Language Matters:
Choose Language Carefully

- Certain ways of talking about suicide can alienate members of the community or inadvertently contribute to suicide being presented as a glamorous, ideal or common option for dealing with problems. Certain words can negatively impact people bereaved by suicide or people vulnerable to suicidal thinking.

- Avoid judgmental phrases. Do not place any moral judgments on the act of suicide.

- Sometimes language can be misinterpreted especially across different cultural groups. Be mindful of the cultural aspects of language.

- Avoid discussing the methods or locations of suicide deaths in detail. Talking in specific detail about the methods of suicide or locations where suicides occur can create images that are upsetting for people and can increase risk in people vulnerable to suicide.

Do Say	Don't Say	Why?
'non-fatal' or 'made an attempt on their life'	'unsuccessful suicide'	So as to not normalize or glamorize a suicide attempt
'took their own life'' or 'ended their own life'	'successful suicide' or 'completed suicide'	So as to not present suicide as a desired outcome
'died by suicide' or 'deaths by suicide'	'committed' or 'commit suicide'	So as to avoid the association between suicide and 'crime' or 'sin'
'concerning rates of suicide' or 'number of deaths'	'suicide epidemic'	To avoid sensationalism and inaccuracy

See also www.preventsuicidewi.org/prevention-messaging for additional resources related to safe and effective suicide prevention messaging.