



The Suicide Prevention Australia Community Tracker is a quarterly survey that sheds light on the prevalence of suicidal behaviours, what social and economic issues are driving distress, and the impact of suicide in our community. It is designed to provide real-time, community-wide insights to policy makers, practitioners, and the community and to support suicide prevention activities across Australia.

Key Findings

74%

of Australians are feeling elevated levels of distress beyond normal levels compared to this time last year due to social and economic circumstances.



This figure has consistently reached 70% or above every quarter for the last two years.

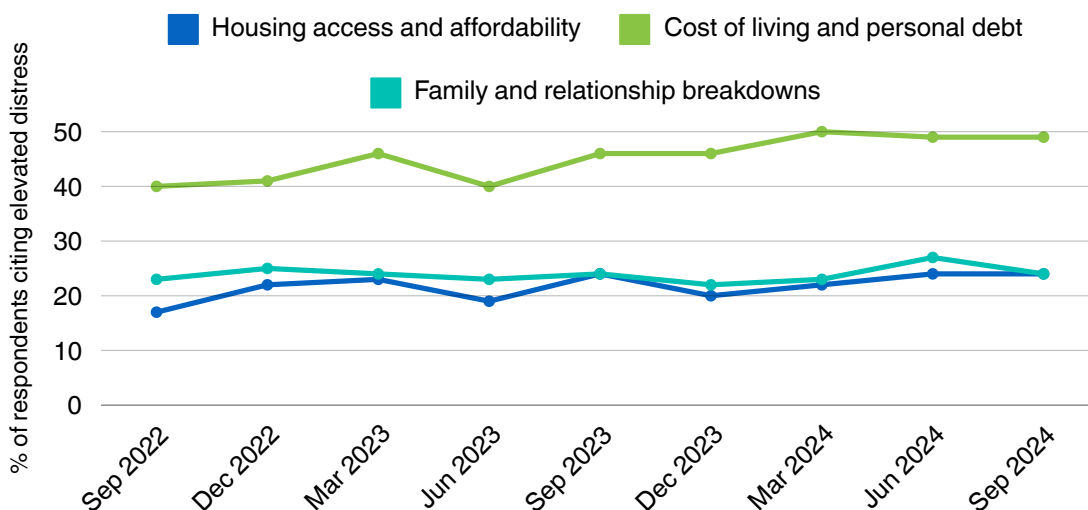
What this quarter reveals

Suicide Prevention Australia's latest Community Tracker indicates that distress levels in the community remain stubbornly high. Of particular concern is the distress we're seeing in young Australians aged 18- 24. Young people are the most likely out of all the generations to have had serious thoughts of suicide in the last 12 months. The key stressors for this age group are cost-of-living and personal debt, housing access and affordability, and social media, self-image and bullying.

