



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.

Quarterly insights

Suicide Prevention Australia's latest Community Tracker has revealed that distress levels leading up to the holiday season are high, particularly among households with children. Those living with children under 18 are more likely to have experienced suicidal behaviour compared to those who do not live with children. The key stressors for this group are cost-of-living and personal debt, family and relationship breakdown, and housing access and affordability.

KEY FINDINGS

Distress remains high

- **75%** 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 is higher than the December quarter figures for both 2022 and 2023 (71% and 74% respectively).
- **Close to three in 10** (28% - up from 26% in August 2024 and on par with 28% in May 2024 and 27% in November 2023) Australians say they know someone in their personal life or networks who has died by or attempted suicide.
- **Nine in 10** (90%) Australians continue to believe that social and economic circumstances will still pose a significant risk to suicide rates in Australia this time next year.

What is causing distress?

1. Cost-of-living and personal debt (46%)
2. Family and relationship breakdowns (26%)
3. Housing access and affordability (24%)
4. Social isolation and loneliness (20%)
5. Unemployment and job security (20%)
6. Environmental and climate change (16%)
7. Social media, self-image and bullying (16%)
8. Alcohol and other drugs (13%)
9. New technology and social change (12%)
10. Exposure to suicide in others (10%)



Suicidal behaviour reaches highest occurrence for 2024

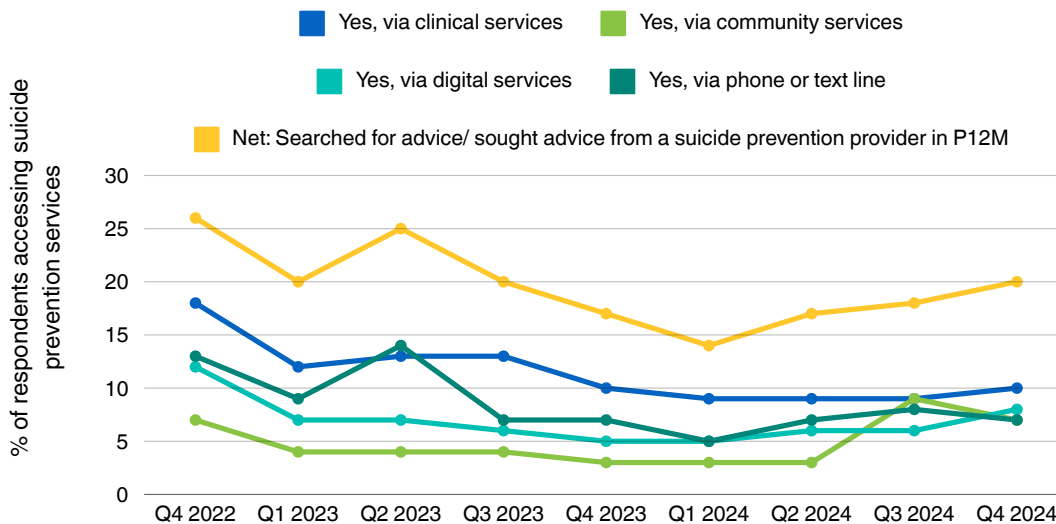
Suicidal behaviour in the past 12 months



- The percentage of those who had serious thoughts of suicide increased this quarter to the highest it has been this year (12%). Thankfully, the figure remains lower than its peak in 2022 (16%).
- The percentage of respondents reporting serious thoughts of suicide has been falling since Q4 2022 but has slowly risen throughout 2024.

Help-seeking is on the rise

Help-seeking behaviour for all Australians



- Proportion of Australians who say that have sought help, searched for advice or visited a suicide prevention service in the past 12 months has risen to 20% (up 2pp from Q2 2024 and up 4pp from Q1 2024).

Of those experiencing suicidal behaviours, most people reach out to a friend for help

The most common personal networks Australians have sought help from in the past 12 months continue to be a friend(s) (27%), followed by a partner (19%), and a parent/ guardian (13%), or sibling (13%).



