

Communication Best Practices

Media Tips for Reporting on Suicide Clusters

If a suicide cluster occurs in your community, the way we communicate is important to help mitigate the spread and help the public cope with trauma. We have an obligation to report on suicide clusters responsibly and with sensitivity.

For internal communications departments, marketing teams and media outlets, follow these best practices when reporting on suicide or a suicide cluster:

- Avoid glorification of the suicide victims and minimize sensationalism. Highlight the individual and the tragic loss of life vs. lifting up a suicide death.
- Do not include details mentioning the method or means of suicide.
- Don't refer to a suicide cluster as an "epidemic" or sensationalized term.
- Incorporate stories of hope and healing. The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline says that sharing stories of hope and recovery from suicidal thoughts and actions can help people get through these events.
- Avoid blame. Don't attribute the suicide to a specific cause or event.
- Provide information on warning signs of suicidal ideation.
- Feature suicide prevention experts in news articles.
- Share ways to get help including the 988 Lifeline, grief support groups and local resources.

Resources and Help

It's okay to talk about suicide. The best way we can prevent suicide and promote healing is by sharing resources and support.

- Call, text or chat the 988 Lifeline for free, confidential support with suicidal thoughts, depression or any emotional support. Loved ones can also call 988 for advice and support if they're concerned about someone in their life.
- Visit SDSuicidePrevention.org to find local resources, treatment options and more.

Learn about suicide at SDSuicidePrevention.org.
Find more reporting tips at ReportingOnSuicide.org/.

