



**International  
Survivors of  
Suicide Loss Day**

**Promotion and  
Publicity Toolkit  
For Survivor Day  
Organizers**

[afsp.org/SurvivorDay](https://afsp.org/SurvivorDay)



**American  
Foundation  
for Suicide  
Prevention**

# Use the power of promotion, public relations, and social media to boost attendance at your event.

Local promotion and publicity are essential to spreading the word about your International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day (ISOSLD, or Survivor Day) event. In this toolkit, you'll find everything you need to publicize your event through local and regional media channels, ensuring that as many people are aware of the event as possible.

The more efficient your public relations strategy and the sooner you begin to promote your event, the more loss survivors you'll reach – meaning more people who will have the opportunity to discover that they are not alone.

## Contact

Loss & Healing Department  
[survivorday@afsp.org](mailto:survivorday@afsp.org)

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# Talking Points

## Survivor Day Messages

- International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day is a day when suicide loss survivors can gather together to find comfort and gain understanding as they share stories of healing and hope
- Survivor Day was created by a resolution in the U.S. Congress in 1999, and has since been sponsored and supported by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, taking place each year on the Saturday before American Thanksgiving
- In 2018 there were over 370 locally organized events held throughout the U.S. and around the world
- For those who are unable to attend a Survivor Day event in person, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention hosts a Survivor Day program online at [Facebook.com/afspnational](https://www.facebook.com/afspnational)
- Caring for those left behind in the aftermath of a suicide is an essential part of suicide prevention, because suicide loss survivors who are left to grieve alone are at greater risk of suicide themselves

## AFSP Messages

- The **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention** leads the fight against suicide – we save lives and bring hope to those affected by suicide
- With **chapters** in all 50 states that host programs and events nationwide, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention is the largest suicide prevention organization in the United States
- The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention has set an initiative to reduce the nation's annual suicide rate 20 percent by 2025, identifying four crucial target areas to save the most lives in the shortest amount of time
- Visit [afsp.org](https://www.afsp.org) to learn more

## Messaging about Suicide

- It's okay to not be okay – grief can sometimes feel overwhelming, but support is always available
- The emotions felt after a suicide loss are deeply personal, and each person may face unique challenges in their grief – know that you are not alone in your healing journey
- If you are in crisis, please call the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), or text TALK to the Crisis Text Line at 741741

# Timeline

## May

- Build a local **press list**
- Start your promotional efforts: send out **save-the-date emails and information cards**; enlist your local partnerships and organizations, etc., to help spread the word through newsletters and listservs
- Plan your **social media** effort

## June

- Arrange to set up an information table at any upcoming AFSP Out of the Darkness™ Walks (find further information at [afsp.org/chapters](https://afsp.org/chapters))

## August

- Distribute **flyers** containing your event program details
- Send a second round of **save-the-date emails**, with updated event information

## September

- Start posting on **social media** (sample messages can be found later in this toolkit)
- Send **PSA scripts** to area radio stations
- Send the **Survivor Day PSA** to local TV stations
- Send the **media advisory** to public/community affairs directors at local TV and radio stations
- Send the **calendar listing** to local media

## October

Once a week, post a message to your Survivor Day event page on Facebook, and send a tweet; add a visual element to your tweet or Facebook post by adding a Survivor Day shareable, available on the **Survivor Day Resources** page

- If you have any media interviews scheduled, review this toolkit to prepare
- In late October, conduct follow-up calls to media outlets to secure pre-event coverage

## November

- Twice a week, post messages to your Survivor Day event page on Facebook, and send a tweet; add a visual element to your tweet or Facebook post by adding a Survivor Day shareable, available on the **Survivor Day Resources** page
- At the start of the month, send the media advisory to features reporters at local newspapers
- In the second week of the month, send **messages on Twitter** to local politicians and news outlets

- Call all the media you were not able to connect with in October
- On the Saturday before Survivor Day, send the media advisory to news desks at local TV stations
- On the Monday before Survivor Day, conduct follow-up calls to confirm that reporters have added Survivor Day to their event calendars
- On the Wednesday before Survivor Day, send the media advisory to metro/city editors at local newspapers and to news assignment editors at radio stations
- On the day before Survivor Day:
  - Re-distribute the media advisory to TV, radio, and newspaper contacts (make sure your cell phone number is listed)
  - Conduct follow-up calls to confirm that your contacts have added your Survivor Day listing to their calendars
  - Post reminders on social media, calling out specifically that Survivor Day is tomorrow
- On Survivor Day, coordinate interviews with any media attending your event
- After Survivor Day, obtain links to any press coverage; please send the links to AFSP’s Public Relations Director, Alexis O’Brien, at [aobrien@afsp.org](mailto:aobrien@afsp.org)

# Marketing

## Save-the-Date Emails and Information Cards

Send save-the-date emails and distribute save-the-date information cards to previous Survivor Day attendees, and to individuals and organizations that come into contact with suicide loss survivors. Enlist your local event partner and nearby organizations to help you spread the word through newsletters and listservs. Be sure to include [afsp.org/SurvivorDay](https://afsp.org/SurvivorDay) in all your save-the-date emails.

