BEFORE YOU SPEAK, KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE AND MESSAGING GOALS.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Key Audiences</th>
<th>Messaging Goals</th>
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<td>At-risk persons</td>
<td>Keep safe</td>
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<td>Survivors</td>
<td>Destigmatize</td>
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<td>Professionals</td>
<td>Burnish credibility</td>
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<td>General public</td>
<td>Educate</td>
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SAFETY, IS ABOVE ALL, THE MOST IMPORTANT CONCERN WHEN TALKING ABOUT SUICIDE.

- **Anyone** you speak to could be at risk.
- When in doubt, remember **The Golden Rule**.
- Expect **unexpected conversations** to occur. Be ready.

SOME BASIC SAFETY GUIDELINES:

- **Avoid saying** “Committed suicide” → “Died by suicide”
  “Successful attempt” → “Suicide death”
  “Failed attempt” → “Suicide attempt”
  “22 veterans a day” → “Just under 20 service members and veterans a day”

  - Don’t **overshare** details of other suicides like means, location, or vivid imagery.
  - Don’t **sensationalize**, glamorize, romanticize, or normalize suicide.
  - Don’t **speculate** on or oversimplify the cause of a suicide death.
  - Don’t refer to a suicidal attempt or act as “selfish,” “stupid,” or “crazy.”

HOW YOU TALK ABOUT SUICIDE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN WHAT YOU SAY.

- Speaking **openly** and **confidently breaks taboos** and reduces stigma.
- Be mindful of your **body language**, **eye contact**, and emotional cues.
- Stay **calm**, be **compassionate**, listen, and act.
- Don’t **whisper** or speak in hushed tones.
- Don’t speak in **euphemisms** or beat around the bush.
- It’s okay to say the word “suicide” out loud.

STAY HOPEFUL, PROVIDE RESOURCES.

- Military service members or veterans may call Stop Soldier Suicide 24/7 at **844-503-0553**.
- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is **800-273-8255**.

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