Friend(s) 27%



Partner 19%



Parent/guardian 13%

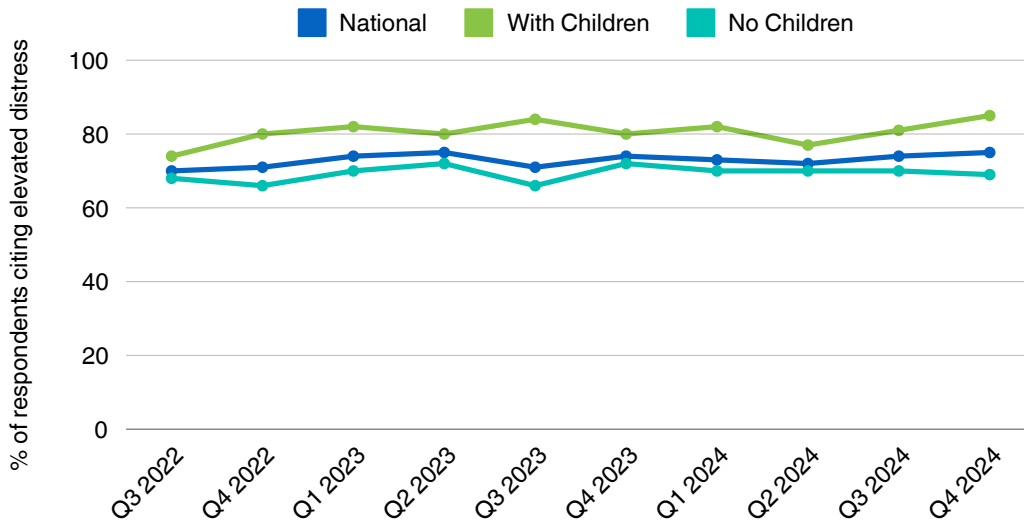


Sibling 13%



Families snapshot (Australians living with children under 18)

Circumstances have caused elevated distress compared to the same time last year



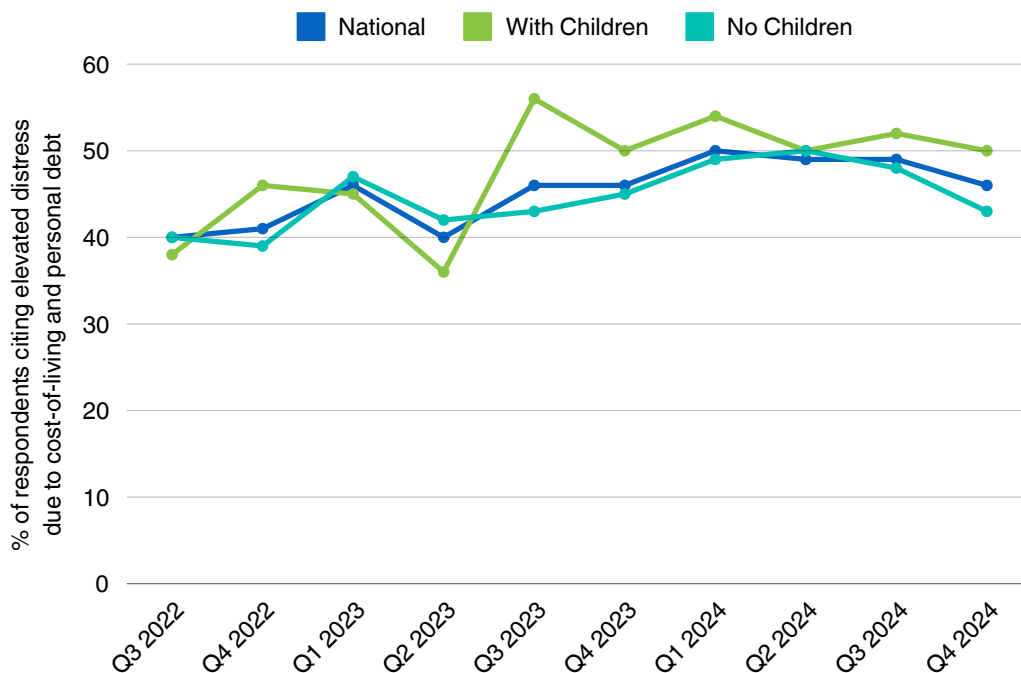
- 85% of Australians with children under 18 reported overall elevated distress in the December 2024 Quarter.
- This figure is significantly higher than the general population (75%) and Australians without children under 18 living with them (69%).
- Australians with children under 18 at home are more likely to have had serious thoughts of suicide in the past 12 months (15%) compared to those without children under 18 living with them (12%).