Suggestions for distribution:

- Suicide bereavement **support groups**
- Clergy, religious organizations, and interfaith associations
- Mental health professionals and centers
- Psychiatric hospitals and other outpatient/inpatient facilities
- College counseling centers
- **Veteran** and military organizations

On the **Survivor Day Resources** page, you will find:

- A save-the-date email banner that you can paste into the signature field of your email program
- Two save-the-date emails: a general one to send out in the spring, and one to send out closer to Survivor Day that features this year’s Survivor Day PSA

## Flyers

On the [Survivor Day Resources](#) page, you will find customizable flyers to help you get the word out about Survivor Day in general, and about your local Survivor Day event in particular.

Set up an information table with Survivor Day materials, including flyers and information cards, at local [Out of the Darkness Community Walks](#). Reach out to your local [AFSP chapter](#) to work out the logistics.

Distribute flyers (in printed form or as email attachments) to loss survivors and to individuals and organizations that come into contact with them. See the above list of people and institutions that should be on your distribution list.

# Social Media

## Why Use Social Media?

As you begin to plan your Survivor Day event, it is important to establish a presence on social media channels, such as Facebook and Twitter. Not only can it increase the number of local suicide loss survivors you are able to reach, it can also raise awareness about suicide prevention and mental health issues in general.

### If Your Event is Co-Sponsored by AFSP

All Survivor Day-related social media activity conducted by AFSP chapters is subject to AFSP's [Social Media Guidelines](#), which is available on the [Survivor Day Resources](#) page.

## Social Media Glossary

### Like

On Facebook, a "Like" comes from someone clicking "Like" under a post/photo/video. A "Like" allows followers and potential attendees to acknowledge that they've seen your post and support the content.

### Reactions

Similar to "Liking" a post on Facebook, you can express different reactions by hovering over the "Like" button under a post and clicking "Love," "Haha," "Wow," "Sad," or "Angry."

### Favorite

On Twitter, a "Favorite" (similar to a "Like" on Facebook) comes from someone clicking the heart under a tweet.

### Retweet

On Twitter, followers can retweet a tweet by clicking the button that looks like a square formed by two arrows (↻). It will then appear on their profile and in the feed of their followers. It is abbreviated as "RT."

### Hashtag

A hashtag is the phrase that follows a # on Twitter (see sample tweet below) or Facebook. A hashtag is a cataloging system. People looking for information about a certain product or event can search for the hashtag. It is used on Twitter more than Facebook.

## Handle

On Twitter, a handle is the word, phrase, or name following the @ symbol (see sample tweet below, where the handle is “@afspnational”).



**Suicide Prevention** @afspnational - Nov 18  
Why attend a #SurvivorDay event near you? A  
#SuicideLoss survivor explains what she found at her first:  
[bit.ly/2g5YBG3](https://bit.ly/2g5YBG3)

## Social Media Tips

- “Like” AFSP National on Facebook ([facebook.com/afspnational](https://facebook.com/afspnational)); you can also “Follow” your local chapter and AFSP National on Twitter ([twitter.com/afspnational](https://twitter.com/afspnational)) and on Instagram ([instagram.com/afspnational](https://instagram.com/afspnational))
- Be actively engaged with social media; social media is more worthwhile if you are an active, ongoing user
- Be creative with your content; post interesting videos, pictures, stories, etc. (see [Content Suggestions](#) below for examples)
- Use the #SurvivorDay hashtag when posting on Twitter
- Use our Survivor Day cover photo to help you promote your event on your Facebook page, and add our Survivor Day twibbon (i.e., a small image overlay) to your profile image on Facebook and Twitter – the [Survivor Day Resources](#) page offers helpful tips

## Content Suggestions

### Post Pictures

Share images of the loved ones you’ve lost, and share their stories – be mindful to keep these messages hopeful and in-line with [Safe Messaging Guidelines](#).

### Share Videos

AFSP National will provide a preview of this year’s Survivor Day film, or a Survivor Day PSA for those organizers registered with AFSP, closer to November.

### Use Social Shareables

Add visual elements to your tweet or Facebook post by adding one of our Survivor Day shareables, which will be made available on the [Survivor Day Resources](#) page.

### Post Links

Repost stories from AFSP’s National Facebook and Twitter pages. Be sure to also share links from [afsp.org](https://afsp.org). The website has the following resources available for survivors of suicide loss:

- Handling special occasions after a suicide loss: [afsp.org/SpecialOccasions](https://afsp.org/SpecialOccasions)
- Helping children understand a suicide loss: [afsp.org/AfterALoss/Children](https://afsp.org/AfterALoss/Children)
- Taking care of yourself after a suicide loss: [afsp.org/SelfCareAfterALoss](https://afsp.org/SelfCareAfterALoss)
- Commemorating your loved ones in AFSP’s Digital Memory Quilt: [afsp.org/Quilt](https://afsp.org/Quilt)

- Safely speaking out about suicide: [afsp.org/SpeakingAboutSuicide](https://afsp.org/SpeakingAboutSuicide)
- AFSP infographics: [afsp.org/SocialShareables](https://afsp.org/SocialShareables)

## Facebook

### Creating a Facebook Event

Creating a public Facebook event (an event listing) from your personal profile or from your local AFSP chapter page is a great way to share information about your event with people inside and outside your circle of Facebook friends.

