

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities: Suicide data 2021

(Australian Bureau of Statistics,  
Causes of Death, 2021)

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An  **EVERYMIND** program



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: National data

- In 2021, **219** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died by suicide. This is a decrease from the 223 deaths recorded in 2020. The median age of death was **30.2 years**.
  - The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide deaths increased across all jurisdictions, except Western Australia, when comparing 2012-16 with 2017-21.
- When exploring suicide data, it is important to remember that behind the numbers are people, families and communities impacted by suicide across Australia.
  - It is important that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and services speak to this data. We recommend that you contact the Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention for advice and guidance on interpretation and communication about this data. [www.cbpatisp.com.au/contact-us/](http://www.cbpatisp.com.au/contact-us/)



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: National data

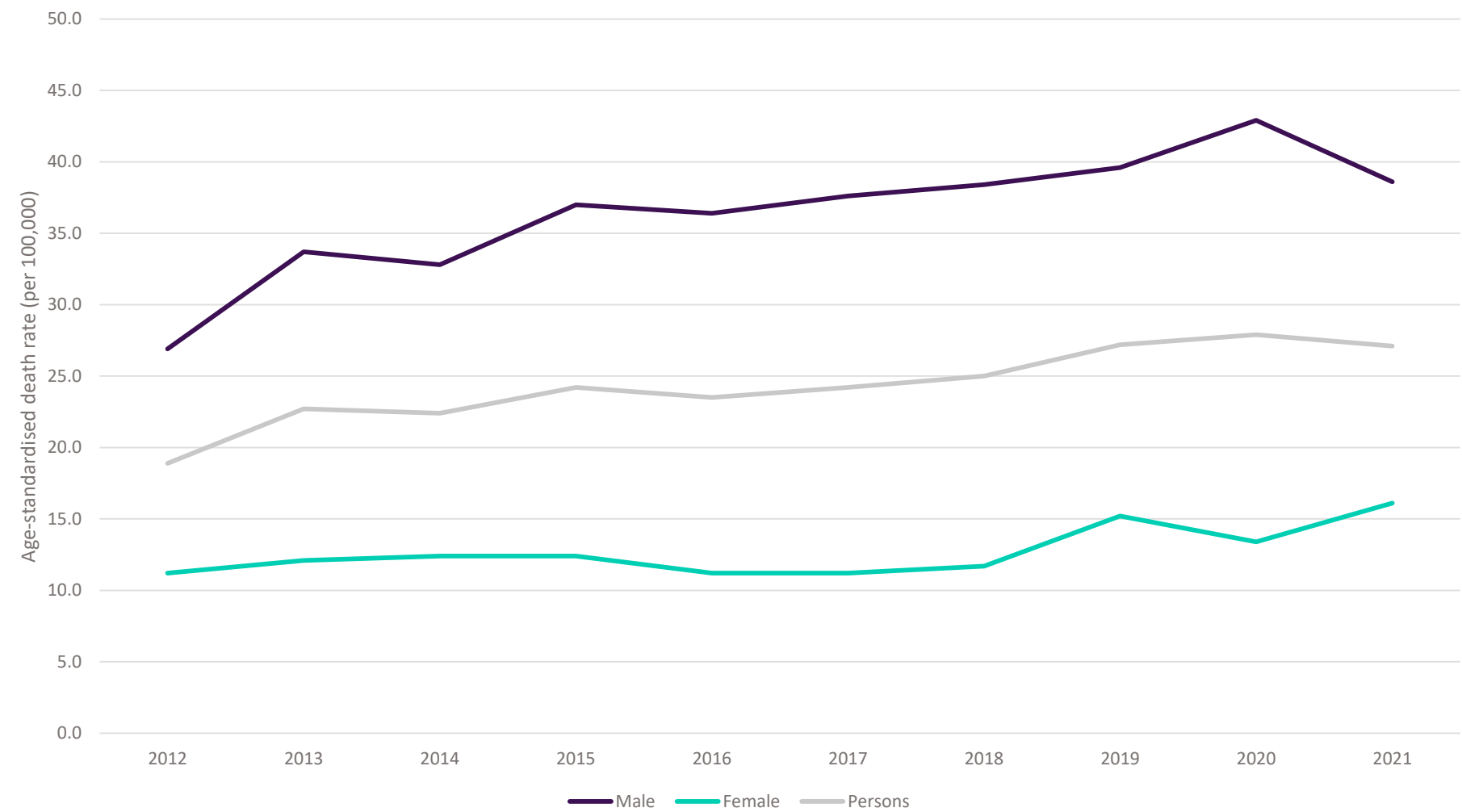
Trend analysis and detailed data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can only be compiled from the jurisdictions of New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory. The ABS advises that data for Victoria, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory is not suitable for comparisons and changes over time.

The following data pertains only to New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory.

