Medical Examiner and Coroner Guidelines

Goals
The aim of the project was to develop the first set of best practices specific to medical examiners and coroners on how to speak with the media and with families following a death by suicide.

Purpose
As MEs/Coroners increasingly find themselves needing to talk with the media, guidelines on doing so safely to reduce the risk of contagion is critical. Further, guidelines for talking with families who are often interviewed by media is also important in reducing the risk of contagion.

ABOUT THE GUIDELINES
WHO IS INVOLVED
Medical examiners
Coroners
Suicide prevention experts
Messaging experts
Public health experts
Media professionals
Using a multi-tiered approach to arrive at consensus best practices.

A literature review was also conducted on language and safe messaging standards.

Conducted a literature review and analysis of research nationally and internationally.

Conference calls, meetings, and surveys were used to collect information and data on commonly experienced practices.

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**Best Practices For Talking With Media About Suicide**

1. Inform Media Personnel About Suicide Contagion
2. Seek Basic Media Training
3. Avoid presenting suicide as common or acceptable
4. Explain the Complexities of Suicide
5. Request That Media Include Resources For Their Audience
6. Use Reliable Data
7. Avoid Sharing Suicide Method or Location
8. Do not share the contents of a suicide note
9. Avoid Sharing Personal Details of the Deceased
10. What To Do When the Media Contact You

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**Talking With Media About Suicide**

- Use reliable data to inform media personnel about suicide contagion.
- Seek basic media training before responding to high-profile cases.
- Avoid presenting suicide as common or acceptable.
- Explain the complexities of suicide.
- Request that media include resources for their audience.
- Use reliable data in all communications.
- Avoid sharing suicide method or location.
- Do not share the contents of a suicide note.
- Avoid sharing personal details of the deceased.
- Have a plan in place for when the media contacts you.
Talkimg With Families About Suicide

Do you have comments or input on these Guides??

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Thank you!