



**Media Release  
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## **R U OK? Day**

Thursday 15 September, 2011 is R U OK? Day. It is a national day of action which aims to prevent suicide by encouraging Australians to connect with someone they care about and help stop little problems turning into big ones.

The CEO of the Mental Health Council of Tasmania Ms Michelle Swallow said, 'On this day we want everyone across Tasmania to connect with someone they care about and help stop little problems turning into big ones. Staying connected with others is crucial to our general health and wellbeing'.

'Feeling isolated or hopeless can contribute to depression and other mental illness, which can ultimately result in suicide. Regular, meaningful conversations can protect those we know and love. It's so simple. In the time it takes to have a coffee, you can start a conversation that could change a life'.

### **Some helpful pointers offered by R U OK? to help you connect with someone you think may be doing it tough include:**

- Start a general conversation somewhere private.
- Ask open-ended questions to discuss concerns based on their behaviour.
- Guide the conversation with caring questions.
- Listen to the person without them.
- Encourage them to take one step, such as see their doctor.
- It is essential to follow up. Nothing changes until someone acts.
- Ask if they have managed to take that first step and see someone.

### **R U OK? Suggest the following steps when someone is considering suicide?**

- It is important that you give the person an opportunity to talk about it.
- Speak in a calm, confident and non-judgemental manner to help them feel supported and reassured
- If someone says they are thinking about suicide, it is important you take it seriously.
- It is essential that you determine whether they have formulated a plan to take their life.
- If they have, it is critical that you do not leave them alone and do not use guilt or threats to prevent suicide. Get immediate professional help or call help lines – such as **Lifeline on 13 11 14**

**For further information and to arrange interviews, contact:  
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