

Latest publications

# Update

PHA





**SAMARITA**

# Media Guidelines

for Reporting S

# TEN THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN REPORTING SUICIDE

- 1 Leave out technical details about the method of suicide, such as describing the type of ligature used or the number and types of pills taken in an overdose. Never suggest that a method is quick, easy, painless or certain to result in death.
- 2 Language matters. Avoid dramatic headlines and terms such as 'suicide epidemic' or 'hot spot'.
- 3 Include references to support groups and places where suicidal people can find help – it really does make a difference.  
Lifeline 0808 808 8000  
Samaritans 116 123
- 4 Treat social media with particular caution and refrain from mentioning websites or networks that promote or glorify suicide.
- 5 Avoid dramatic or sensationalist pictures or video. Refrain from including content from suicide notes.
- 6 Young people are especially vulnerable to negative suicide coverage. Do not give undue prominence to photographs of a young person who has died and avoid repeated use of images such as galleries.
- 7 Try not to give a story undue prominence, for example with a front cover splash.
- 8 Don't brush over the complex realities of suicide and its impact on those left behind. Remember that people bereaved by suicide are often vulnerable and are more likely to take their own lives than the general population.
- 9 Speculation about the 'trigger' for a suicide, even if provided by a close family member, should be avoided.
- 10 Use statistics with caution. Check with Samaritans, IAS or the relevant national statistical agency to make sure you have the most recent data and are comparing like with like.

Contact Samaritans' press office for advice on reporting:  
+44 (0)20 8394 8300  
Out of hours: 444 (0)7943 809 162  
press@samaritans.org  
samaritans.org/mediaguidelines  
@samaritans #reportingsuicide

Supported by



01/16  
Public Health Agency Tel: 0300 551 1314 (toll free)

Samaritans is a registered charity



Communications Strategy  
(Draft)  
2011 - 2015

November 2011



[View PDF](#)