

MEDIA RELEASE

“Network of safety critical to protecting against suicide” Online training makes suicide first aid accessible during COVID-19 crisis

March 26, 2020 - LivingWorks, a global leader in suicide prevention, is concerned about people's mental health as we try to cope with the realities of a world with COVID-19. It is reminding people that everyone can play a role in identifying and protecting someone at risk of suicide.

“Now, more than ever, we cannot be complacent when it comes to protecting those around us from the risk of suicide,” says Shayne Connell, CEO of LivingWorks Australia. “Prioritising the upskilling of every Australian in suicide first aid is an essential part of keeping our families, friends, co-workers and communities safe.”

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 3,046 people died by suicide in 2018 and one in 25 people has thoughts of suicide at any given time. There are many factors that increase risk for suicide. With issues related to COVID-19 - unemployment, social isolation and financial problems - those who may have been at risk before are more vulnerable than ever.

Building a network of safety

With easy, online, suicide prevention skill-building, people can learn what clues to listen for and how to connect the individual thinking of suicide with someone who can provide the help they need. When we all work together, this creates a network of safety in our communities.

LivingWorks Start is the first step in the continuum of safety skills offered by LivingWorks. It is a 90-minute online program that anyone can take to be trained to recognise the signs of suicide and take life-saving action by connecting those at risk to hope and safety.

“As its name suggests, this program is a great start for anyone looking to increase their awareness of suicide intervention skills. We are all working through these uncertain times and it is critical for us, as Australians, to look out for one another,” adds Connell.

“We are proud to be donating \$5 of every Start licence purchased to our friends at R U OK? Encouraging every Australian to stay connected through conversation with those around them is crucial to our community coming together in tough times. Doing LivingWorks Start can prepare you for what to do when someone says no, I'm not ok. It can give you the skills and confidence you may need if the conversation turns to thoughts of suicide.”

As a way to make Start available to even more people during this critical time, LivingWorks is offering the Start program at a reduced cost that makes the program accessible to just about anyone. Across the world the company will also direct a portion of every sale of Start between now and June 30, 2020 to support suicide prevention initiatives related to COVID-19.

To learn more about Start, you can watch [this video](#) or visit [Livingworks.net/start](https://livingworks.net/start).

About LivingWorks

LivingWorks is the world's leading provider of suicide prevention solutions. It has more than 35 years of history and expertise and has trained 2.3 million people worldwide.

Its programs have been evaluated in more than 50 peer-reviewed articles, and its ASIST and safeTALK programs are recognised best practices, used by crisis hotlines throughout the world. LivingWorks' vision is a world free from suicide loss.

It strives to accomplish this by providing high-quality training programs that empower everyone to be part of the solution.

To date we have:

- Empowered over 2,000,000 people to save lives from suicide
- Estimates suggest that our training has prevented over 300,000 suicide attempts
- Over 50 peer-reviewed studies support our programs' effectiveness with that research and evaluation being updated to include new digital interventions
- 8,000 trainers worldwide with more than 600 of them based in Australia
- Run training courses from Australia to Zambia and over 30 countries in between
- Partnered with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and LGBTI organisations and communities to adapt ASIST into culturally appropriate, locally designed and delivered evidence-based programs
- Translated programs into languages such as French, Korean, Norwegian, and Lithuanian • Prioritised Australian research in areas relating to upskilling homeless youths in suicide prevention, Indigenous suicide intervention training programs, suicide safety of older people, measuring confidence pre and post participation in LivingWorks training, extending evidence in relation to SafeTALK in schools and use of online technologies for suicide intervention skills-based training.
- Commenced work to inform and develop principles for training CALD communities in suicide prevention.