

information for young people

The Girl on the Bridge

The Girl on the Bridge is a documentary film following suicide-survivor and advocate, Jazz Thornton, as she makes a web series about her friend, Jessica, who took her own life.

The documentary recounts Jessica's life through a series of interviews with her family and friends. And follows Jazz' personal struggles as she tries to bring the web series to fruition with the aim of reducing the stigma associated with suicide.

headspace developed the following information that may be helpful for viewers of the documentary and the wider community. The information below provides tips to support you to look after yourself and your friends, where to seek help, as well as provides information about suicide and suicidal thoughts.

Important things to remember

- It's likely people will be talking about this documentary. It's important to be respectful and informed. The information included here can help to keep people safe and connected.
- Some people may be distressed by the documentary, while others are not. This will depend on individual life experiences and current circumstances. It is important to be respectful of other people's experience.

Tips for watching the film safely

- If you are likely to be affected by the content of the documentary, it is important to consider whether you watch it. You might choose not to, which is ok.
- If you choose to watch, you could make a plan to look after yourself. This might be with the support of family and friends. Letting them know what you might struggle with, and how they can help is likely to be useful.
- Your support plan could include self-care options such as taking breaks and checking in with family and friends.
- Take time to look after yourself. Some self-care tips include: prioritising sleep, eating well, staying active, maintaining close relationships with family and friends, learning ways to handle hard times (journaling, listening to music, quiet time out, relaxation), reducing alcohol and other drug use, to keep on doing the things in your life that are fun and important to you.

Understanding suicide

Suicide is a complex issue with many contributing factors, including individual personality characteristics, coping styles, life history of experiences, current circumstances, support networks, and mental health difficulties.

Unfortunately, thinking about suicide is more common than it should be. Despite this, it is still a serious sign that things are not ok. If you are experiencing suicidal thinking it is important to share this with a trusted adult.

Thoughts of suicide can occur when life circumstances have been difficult and stressful, such as after a major loss or traumatic event.

Some young people have thoughts of suicide when life seems unbearable and they want to end their pain. Most young people who have thoughts of suicide may not want to die, they just can't imagine another way out of what they are going through.

It's important to know that young people can and DO get through these times in their lives. Most young people who've had thoughts of suicide find a way to work through them. With effective treatment, social support and time, many who have tried to end, or considered ending their lives can go on to live full, meaningful and productive lives.

If you are experiencing thoughts of suicide, it's important that you seek support. It takes a lot of courage to reach out, but getting help can make a big difference to how quickly you can overcome these thoughts and get back on track with your life. Reach out to a trusted family member, carer, teacher, friend, an Elder, or a professional service.

Seeking support helps

Seeking support helps people to understand:

- how to stay safe
- what things contribute to suicidal thinking
- how to manage and overcome the things that contribute to suicidal thinking
- how to manage suicidal thinking
- what to do when things get really tough
- how to create a life with meaning, purpose and fulfilment.

Remember that thoughts about suicide are changeable. You don't need to act on thoughts about suicide. Like all thoughts, they can be challenged and they can come and go. It can be hard, but with practise you can learn how to react differently to them. For example, you can remind yourself that they are just thoughts and you don't need to act on them.

Create a safety plan that includes warning signs, reasons to live, names of people who love you, distractions and self-care activities and places you can go to be safe. Even if things start to look better, it can help to have a safety plan in place and to look out for your warning signs. Some useful resources to help you create a safety plan

- Beyond Blue's [safety plan guide](#) and [Beyond Now app](#)
- Menzie's [Stay Strong Plan](#), specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

Self-care is about finding healthy activities that make you feel better and less stressed. Some activities might include breathing exercises, mindfulness, hanging out with people you love, getting outdoors or listening to music. It's really up to you as everyone is different. For more ideas about self-care activities, see our [tips for a healthy headspace](#).

What to do if someone you know is thinking about suicide?

Thoughts of suicide should always be taken seriously. It can sometimes be very difficult to recognise early warning signs, or to predict when someone is really struggling. Sometimes people will say something like 'I feel like a burden to everyone', or they may have recently experienced difficult life events. That's why it's important to regularly check in with people and to develop close relationships and support networks, as it can help reduce the risk of suicidal thinking taking over.

It is frightening and distressing when someone you care about is considering suicide. It can be hard to imagine how things got this bad. You may worry that you 'missed something' and feel responsible or guilty. It's important to know that you are human, and you cannot protect people or prevent everything, all the time.



Important

If you, or someone you care about, are in crisis call triple zero (000). You can also go to your local hospital emergency department. Remember to stay with the person until they are able to access professional support.

If you're feeling overwhelmed and need to speak with someone now, contact:

- Lifeline: 13 11 14 or lifeline.org.au
- Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467 or suicidcallbackservice.org.au
- Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636 or beyondblue.org.au

Where else can I go for help?

If you ever feel unable to cope because of overwhelming or intense emotions, or if you have any thoughts of harming yourself, then ask for help immediately.

Additional youth support services

- headspace: visit headspace.org.au to find your nearest centre or call eheadspace on 1800 650 890
- Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800 or kidshelpline.com.au
- ReachOut: reachout.com
- SANE Australia: 1800 187 263 or sane.org

Talk with a trusted adult, such as a parent, teacher, school counsellor or find out if there is a headspace centre near you.

Speak to your local doctor or General Practitioner (GP) and help make a plan for your recovery. Or you can search for a health service and GP on healthdirect.