- Suicide was the **fifth leading cause of death** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- The age-standardised suicide rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (**27.1 per 100,000**) was higher than the overall suicide rate for Australia in 2021 (**12.0 per 100,000**).
- The suicide rate for males increased between 2012 and 2021 from **26.9** to **38.6** per 100,000. The suicide rate for females is the highest in the 10-year time series (**16.1** per 100,000).



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: National data



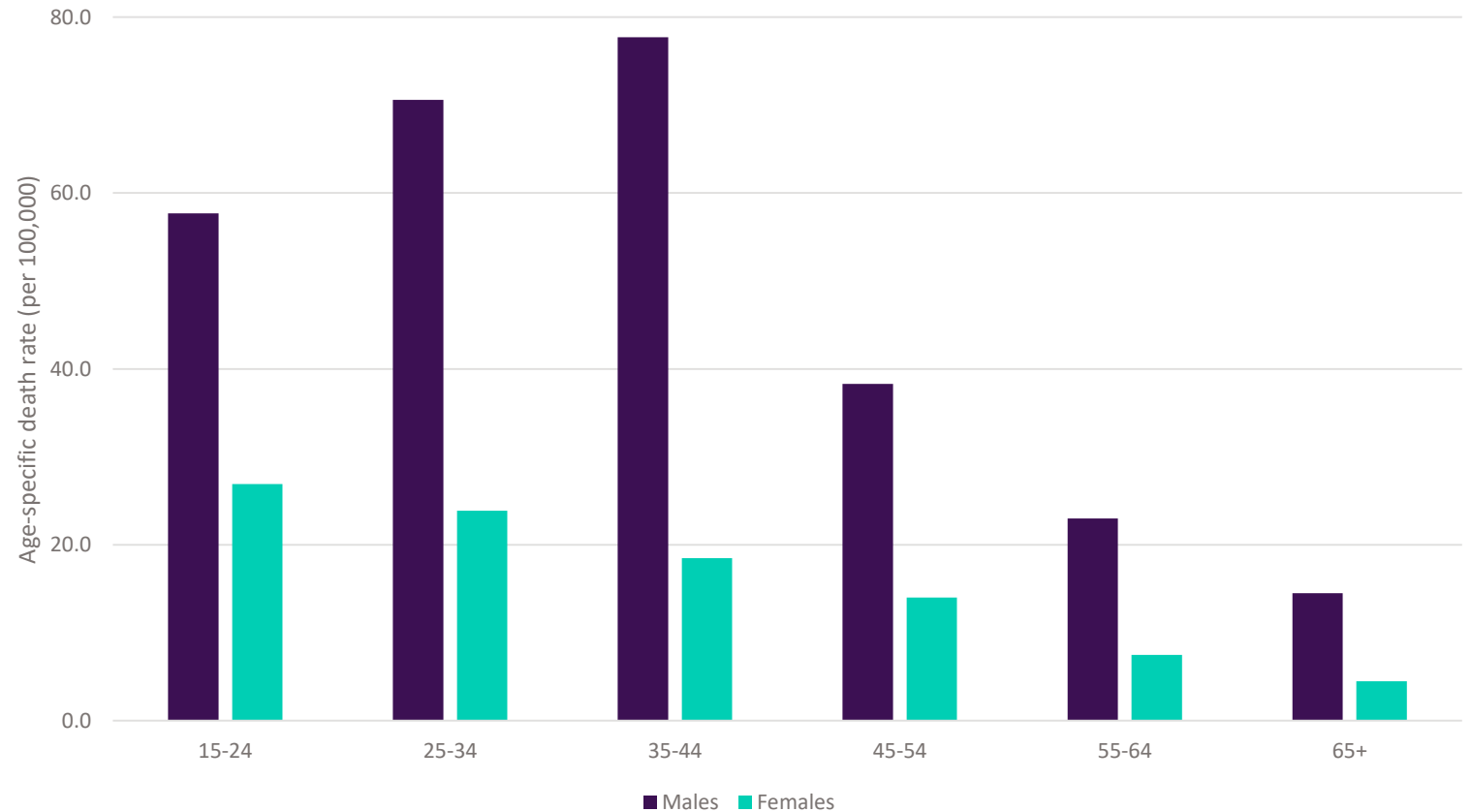
*Note: Age-standardised suicide rates are compiled from the jurisdictions of NSW, QLD, WA, SA and NT.*



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: Age specific rates

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who died by suicide between 2017-2021:

- 83.7% were aged between 15 and 44 years.
- For males, the highest suicide rate was for those aged 35-44 years at 77.7 deaths per 100,000.
- For female, the highest rate was for those aged 15-24 years at 26.9 deaths per 100,000.



*Note: Age-specific suicide rates are compiled from the jurisdictions of NSW, QLD, WA, SA and NT.*



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: Age specific rates

## Suicide of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, 5-17 years

During the period 2017-2021:

- Suicide was the leading cause of death for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- Almost three in ten (29.7%) deaths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were due to suicide.
- Over three quarters (75.3%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who died by suicide were aged 15-17 years.
- Just over half (54.5%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who died by suicide were female.





