

Tips for Reporting on Suicide Responsibly

Media coverage of suicide can affect individuals, families, and communities. Responsible reporting can reduce harm, encourage help-seeking, and support suicide prevention efforts.

Why Responsible Reporting Matters

Research shows that certain types of suicide coverage may increase emotional distress or suicide risk in vulnerable individuals. Careful reporting can help reduce stigma and promote safety.

Best Practices for Reporting

When covering suicide-related topics:

- Use accurate and non-sensational language
- Focus on hope, recovery, and prevention
- Include crisis support resources
- Share warning signs and ways to seek help
- Respect the privacy of individuals and families
- Use person-first language

Avoid Harmful Reporting Practices

Avoid:

- Describing suicide methods or locations in detail
- Using graphic images or videos
- Presenting suicide as unavoidable or simplistic
- Oversimplifying causes
- Repeating dramatic headlines
- Sharing suicide notes or personal details without consent

Wyandot Behavioral Health Network

Website: <https://www.wyandotbhn.org/> | Phone: 913-328-4600

In Crisis? Call or text 988 (Suicide & Crisis Lifeline) or call 913-788-4200

Language Matters

Certain phrases may increase stigma or unintentionally cause harm.

Instead of:

- “Committed suicide”

Use:

- “Died by suicide”

Instead of:

- “Successful suicide attempt”

Use:

- “Suicide attempt”

Include Support Information

Stories related to suicide should include crisis resources such as:

- Call or text 988
- Local crisis lines
- Emergency services information

Encourage Help-Seeking

Responsible reporting can remind people that support and treatment are available. Including messages of hope and recovery may encourage individuals to seek help for themselves or others.

Remember

Words and headlines matter. Responsible reporting can help inform communities while supporting safety, dignity, and prevention efforts.