

Mindframe calls on media to promote help seeking and trauma support resources during the bushfires

Please cascade to all media staff covering bushfire stories

Mindframe calls on media to promote support information for psychological distress to communities directly affected by bushfires, including emergency and relief workers and the wider Australian public during continued media and social media coverage.

Mindframe also encourages media and communications professionals to take care of their own mental wellbeing during the coverage of this natural disaster.

Mindframe acknowledges the vital role of media in ensuring information and updates on the bushfire activity is being communicated to the local communities that are impacted and the wider Australian public.

Mindframe encourages media continue to report responsibly when covering these stories by including help-seeking information on all reports of the bushfires and when on the ground gathering information for stories. It is important to be aware of the possible presence of trauma in the lives of those consuming media, and that certain communications could potentially impact them.

To support media in this role, *Mindframe* has provided tips and links below for media to consider for supporting psychological distress for audiences.

Program Manager Marc Bryant said: “Many media have already been including help seeking information in their articles as well as stories themselves about coping during traumatic events, which we acknowledge.”

“However, as the bushfires continue along with recovery operations underway, it’s important media continue to offer audiences ongoing pathways to seek support during a natural disaster,” he said.

Help-seeking information to promote

Media stories with help-seeking can offer audiences ways to access:

- **Immediate crisis support:** this can be a 24/7 national telephone or online services; advising of what support is available on the ground; and/or a local number set up by regional health services to support access to psychological services.

- **Resources to help understand and cope with traumatic events:** there are many agencies that have resources and tools for dealing with psychological distressing during a natural disaster. This can include for directly affected communities; emergency and relief workers; the wider community consuming media and social media coverage; and for Indigenous and cultural and linguistically diverse peoples.
- **Additional mental health support:** Government (Federal and state) may announce additional services as part of the national response, which the media are encouraged to promote.

There is a table at the end of this alert with a range of information for media to choose from to share with audiences right now. However, the *Life in Mind* team at **Everymind** in partnership with the National Mental Health Commission (NMHC) has collaborated with numerous health organisations to develop a comprehensive resource list that media and communications professionals can use in their communications. Access this resource via:

www.lifeinmindaustralia.com.au/mental-health-support-for-bushfire-affected-communities

Please save this link as service and information will be updated regularly as it becomes available

Responsible reporting

In addition to including help-seeking information on all reports of the bushfires, there is the opportunity for media to apply trauma-informed reporting. Stories that validate grief and loss as well as promote hope and recovery, can help communities come to terms with the traumatic events as well as help build community resilience.

It's also important that stories come from affected communities. However, media are reminded of the potential impact interviewing and the way stories are written may have on those individuals or community groups. The Dart Center for Journalism Trauma has specific advice for media reporting on the bushfires, which can found here: <https://dartcenter.org/resources/resources-covering-australian-bushfires>.

Emerging Minds has guidelines for media professional reporting on disaster which can be found here: <https://emergingminds.com.au/resources/keeping-children-and-families-in-mind-guidelines-for-media-professionals-reporting-on-disaster-or-community-trauma-events/>

Media comment

It's important to provide accurate and expert commentary relating to trauma informed advice to communities. To support the media, consider seeking comment via:



- The National Mental Health Commission (NMHC) is available to provide comment on mental health and Federal Government relief and assistance information. Contact details are available here: www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/contact
- A list of potentially appropriate health contacts is available on the *Mindframe* website here: www.mindframe.org.au/find-a-topic-expert

Media self-care

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

A list of services and resources to consider promoting in your stories

Service	Contact/Resource
<p style="text-align: center;">For immediate support and crisis assistance</p> <p>Evidence shows that people are more likely to seek help when appropriate services are included in stories referencing suicide or mental illness. Natural disasters can have a vast effect on communities, it is therefore recommended that crisis lines are included in these communications.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"> Lifeline 13 11 14 www.lifeline.org.au MensLine Australia 1300 789 978 www.mensline.org.au Beyond Blue 1300 224 636 www.beyondblue.org.au Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800 www.kidshelpline.com.au headspace: 1800 650 890 www.headspace.org.au GriefLine 1300 845 745 www.griefline.org.au </p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Resources for support communities and individuals to cope with a natural disaster</p> <p>Some people may not want to contact a helpline or are more comfortable seeking help online. It is therefore important to direct people to a variety of resources so the audience can reach out for support in a way that suits their individual needs.</p>	
<p>Phoenix Australia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information/resources on trauma/recovery www.phoenixaustralia.org/recovery/

<p>Beyond Blue</p>	<p>For people impacted by bushfires</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bushfires and mental health • PTSD: signs, symptoms and available treatments • Looking after yourself after a disaster <p>For parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to talk to children about news events <p>For educators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of natural disasters on mental health
<p>Australian Psychological Society</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking after children affected by disasters • Information on recovering from bushfires
<p>Black Dog Institute</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.onlineclinic.blackdoginstitute.org.au
<p>Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.crrmh.com.au/programs-and-projects/bushfire-support/
<p>Your Health In Mind</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.yourhealthinmind.org
<p>Headspace</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to cope with the stress of natural disasters • Supporting your child after exposure to a traumatic event
<p>Emerging Minds</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community trauma toolkit
<p>Mental Health First Aid Trauma Event Guidelines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting a person following a potentially traumatic event
<p>SANE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tips for coping with the effects of trauma

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with a traumatic event when you have a mental illness
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Support for emergency workers

Additional to generic support services, specific supports for emergency workers is important considering their unique experiences and needs.

R U OK?, Are they Triple OK?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.ruok.org.au/triple-ok
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Workforces

Workplaces are where many people connect. It can be helpful for employees and employers to have specific resources to help themselves and to support others within the workforce.

Open Arms (Veterans & Families Counselling)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1800 011 046 • www.openarms.gov.au
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Beyond Blue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Business Owners resource • Are they okay? • Starting a conversation • If you manage others • Online training: having a conversation • Online training: Approaching an Employee you're concerned about • Supporting Small Business Owners guide • Promoting the mental health of police and emergency services personnel
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<p>Superfriend</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping colleagues in hard times • Where to find help • Looking after you
<p style="text-align: center;">Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</p> <p>National services are for all people within the Australian community. However it is important to additionally provide information and resources that provide specific support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p>	
<p>The Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.cbpatisp.com.au/resources/fact-sheets/
<p>The Healing Foundation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://healingfoundation.org.au/app/uploads/2019/02/Coping-with-the-Impacts-of-Trauma-Brochure.-Aer.-WEB.pdf
<p>Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/
<p style="text-align: center;">Culturally and Linguistically Diverse</p> <p>Including information that is accessible for people in Australia is extremely important when providing support in mass communications.</p>	
<p>Transcultural Mental Health Centre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Help kit- Post traumatic stress factsheet • Family help kit- grief and loss • Help for you and your family after disaster factsheet
<p>Department of Health and Human services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoky outside? Protect your health • Trauma- reaction and recovery
<p>Queensland Hospital and Health services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information for children

Emergency information in states

Each state has separate sites with specific information related to fires in their region. It is important people have a place to obtain up-to-date relevant information during fire season to help prepare and respond.

NSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fire-information
VIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.emergency.vic.gov.au/respond/
SA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/home.jsp
WA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.emergency.wa.gov.au

Local services provision

Inclusion of local support services in addition to national lines is important as they can direct people to in-person services that are specific for their needs in their local area. Some people may feel more comfortable reaching out for local support.

<p>Primary Health networks</p> <p>(Each Primary Health Network may be able to provide local information on accessing specific services in affected areas)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/PHN-Contacts
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