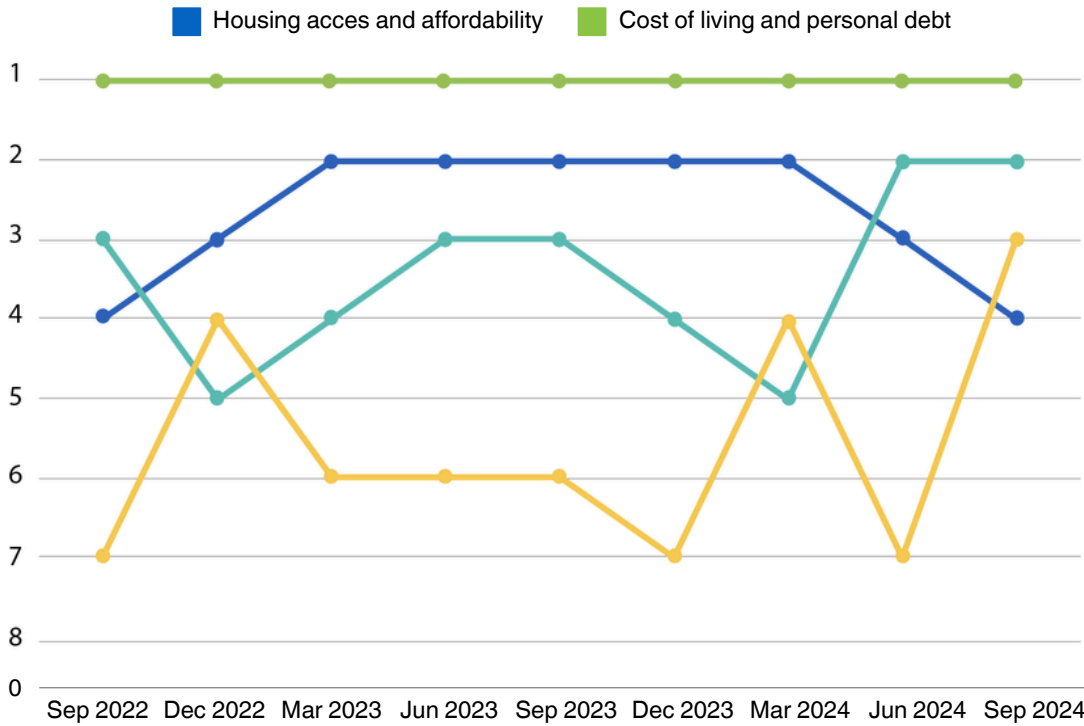
Risk factors

- Cost-of-living and personal debt remains the top cause of elevated distress among Australians (49% - up 3pp from September 2023)
- Followed by close to a quarter (24%) who cited family and relationship breakdowns and housing access and affordability (24%)

Top risks causing elevated distress

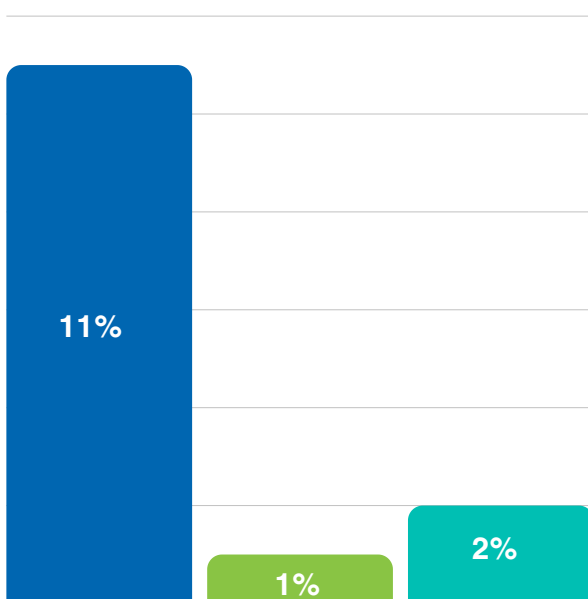


Social and economic circumstances believed to pose significant risk to suicide rates in Australia this time next year



- 91% of Australians believe social and economic circumstances will still pose a significant risk to suicide rates this time next year
- Cost-of-living and personal debt (70%) continues to be the main social and economic circumstance believed to pose significant risks to suicide rates in Australia followed by family and relationship breakdowns (56%)
- Social media, self-image and bullying (54%) has risen to be the third most common social and economic circumstance Australians believe pose a significant risk to suicide rates (up from 7th position)

