

9 June 2018

Celebrity and wealth are no defence against suicide risk

It is difficult to understand why a person who appears to have it all takes their own life.

But international recognition, excellence in your chosen career, respect from your peers and public admiration are no defence when it comes to developing a mental health condition.

“Mental health issues can affect anyone at any time: No one is immune,” said **beyondblue Chair, The Hon. Julia Gillard AC.**

“I urge anybody who is affected by news of recent high-profile suicides to reach out for support.

“Talk to somebody you trust, speak to your GP or a mental health professional. Call the *beyondblue* Support Service on **1300 22 4636.**

“Don’t stay silent if you are concerned about somebody. Ask how they are really feeling. Ask if they have been thinking about taking their own lives.

“Talking about suicide does not make it happen.”

Eight Australians – of all ages, ethnicity, religion, gender identity and socio-economic circumstances – die by suicide every day.

On average there are 200 suicide attempts in Australia every 24 hours, but you don’t have to be a mental health expert to do something about that.

“People who have thought about suicide have told *beyondblue* that the most important thing family, friends and colleagues can do is to listen, show they care and offer support,” said ***beyondblue* CEO Georgie Harman.**

“So, if you are worried about someone, have that conversation. You might just save a life.”

Talking openly about depression, anxiety and other mental health conditions helps reduce stigma, tackles discrimination and encourages those at risk of self-harm and suicide to seek support.

Visit **beyondblue.org.au** to learn how to have that conversation.

Suicide prevention starts with recognising the warning signs and taking them seriously.

People thinking about suicide can offer some clues or signs to the people around them, even though these signs may be subtle.

These might include:

- Expressing sense of hopelessness or no hope for the future
- Isolation or feeling alone – “No one understands me”
- Aggressiveness and irritability – “Leave me alone”
- Possessing lethal means – medication, weapons

Contact:

Carmel Egan – 0476 803 991
carmel.egan@beyondblue.org.au

Continued over page...

- Negative view of self – “I'm worthless”
- Drastic changes in mood and behaviour
- Frequently talking about death – “If I died would you miss me?”
- Self-harming behaviours like cutting
- Risk-taking behaviours – “I'll try anything, I'm not afraid to die”
- Getting affairs in order, such as making funeral arrangements
- Giving things away (clothes, expensive gifts) – “When I'm gone, I want you to have this”.
- Substance abuse.
- Feeling like a burden to others – “You'd be better off without me”
- Talking about suicide – “Sometimes I feel like I just want to die”

Visit www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/have-the-conversation

*Mental health professionals are available at the beyondblue Support Service via phone 24/7 on **1300 22 4636** or via www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support for online chat (3PM – 12AM AEST or email responses within 24 hours).*

Contact:

Carmel Egan – 0476 803 991 carmel.egan@beyondblue.org.au