



Responsible Reporting Suicide Language Guide



DONT SAY:

"successful suicide" or
"unsuccessful suicide"

DO SAY:

"died by suicide" or
"took their own life"

WHY?

Because it suggests
suicide is a desired
outcome. No one wins
if someone dies by
suicide.





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DONT SAY:

"committed suicide" or
"commit suicide"



DO SAY:

"took their own life" or
"died by suicide"



WHY?

Because it associates
suicide with a crime
or sin



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DONT SAY:
"failed suicide"

DO SAY:
"suicide attempt"

WHY?

It means that someone hasn't died, they are still alive & there is a chance to get them help. So not dying by suicide is not a fail





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DONT SAY:
"suicide epidemic"



DO SAY:
"increasing rates" or
"higher rates"



WHY?
Because it
sensationalises
suicide



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DONT SAY:

"political suicide" or
"suicide mission"



DO SAY:

refrain from using the
word suicide out of
context



WHY?

Because it is an
inaccurate use of the
term 'suicide'