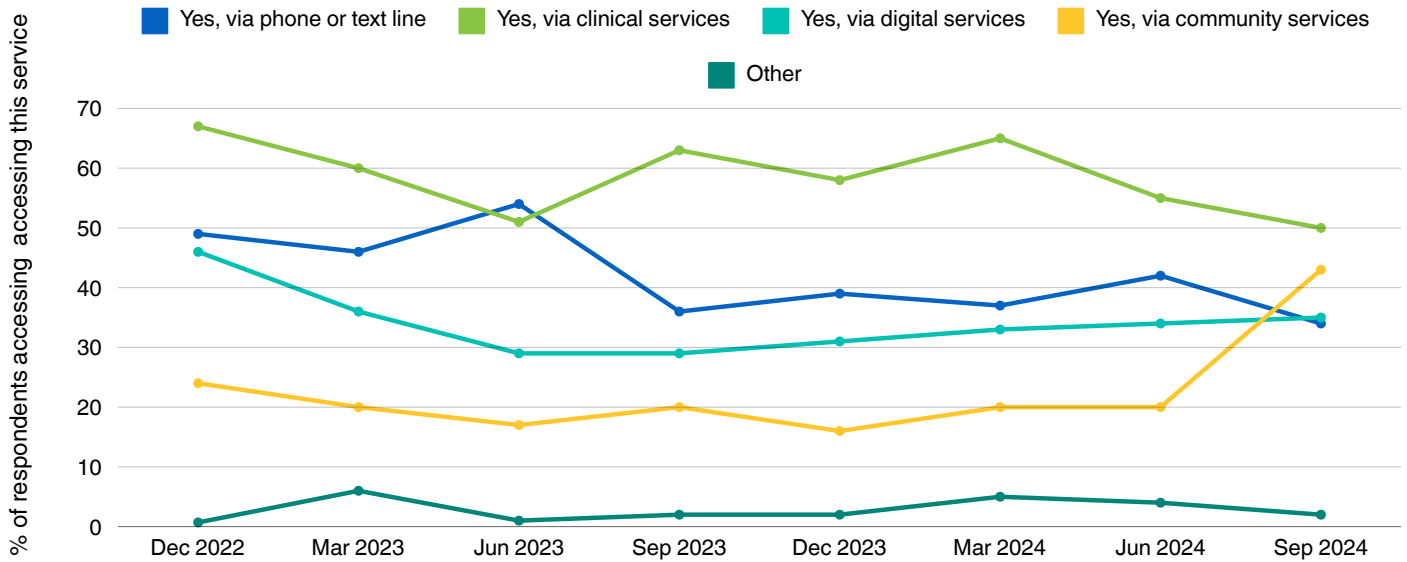
Breakdown of Australians reporting having experienced any suicidal behaviour in the past 12 months



- Yes, I have had some serious thoughts of suicide
- Yes, making a suicide plan
- Yes, attempting suicide

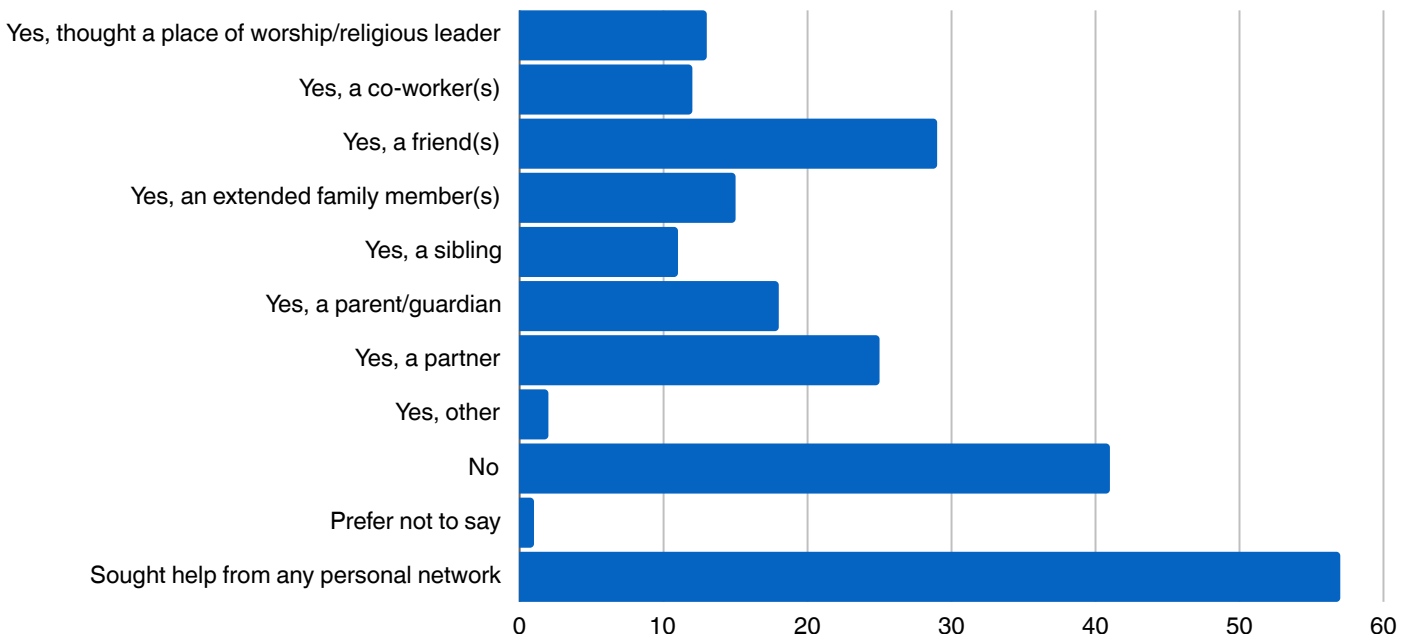
- 15% (up 3pp from the previous quarter) of Australians report having experienced suicidal behaviour in the past 12 months.
- Among these, one in eight (12%) had serious thoughts of suicide, 1% have made a suicide plan, and close to 2% have attempted suicide in the past 12 months.
- Australians under the age of 50 years continue to be more likely than those over 50 years to report having experienced suicidal behaviour in the past 12 months (21% 18-34, 15% 35-49, compared to 10% 50+).
- Promisingly, while the number of men having experienced suicidal behaviour in the past 12 months is at 15% (14% in May 2024) it has declined 4pp from August 2023, and the proportion of men who have made a suicide plan has declined to 2% (down 1pp from May 2024)

