

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Community invited to Winter Solstice

14 June 2019

Community members are invited to attend this year's Albury Winter Solstice event, hosted by Survivors of Suicide and Friends, on Friday 21 June. There is a free bus to Albury for those who would like to attend in person, plus a live-stream event to be held in Benalla.

Now in its seventh year, the Winter Solstice offers an opportunity for community members to gather on the longest (and often coldest) night of the year to be "entertained, enlightened and supported". This year, guest speakers will include domestic violence campaigner Rosie Batty, Steve "Commando" Willis and anti-violence and victim support advocate Kathy Kelly.

Survivors of Suicide and Friends founders Stuart and Annette Baker, who attended the Benalla place-based suicide prevention meeting in February, issued an open invitation to the Benalla community to join the event. Their organisation works to bring the subject of suicide and mental health into the public forum, so it can be addressed without shame or stigma.

Bek Nash-Webster, Murray PHN Suicide Prevention Coordinator, said the live-stream of the Winter Solstice in Benalla presents an exciting opportunity for other communities to do the same.

"Benalla will be the first community in Australia to live-stream the Winter Solstice outside of Albury. We encourage other regions to create and support change by bringing this event to their community through live streaming in the future."

Information about the 2019 program of speakers and entertainment can be found at [wintersolstice.org.au](http://wintersolstice.org.au)

RSVP by Wednesday 19 June for either the bus trip or the live-stream event via [bit.ly/2wkUNJz](https://bit.ly/2wkUNJz)

*Benalla is one of 12 locations taking part in Victorian Government trials to develop local strategies to prevent suicide. This work forms part of the Victorian Suicide Prevention Framework 2016-2025, which aims at halving the state's suicide rates by 2025.*

*If you are in an emergency or at immediate risk of harm to yourself or others, please contact emergency services on 000. Other services include Lifeline – 13 13 14 or [lifeline.org.au](http://lifeline.org.au) or Suicide Call Back Service – 1300 659 467 or [suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://suicidecallbackservice.org.au)*

**A note on reporting suicide:** *There is extensive literature linking media reporting of suicide with increased suicide rates. Suicidal behaviour can be 'learned' from the media when reports are sensationalised, focus on celebrities, are repeated, and explicitly describe location and method details. Evidence suggests that responsible reporting of suicide by the media can reduce suicide rates. Mindframe Australia Media Guidelines support the media to report suicide accurately, responsibly, and ethically. A summary version of these guidelines accompanies this Murray PHN media release. This information is also available from [mindframemedia.info](http://mindframemedia.info) or on the Mindframe App.*

### Contact details

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