

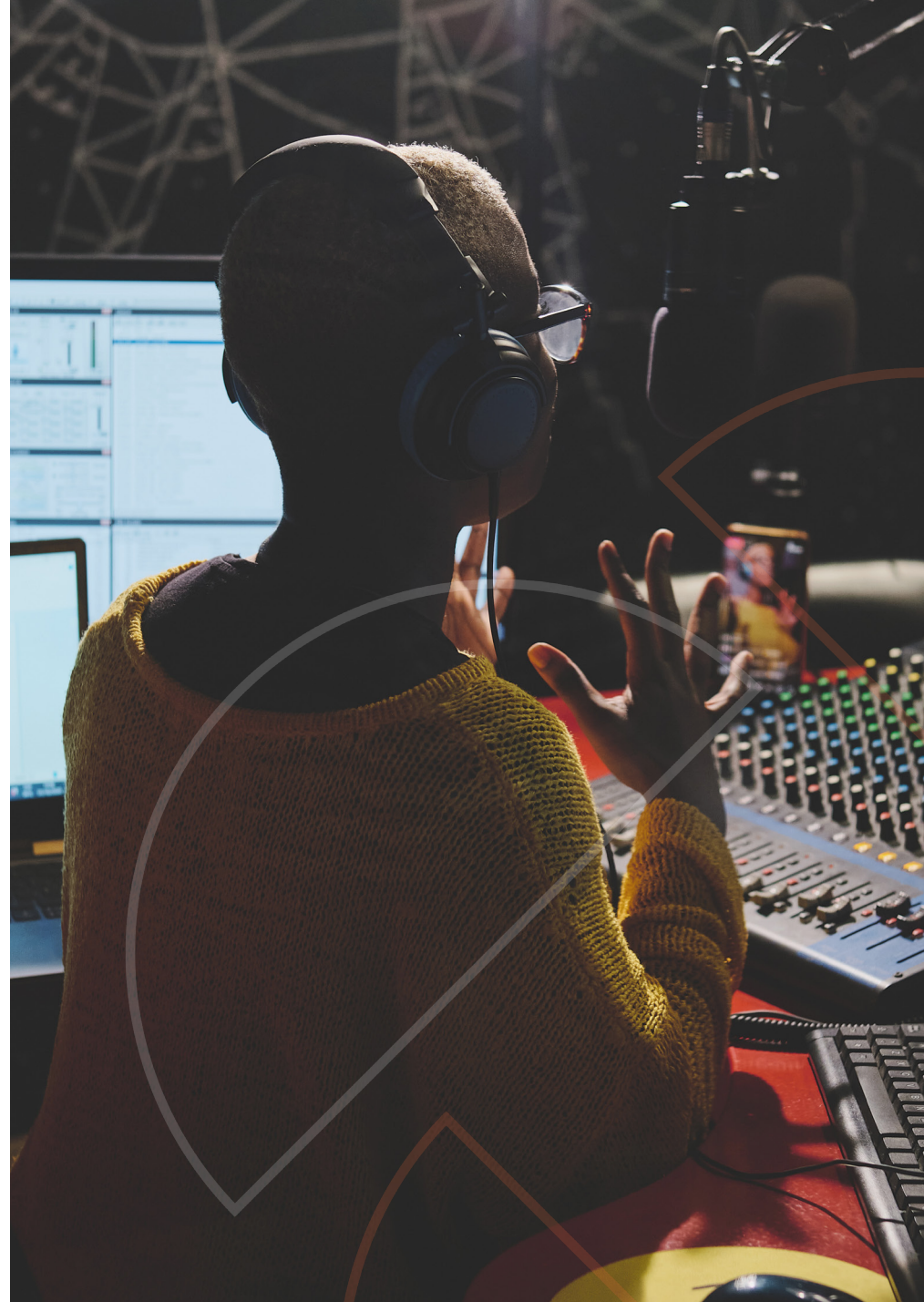
How to talk about mental health, mental health concerns and suicide as a community

Communities may understand and talk about mental health, mental health concerns, and suicide in different ways.

Talking about these topics safely means acknowledging and addressing the many different feelings, experiences, and impacts involved for individuals, families, and communities.

“Suicide and mental health concerns are sensitive subjects and need to be treated with respect. That’s why this guide is important... it allows us to have that conversation and take the fear out of actually presenting on mental health challenges.”

Andrew Segelov
Counsellor and radio presenter



When talking about mental health, mental health concerns or suicide in your broadcast:



Do your research

- Take time to learn what you can about the topic you are covering from a trusted source.
- Ask local community leaders or culturally focused mental health groups for advice on what to discuss.



Be consistent with broadcasting codes

- Check the latest codes (e.g. Community Radio Broadcasting codes of practice) to find out more about promoting awareness of suicide prevention.



Consider including content advice

- Providing this at the start of your broadcast informs your audience about what is going to be discussed. You can find some suggested wording via the [*Mindframe* quick reference guide on this topic](#).



Use your knowledge of local culture

- If you know that people in your community often turn to family or elders for support, mention these as potential support options. Or if you are aware that discussing death is generally disapproved of, provide a statement that the program will be covering this topic and the reasons why.



Change your language to suit your audience

- Use clear and simple words that are easy to understand. It's okay to replace clinical or technical terms if they may not be widely understood, but make sure the meaning remains accurate.
- For example, you may say 'feeling low and exhausted' instead of the clinical term 'depressed' if this term is poorly understood.



Consider what is happening in the community

- Think about the current events, challenges, or experiences affecting your community at this time. Consider what would be helpful for them to hear.
- For example, if your community is in a period of mourning or distress, think about practical information you could provide.



Promote opportunities for connection

- Talk about local community events, cultural activities, and opportunities for people to come together, celebrate their culture and promote wellbeing.

The main goals in talking about these topics are to:



Reduce stigma or negative ideas



Promote different perspectives and experiences



Role model how to have a safe public conversation



Encourage people to seek and offer support



Raise awareness

We have included some examples of topics you might want to talk about in your broadcast such as:

- Signs that someone might be struggling
- What helps and what makes things harder
- Understanding stigma around suicide and mental health concerns.
- Encouraging people to get and give support
- Discussing refugees and people seeking asylum
- The role of faith and religion in conversations about suicide and mental health concerns.

You can access these resources to support your broadcast by clicking this tab