Service usage among Australians who have visited, sought help, or searched for advice from a suicide prevention provider in the past 12 months



- Proportion of Australians who say that have visited, sought help, or searched for advice from a suicide prevention service in the past 12 months has risen to 18% (up 1pp from Q2 2024 and up 4pp from Q1 2024)
- The most common personal networks Australians have sought help from in the past 12 months are a friend(s) (29%), followed by a partner (25%), a parent/ guardian (18%), or an extended family member (16%)

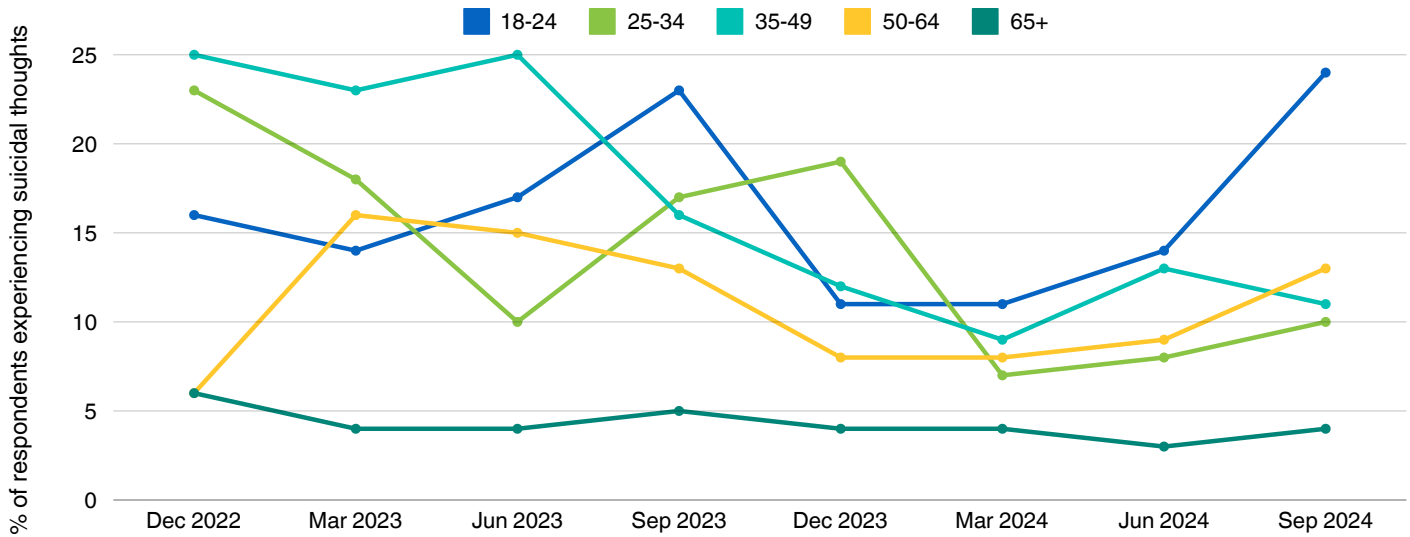
Percentage of personal networks utilised by respondents who experienced suicidal behaviour in the past 12 months (Sept 2024)



