

Research highlights positive feedback for new intensive youth suicide prevention program

June 11 2024



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Suicide prevention services targeting struggling young people have proven to be successful in reducing suicide risk and distress, and in

improving overall well-being, according to new Swinburne-led research.

The study is [published](#) in the journal *PLOS Mental Health*.

The evaluation of a three-month Melbourne service, designed at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic for young people at risk of suicide, was carried out by the team at Swinburne University of Technology and Alfred Health.

Lead author from Swinburne's Centre for Mental Health, Professor Denny Meyer, says the findings are positive for the future of [mental health](#) care, suggesting that services of this nature—which focus on peer and psycho-social support—can have real benefits for young people at serious risk of suicide.

"We found that the young people using this three-month service experienced significant reductions in [suicide risk](#) and [psychological distress](#), which were associated with significant improvements in quality of life and reductions in the use of hospital services."

Professor Meyer hopes that these promising results will prompt further services to be designed, particularly those supporting [young people](#) for more than a year.

"We hope the findings from this evaluation will be helpful for those wanting to implement other services of this nature in other locations," she said. "In particular, the principles of co-design, [peer support](#) and planning for future service provision should be incorporated in any such service, regardless of whether the service is offered using eHealth or face-to-face."

More information: Denny Meyer et al, Evaluation of a service introduced to support young people at risk of suicide using a cohort design, a mixed methods analysis and cost-benefit analysis, *PLOS Mental Health* (2024). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pmen.0000043](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmen.0000043)

Provided by Swinburne University of Technology

Citation: Research highlights positive feedback for new intensive youth suicide prevention program (2024, June 11) retrieved 18 June 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2024-06-highlights-positive-feedback-intensive-youth.html>

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