org.au/chatsafe/Resources/chatsafe-for-parents-and-carers](http://www.orygen.org.au/chatsafe/Resources/chatsafe-for-parents-and-carers)

### #chatsafe for communities

Link: [www.orygen.org.au/chatsafe/Resources/A-guide-for-communities-\(1\)](http://www.orygen.org.au/chatsafe/Resources/A-guide-for-communities-(1))

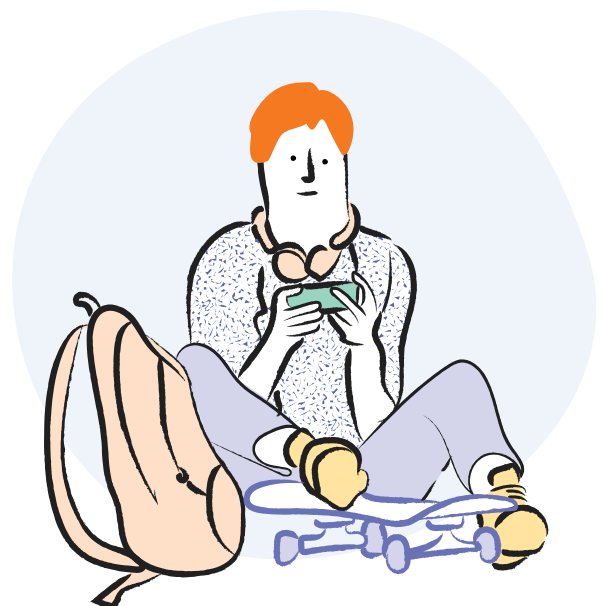
### #chatsafe trigger warning templates

Link: [www.orygen.org.au/chatsafe/Resources/Trigger-warnings](http://www.orygen.org.au/chatsafe/Resources/Trigger-warnings)

## Keep up to date with #chatsafe

To stay up to date with the work we do at #chatsafe and the resources available to you, keep an eye on our website: [www.orygen.org.au/chatsafe](http://www.orygen.org.au/chatsafe).

We also regularly update our social media pages with information for young people, which you might want to share with your school community or use as a conversation starter. You can follow us on:





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