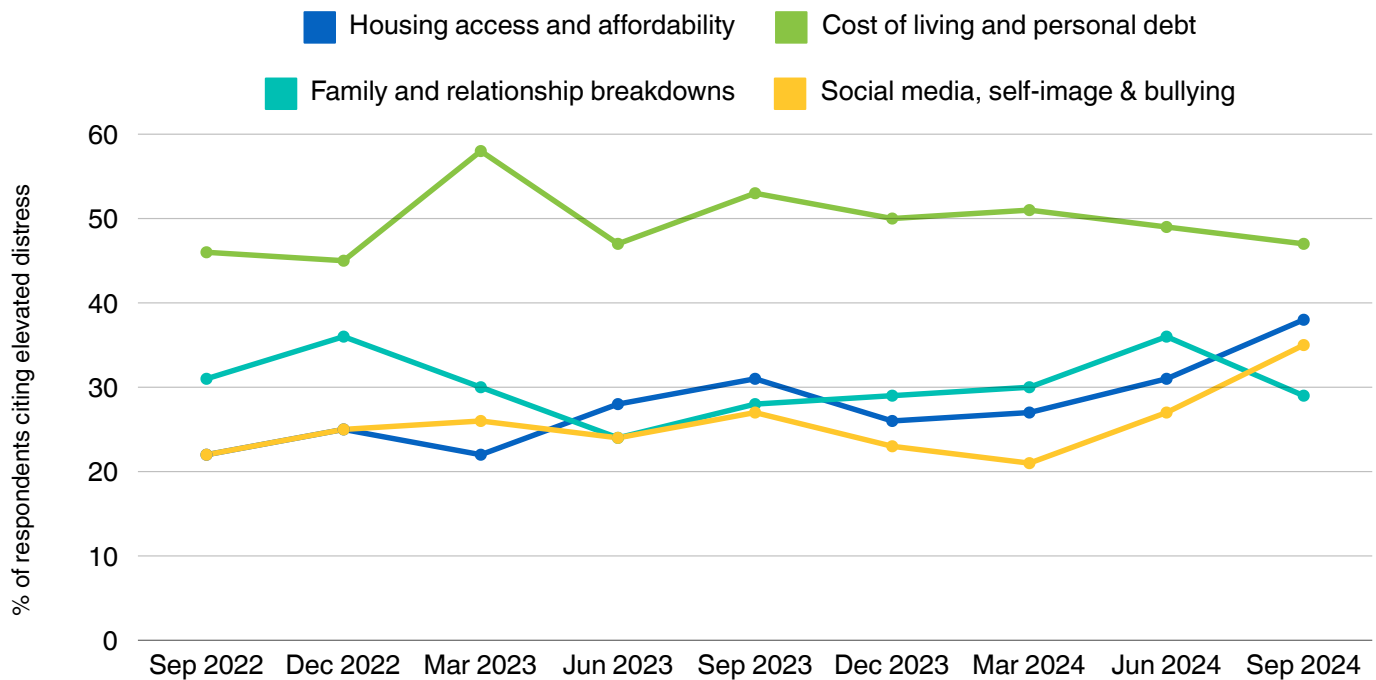
Young people (Australians aged 18-24)

One in four (25%) Australians aged 18-24 said they have had serious thoughts of suicide in the last 12 months, which is the most likely of all generations.

