



*Hope Assistance Local Tradies (HALT) is a national grass-roots suicide prevention charity that provides important information and support to tradespeople across Australia.*



## INTRODUCTION

Since its establishment in 2013, HALT has held more than 800 events, reaching more than 100,000 tradies and community members with 6 project workers raising awareness of mental health, and providing information about support services. Events are held at hardware stores, on trade sites, at trades schools and TAFEs, men's sheds, sporting clubs and with farming communities.

The HALT program emphasises the importance of mates looking out for one another and works to break down any barriers to tradies seeking support when they are experiencing mental health difficulties.

## THE FACTS

Suicide is a prominent public health concern that has an overwhelmingly devastating effect on families, friends and the wider community. The statistics can be very confronting; however, it is important to remember that suicide can be prevented.

- More than 3,000 Australians died by suicide in 2017, with 75% of those being men.
- Suicide accounts for more than twice as many deaths per year as deaths from road accidents.
- Suicide is the leading cause of death for Australians between 15 and 44 years of age.
- Every year over 65,000 Australians make a suicide attempt (close to 200 attempts per day.)



## TRADIE CULTURE

Tradies make up over 30% of the workforce, with more than 90% of tradies being men. The suicide rate amongst male tradies is almost double that of other men in Australia.

Tradies are one group that experience mental health issues often without support. Many will not seek the help they need if they are experiencing depression, anxiety or suicidality due to stigma and a culture that generally doesn't encourage talking about mental health.

HALT aims to break down that stigma, get tradies informed on the issues and connect them with support services that could save their lives.

## HALT'S VISION

*That every tradie in Australia knows how to look after their mental health and wellbeing.*

## HALT'S MISSION

- To increase awareness of mental health and wellbeing in the tradie community
- To reduce stigma and discrimination associated with mental health issues
- To develop familiarity and connection for tradies to health / support services within their local community.



## HALT'S GOALS

- To expand HALT into a national program, employing HALT workers in local communities throughout Australia
- To educate and raise awareness of mental health issues that people in the building and construction industry may encounter
- To expand HALT's reach within the communities it serves
- To create a stronger evidence base to complement HALT's work in the tradie communities
- To continue to tailor the HALT program for use with other groups who have similar needs to those in the building and construction industry.

## ORGANISATIONAL HISTORY

HALT was founded in 2013 in regional Victoria. After a tragic suicide rocked the small community of Castlemaine, two concerned residents organised the very first Save Your Bacon event.

From its humble beginnings Co-Founder Jeremy Forbes has driven the program sourcing funding through business sponsorship and partnerships, community grants and donations from local communities in which they work.

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

2019: HALT won the Victorian section of the Australian Men's Health Award

2016: Co-Founder Jeremy Forbes was awarded a Westpac Social Change Fellowship

2017: HALT was awarded a Worksafe Health and Safety OHS Achievement of the Year Award:

[www.youtube.com/watch](http://www.youtube.com/watch)

## NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PRESS

Co-Founder Jeremy Forbes delivered a Ted Talk, "How to Start a Conversation About Suicide":

[www.ted.com/talks/jeremy\\_forbes\\_how\\_to\\_start\\_a\\_conversation\\_about\\_suicide?](http://www.ted.com/talks/jeremy_forbes_how_to_start_a_conversation_about_suicide?)

HALT was interviewed by celebrity Henry Rollins in a series about tough conversations: [www.youtube.com/](http://www.youtube.com/)

HALT was interviewed by ABC Breakfast News: [thehaltbrekky.com/halt-interview-on-abc-news-breakfast/](http://thehaltbrekky.com/halt-interview-on-abc-news-breakfast/)

## RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

In order to ensure that the HALT program is reaching its intended goals and outcomes, HALT has partnered with Swinburne University of Technology in order to undertake a rigorous evaluation of the HALT workers and the delivery of the program over three years.

## BUILDING A

### NATIONAL PROGRAM

In 2019 HALT was awarded a \$2 million grant over four years from the Federal Government in order to build the work into a national program. HALT are currently exploring additional funding and partnership opportunities in order to employ HALT Project Workers across more communities in Australia.

HALT held an event at Parliament House in October 2019, with tradies and politicians showing bipartisan support.

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