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# New South Wales suicide data 2021

(ABS, 2022)



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: New South Wales

## New South Wales in 2021

- In New South Wales, **54** (**42** male, **12** female) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died by suicide.
- Suicide was the **fifth leading cause of death** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in New South Wales compared to the 17<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death for non-Indigenous people.
- The age-standardised suicide rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (**21.6 per 100,000**) was considerably higher than the non-Indigenous age-standardised suicide rate for New South Wales (10.1 per 100,000).

## Between 2017-2021 in New South Wales

- Across a five-year period, **252** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died by suicide.
- The age-standardised suicide rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (**20.8 per 100, 000**) was higher than the non-Indigenous age-standardised suicide rate (10.6 per 100,000).







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# Northern Territory suicide data 2021

(ABS, 2022)



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: Northern Territory

## Northern Territory in 2021

- In the Northern Territory, **24** (**14** males, **10** females) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died by suicide.
- Suicide was the **fifth leading cause of death** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Northern Territory, compared to the sixth leading cause of death for non-Indigenous people.
- The age-standardised death rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (**31.1 per 100,000**) was considerably higher than the non-Indigenous age-standardised death rate (12.0 per 100,000).

## Between 2017 - 2021 in the Northern Territory

- Across a five-year period, **129** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died by suicide.
- The age-standardised suicide rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (**30.9 per 100,000**) was higher than the non-Indigenous age-standardised suicide rate (13.6 per 100,000).





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# Queensland suicide data 2021

(ABS, 2022)



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: Queensland

## Queensland in 2021

- In Queensland, **57 (39 male, 18 female)** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died by suicide.
- Suicide was the **fifth leading cause of death** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland, compared to the 10<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death for non-Indigenous people.
- The age-standardised death rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (**22.7 per 100,000**) was considerably higher than the non-Indigenous age-standardised death rate (14.2 per 100,000).

## Between 2017 - 2021 in Queensland

- Across a five-year period, **318** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died by suicide.
- The age-standardised suicide rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (**28.1 per 100,000**) was higher than the non-Indigenous age-standardised suicide rate (14.8 per 100,000).





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# South Australia suicide data 2021

(ABS, 2022)



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: South Australia

## South Australia in 2021

- Data for South Australia in 2021 have been excluded in line with reporting guidelines.

## Between 2017 - 2021 in South Australia

- Across a five-year period, **51** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have died by suicide.
- The age-standardised suicide rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (**24.0 per 100,000**) was considerably higher than the non-Indigenous age-standardised suicide rate (12.3 per 100,000).





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# Western Australia suicide data 2021

**(ABS, 2022)**



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: Western Australia

## Western Australia in 2021

- In Western Australia, **48 (33 male, 15 female)** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died by suicide.
- Suicide was the **second leading cause of death** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Western Australia, compared to the 12<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death for non-Indigenous people.
- The age standardised suicide rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (**49.6 per 100,000**) was considerably higher than the non-Indigenous suicide rate (12.3 per 100,000).

## Between 2017 – 2021 in Western Australia

- Across a five-year period, **179** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died by suicide.
- The age-standardised suicide rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (**34.7 per 100,000**) was higher than the non-Indigenous suicide rate (13.4 per 100,000).





# Support services

## Adult

**Lifeline:** 13 11 14 | Text 0477 131 114

[lifeline.org.au](https://lifeline.org.au)

**Suicide Call Back Service:** 1300 659 467

[suicidecallbackservice.org.au](https://suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

**Beyond Blue:** 1300 224 636

[beyondblue.org.au/forums](https://beyondblue.org.au/forums)

**MensLine Australia:** 1300 789 978

[mensline.org.au](https://mensline.org.au)

**Standby Support After Suicide:**

1300 727 247

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

**13YARN:** [13YARN.org.au](https://13YARN.org.au) | 13 92 76

**Brother to Brother 24 Hour Crisis Line:** 1800 435 799

**National Indigenous Postvention Service:** 1800 805 801

[thirrili.com.au/nips](https://thirrili.com.au/nips)

## Youth

**Kids Helpline:** 1800 551 800

[kidshelpline.com.au](https://kidshelpline.com.au)

**headspace:** 1800 650 890

[headspace.org.au](https://headspace.org.au)

**ReachOut:** [Reachout.com](https://Reachout.com)

## Other

**Head to Health:** mental health portal

[headtohealth.gov.au](https://headtohealth.gov.au)

**Life in Mind:** suicide prevention portal

[lifeinmind.org.au](https://lifeinmind.org.au)

**SANE:** 1800 187 263 | [saneforums.org](https://saneforums.org)



# Life in Mind

*Life in Mind* is a knowledge exchange portal providing translated evidence, policy, data and resources in suicide prevention, and is host of the National Communications Charter.

*Life in Mind* connects suicide prevention and related sectors to the evidence, information and resources they need, and communities to help-seeking information, with the aim to promote best practice in suicide prevention and support the sector and the community to respond to and communicate about suicide and its impacts.

[lifeinmindaustralia.org.au](https://lifeinmindaustralia.org.au)