



THIRRILI

Suicide Postvention is Suicide Prevention

This resource discusses suicide (with care).



What is postvention?

Postvention refers to the activities and support provided after a suicide or traumatic incident to help individuals, families, and communities heal.

The World Health Organisation defines postvention as: “Intervention efforts for individuals bereaved or affected by suicide that are implemented in order to support the grieving process and reduce the possibility of imitative suicidal behaviour. These interventions may comprise school, family or community-based postventions.”

At Thirili, we work closely with individuals, families, and communities to understand their needs and provide tailored postvention support. We aim to help reduce stress and offer practical and emotional support in a culturally safe way during these challenging times.

Why is postvention support important?

Postvention support is a vital aspect of suicide prevention, providing crucial assistance to individuals, families, and communities after losing a loved one to suicide. The grief after such a loss often raises many unanswered questions. This can include anger, guilt and confusion.

All losses are painful, and when the cause of death is suicide, the grief runs even deeper. The wish that we could have done more, what we might have missed, and why we didn't know at the time—these feelings combine with the profound sadness of often not understanding why or having an explanation yet still feeling lost.

Having a dedicated, professional team by your side can help alleviate some of the practical issues during this incredibly challenging time.

Postvention support not only helps reduce the risk of further suicides but also helps promote improved social and emotional wellbeing and stronger connections within families and communities. It is important to receive care in a culturally safe, compassionate, and supportive environment that respects the grieving process while helping to pave the way toward healing.

The postvention support provided depends on what the individual, family or community need but may include:

- **Practical support:** Being there during funeral arrangements and connecting with other essential services.
- **Home visits:** Offering direct support to families after a suicide.
- **Care planning:** Developing a tailored care plan that links families with community resources and services.
- **Wellbeing programs:** Promoting social and emotional wellbeing through culturally appropriate and safe programs.
- **Liaison services:** Supporting families by coordinating with coroners, courts, and police departments.
- **Advocacy:** Helping families access necessary support for superannuation, insurance, or Centrelink matters.
- **Household support:** Assisting with household concerns during the grieving process.
- **Counselling information:** Providing guidance on available counselling and mental health services.
- **Yarning:** Sitting with families as they share their stories, offering a compassionate and culturally safe presence.

Thirili's approach centres on minimising the traumatic impact of suicide while respecting and upholding local cultural protocols and practices related to mourning and Sorry Business. We remain flexible, responsive, and dedicated to meeting the unique needs of the families and communities we serve.

When can you access Thirrili?

Thirrili is here for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To reach us, call **1800 805 801**. One of our dedicated Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander team members will answer your call. If your call is directed to voicemail, we encourage you to leave your best contact number, and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

When we learn about the loss of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person due to suicide or another traumatic event, our team carefully assesses who is best positioned to support the family. We work closely with local Elders, community leaders, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to coordinate a culturally appropriate and community-focused response for bereaved individuals and their families.

For children and young people under 14, we work closely with their parents, carers, or family members to ensure they receive the necessary care and support need.

Thirrili welcomes referrals from community members and services across Australia and the Torres Strait Islands. We are committed to providing culturally safe, compassionate, and timely support to all in need.



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