Yes, I have had serious thoughts of suicide



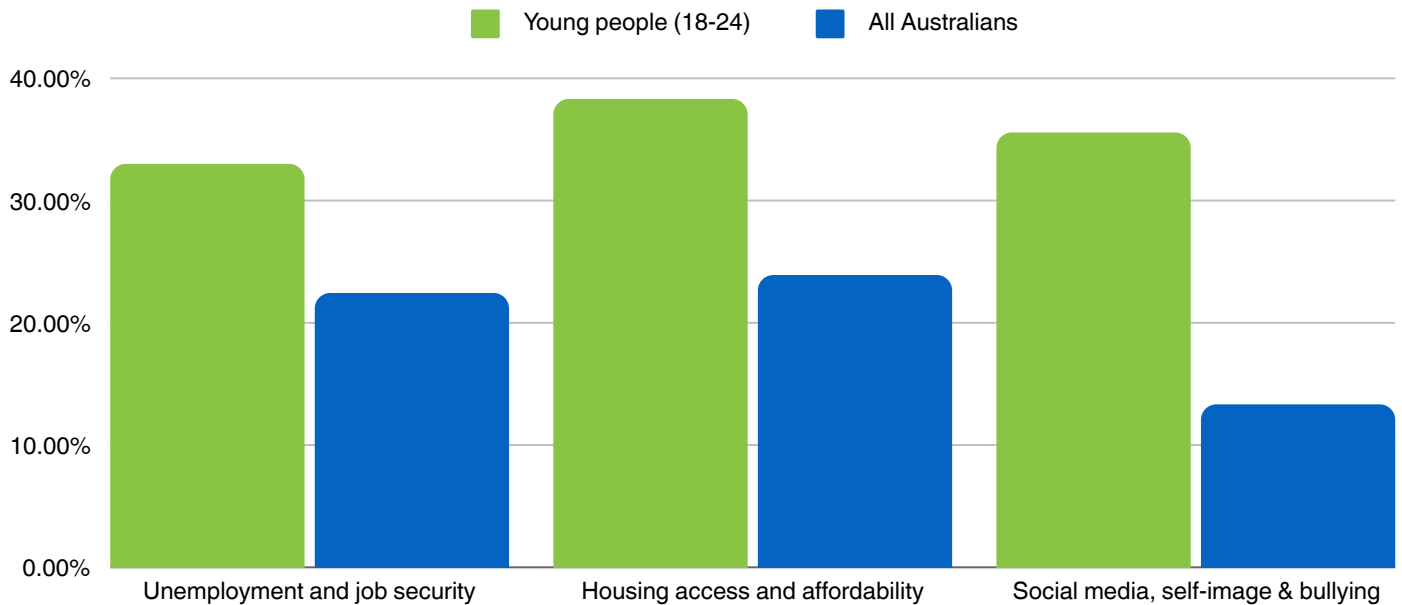
Top risks causing elevated distress for young people (18-24)



- The top risks facing young people (18-24) for this quarter was the following:
 - Cost-of-living and personal debt (47%)
 - Housing access and affordability (38%)
 - Social media, self-image & bullying (36%)

Causes of Elevated Distress

- When comparing between Australian young people (18-24) and all Australians, the risks with the largest differences in percentage points were the following:



Causes of elevated distress (National)	Jun-24	Sep-24	Change
Cost of living and personal debt	49%	49%	+0pp
Family and relationship breakdowns	27%	24%	-3pp
Housing access and affordability	24%	24%	+0pp
Social isolation and loneliness	21%	22%	+1pp
Unemployment and job security	19%	22%	+2pp
Social media, self-image & bullying	15%	13%	-3pp
Overall reporting levels of elevated distress	72%	74%	+2pp

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The Suicide Prevention Australia Community Tracker is undertaken in partnership with YouGov Australia. Total sample size was 1056 adults. The survey was undertaken online between 1st to 5th August 2024. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all Australian adults (aged 18+).