



STATE OF MICHIGAN

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GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

ELIZABETH HERTEL
DIRECTOR

March 21, 2023

Dear Public Health and Media Partners:

Suicide is a major public health concern. How we talk about it can be helpful or harmful based on how we present stories and information, especially through public facing media. It is important to follow safe messaging guidelines to ensure that our messages support safety, reduce harm, and encourage help-seeking.

In 2021, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) reached out to our public health and media partners to share resources on this critical topic. We are doing so again today to invite you to an upcoming live webinar that will share valuable information on how to follow safe reporting guidelines using a tool called TEMPOS (Tool for Evaluating Media Portrayals of Suicide).

TEMPOS tool is the first tool that allows media professionals, public health officials, researchers and suicide prevention experts to assess adherence to the recommended reporting guidelines with a user- friendly, standardized rating scale. This webinar will be held Wednesday, April 5 at 6 p.m.

To register online, visit [TEMPOS safe messaging webinar – Registration](#).

Additional Media Resources for Suicide Prevention Reporting

The American Association of Suicidology toolkit, [Media as Partners in Suicide Prevention](#) was generated by extensive consultation with journalists and those with lived experience of suicide attempts and thoughts. It contains critical information for all media professionals looking to effectively report on suicide as a topic.

[Recommendations for Reporting on Suicide](#) is a two-page document that was developed with worldwide suicide prevention agencies. It offers specific reporting strategies that could help prevent another suicide or encourage someone to seek help.

[The National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention](#) offers several resources on its media messaging page, including a framework for successful messaging which aims to inform organizations how to craft media content about suicide.

There are also Michigan-based coalitions, crisis lines, fact sheets, trainings and events listed on the MDHHS website at [Michigan.gov/suicideprevention](https://www.michigan.gov/suicideprevention).

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The [988 suicide and crisis lifeline](#) number, 988, should be included with any news media materials that talk about suicide.

Thank you again for your partnership; it is deeply appreciated and will make a difference in the lives of our fellow Michiganders.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "David M. Knezek, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

David M. Knezek, Jr.
Senior Chief Deputy Director
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

DK:jb