What is causing distress among families?



Cost-of-living

Elevated distress compared to previous year due to cost-of-living and personal debt



- Half of all Australians with children under 18 reported cost-of-living and personal debt distress beyond normal levels in the December 2024 Quarter.
- Since the September 2023 quarter, families with children under 18 have been reporting higher level distress due to cost-of-living and personal debt.

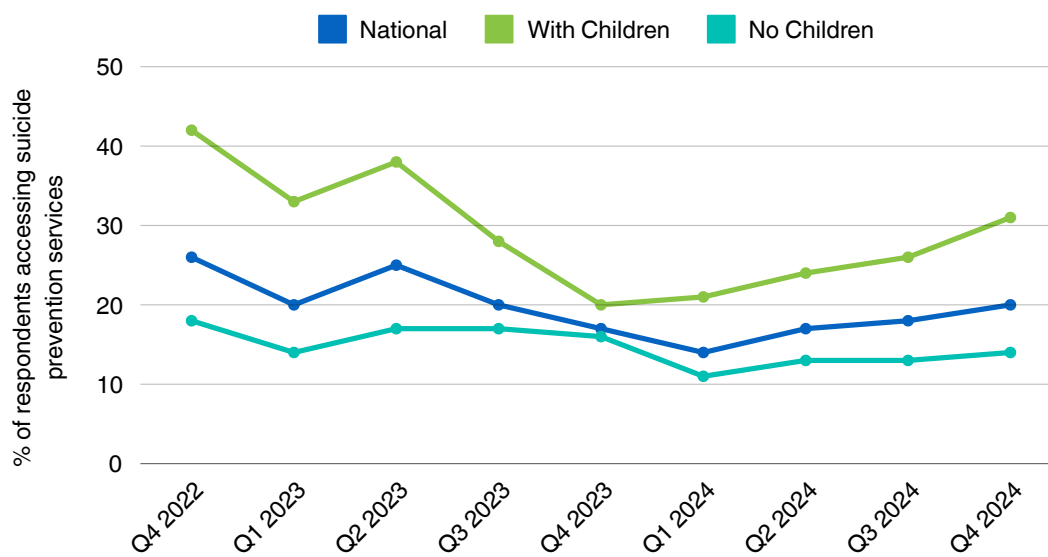


Housing access and affordability

- Close to three in ten (28%) of Australians with children under 18 reported elevated distress due to housing access and affordability in the December 2024 Quarter.
- The increase in distress has been gradual since the start of the year with under a quarter of families with children under 18 feeling elevated distress due to housing access and affordability.

Families snapshot (Australians living with children under 18)

Visited, sought help, searched for advice from a suicide prevention service in P12M



- Over three in ten (31%) of Australians with children under 18 reported having visited/sought help/searched for advice from a suicide prevention service in the P12M during the December 2024 Quarter
- This figure is more than double that of families without children (14%)

Causes of elevated distress (National)	Dec-23	Dec-24	Change
Cost of living and personal debt	46%	46%	+0pp
Family and relationship breakdowns	21%	26%	+5pp
Housing access and affordability	20%	24%	+4pp
Social isolation and loneliness	22%	20%	-2pp
Unemployment and job security	18%	20%	+2pp
Social media, self-image & bullying	11%	16%	+5pp
Overall reporting levels of elevated distress	74%	75%	+1pp

Amelia Hew
Acting Director, Communications and Advocacy
E. ameliah@suicidepreventionaust.org
M. 0410 591 134

The Suicide Prevention Australia Community Tracker is undertaken in partnership with YouGov Australia. Total sample size was 1010 adults. The survey was undertaken online between 4- 6 November 2024. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all Australian adults (aged 18+).