



Mindframe: Quick reference guide for depicting suicide on stage and screen

Use this quick reference guide with the *Mindframe* guidelines to safely and accurately depict stories of suicide on stage and screen.

This guide has been developed to support those involved in creating, commissioning, editing and advertising content for stage and screen to tell stories of suicide in a safe and sensitive way. This guide is based on the evidence that problematic depictions of suicide can lead to further suicidal behaviour and increase stigma.

Stage and screen professionals are in a unique position to handle these stories with care, and create a positive impact on the community by reducing possible harm and stigma, and can increase help seeking by producing sensitive and engaging content.

For more detail and context, access the full suite of *Mindframe* guidelines, and other supporting resources specifically for those depicting suicide on stage or screen: [here](#).



Mindframe

An



EVERYMIND program

When portraying suicide for stage or screen, we recommend:

Content

- Avoid portraying suicide as the logical option or inevitable result of events in the story.
- Consider how the story can model survival, coping strategies, or help-seeking for audience members.
- Avoid the oversimplification of suicide. Suicide is complex. Research shows that linking suicide to a single causal factor can increase risk of further suicidal behaviour.
- Remove all depictions of method and location of a suicide. This includes images, props, sound and text. If the audience can infer method or location, this poses a risk to the community and particularly those who have been impacted by suicide.
- Avoid using lighting, sound, music or settings that romanticise or glamourise suicide.

Training and best practice approaches

- All staff should be briefed on the *Mindframe* guidelines or undertake *Mindframe* training including writers, directors, actors, pre-production and post-production staff, and those involved in the marketing and advertisement of stage and screen productions.
- Facilitate safe and thoughtfully supported conversations between writers, actors, and people with lived experience of suicide, working in partnership with trusted organisations to ensure everyone involved is properly supported.
- Include content advice at the beginning of content as well as all relevant locations. This includes on production material such as shooting scripts, trailers and final content, and at points of sale or other contact, such as ticket booths or promotional websites.
- Include help-seeking information at the beginning and end of the final content. If posting trailers or video content on social media or YouTube, ensure that this information is not only in the text description but in the video itself to ensure it is carried over when content is shared. If distributed by a streaming service, consider how functions like autoplay or skipping intros or credits may impact where you place this information.

Real-time *Mindframe* support for creators

We understand the importance of telling powerful stories. We are here to help you to do this in a way that is safe, sensitive and encourages those who may be impacted by suicide to seek help.

Telling these stories can be nuanced and challenging, but Everymind offers free, real time *Mindframe* support. Our team can review scripts, story boards, draft productions, trailers and marketing content. We can also organise training on the guidelines for staff.

To get started, email our team at mindframe@health.nsw.gov.au and one of our staff will be in touch to discuss your project and to provide any *Mindframe* support and advice you may need.