

A Personal Story

I remember the first time I saw a suicide happen, I was a teenager then, the experience was stamped in my mind and heart for a long time.

When it happened, I felt numb with shock and fear, I couldn't even think clearly. The whole air around me felt heavy. I think everyone in the community was affected by what happened, it was a really sad time.

For the next 6 months, sadness, shock, despair and hopelessness were powerful feelings that I felt in my life. It was hard to talk about what happened, I hid my feelings about what happened so I didn't talk to anyone about it. I was afraid that if I talked about it someone else would kill themselves.

I felt like I was always walking on broken eggshells, it was really scary. It took many years for good healing to take place in my life.

Good Healing for me happened when I:

- A**ccepted and acknowledged the death of the loved one
- L**et them go, knowing that their memories will always be with me
- I**nformed myself with healing people, healing stories and healing activities
- V**aluing and respecting my life and the life of others
- E**mpowering my life to be healed by seeking and trusting in God.

Remember! We can heal our way!

Contact numbers

- **Yarrabah Anglican Churches**..... 4056 9443
- **Yarrabah Police** 4056 9140
- **Life Promotion Officer**
(counselling/support)..... 4056 9528
- **Community Mental Health Service** 4050 3100
- **Cairns Base Hospital** 4050 6333
- **Crisis Assessment Treatment Team (CATT)**
Weekdays 8am–4.30pm 4050 3100
After hours, Cairns Base Hospital..... 4050 6333
- **Yarrabah Health Service**..... 4056 9139
- **Lifeline Crisis Counselling** 131 114
- **Yeti (Youth Empowered Towards Independence)**
(Youth Program 12–25 years)..... 4051 4927
- **Centacare Cairns**..... 4044 0130
- **Gurriny Health Service**
(weekdays 8am–5pm)..... 4056 9388
- **Yarrabah State School Health Nurse**..... 40569199
- **Yarrabah State School**
Guidance Officer 40569110

Brochure developed by David Patterson – Men's Health Coordinator, Vincent Sands – Life Promotion Officer, Yarrabah Council; Thelma Richards – Gindjara Substance Misuse Abor Corp; Mercy Baird, Anthony Weller and Nicola Roberts of Qld Health; Dulcie Bird – Dr Edward Koch Foundation.

Illustrations by Julie Haysom. Produced with assistance from Dr Edward Koch Foundation and Pippin Graphics.



Brochure courtesy of Auseinet

HEALING OUR WAY

AFTER A SUICIDE

Guyula is the Yarrabah sea-hawk who watches over our community. Guyula's outstretched wings reach out to people who are looking for support and comfort after the loss of a loved one.

After a suicide

When someone dies by suicide there are so many things to deal with. Everybody handles this in their own way. Some of these ways are:



Feeling shame/guilt



Feeling angry/blaming self or others



Feeling numb/shocked /holding back/silence



Feeling sad/hopeless or a failure



Feeling confusion

Healing ways

It is normal to feel things, but there are ways of healing:



Be with people who care. Talk to someone.



Take care of yourself. Eat well. Avoid alcohol and drugs. Get plenty of rest.



It's okay to cry. Express your anger safely. Do some gardening/go for a walk.



It is no-one's fault. Try not to judge.



Do things you enjoy. Go fishing. Watch a movie. Remember the good times.

What will happen?



An *inquiry* is based on police and post-mortem reports (6 months). An *inquest* is a court hearing with witnesses (18+ months). If you feel comfortable talking to the police, they are there to **HELP**.