NOTE: Please do not create your own Facebook page, group, or profile for your local Survivor Day event. The proliferation of individual Survivor Day pages can become very confusing for Facebook users.

#### How to create your event:

- Sign in to your personal account, or the local chapter account, for those affiliated
- Click “Events” on the left-hand side of your Facebook page and select “Create”
- If your event is open to the public, go to the “Create New Event” window, click on the “Privacy” dropdown menu, and select “Public”
- Fill in information about your event
- Invite all your Facebook friends to attend
  - Explain on your event page how people can register for your event, e.g., “Thank you for your interest in our Survivor Day event. To register to attend, please visit [\[EVENT LINK\]](#) and click the “Register” button. Please note that you cannot officially register to attend our Survivor Day event through this Facebook event page, which we use first and foremost to provide information about our event.”

NOTE: To find your event link, go to [afsp.org/SurvivorDay](https://afsp.org/SurvivorDay), find your local event webpage, and copy the webpage link (it starts with [afsp.org/survivor\\_day/](https://afsp.org/survivor_day/)).

### Facebook Tips

- Email your registrants the link to the Facebook event or page and ask them to join and invite others
- Like the AFSP National page, and tag it in your posts
  - When you write your post, type @ and start typing “afspnational” and the page name should come up automatically; once you select it, the full name of the organization will appear in your post
- Post to your event or or chapter page regularly

### Sample Facebook Posts

#### For Your Personal Facebook Page

- Every 40 seconds someone in the world dies by suicide. I lost [\[FRIEND/RELATIVE NAME\]](#) to suicide. On November [\[XX\]](#), join me and others like me for International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day at [\[TIME\]](#) in [\[LOCATION\]](#) [\[EVENT LINK\]](#)
- Visit [afsp.org/SurvivorDay](https://afsp.org/SurvivorDay) to find an International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day event near you

- On November [XX], International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day, I will be remembering my [FRIEND/RELATIVE]. Who will you remember? [EVENT LINK]
- There are millions of survivors of suicide loss around the world. On International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day, we join together as one community for mutual support and understanding [EVENT LINK]

### For Your Facebook Event Page

- On November [XX], we will gather at our local International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day event, to remember our loved ones and share our journey. If you are coping with the loss of a loved one, know that you are not alone, and support is always available. [afsp.org/loss](https://afsp.org/loss)
- Special occasions can be difficult for those struggling with a loss. Know that you are not alone, and support is always available. [afsp.org/SpecialOccasions](https://afsp.org/SpecialOccasions)
- For more information about International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, visit [afsp.org/SurvivorDay](https://afsp.org/SurvivorDay)
- Children who have experienced a suicide loss may express grief in a very different way from adults, and effective support can look different for everyone. Find out more [afsp.org/AfterALoss/Children](https://afsp.org/AfterALoss/Children)
- November [XX] is International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day. I'll be remembering [FRIEND/RELATIVE NAME]. Who will you be remembering?
- Post the day before:

Don't forget tomorrow is International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day. Please join us at [TIME] in [LOCATION]. *[This is also the time to remind your attendees of any practical information they might need: simple driving directions, parking info, public transportation info, etc.]*

## Twitter

Most of your tweets will have to be 246 characters or less. Twitter posts are limited to 280 characters (including spaces), the link to your event webpage will take up 22 characters (Twitter automatically alters any URL to 22 characters, no matter the actual length of the link), and "#SurvivorDay" is 12 characters.

Using Twitter to promote your events is great, but if you don't have any followers it may feel as though you're speaking to no one. A great way to combat this and get the word out is to tweet "at" local universities, politicians, local and state-level publications, even if finding their handles (the names that follow @ on Twitter) may require a little bit of research. To tweet at someone, start a tweet with a period, then put in the @ symbol, and type the handle. If the venue where you're hosting your Survivor Day event has a Twitter handle, you can use that, too.

### Sample Tweets

Please replace the phrases in yellow with the appropriate handles and your local event information. To find your event link, go to [afsp.org/SurvivorDay](https://afsp.org/SurvivorDay), find your local event webpage, copy the webpage link (it starts with [afsp.org/survivor\\_day/](https://afsp.org/survivor_day/)), and paste it into your tweet.

- **.@REPORTER** On [11/XX] survivors of suicide loss will gather together. Join us: [EVENT LINK] #SurvivorDay
- **.@PUBLICATION** International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day is [11/XX]. Join us: [EVENT LINK] #SurvivorDay
- **.@POLITICIAN** Watch the #SurvivorDay PSA: [LINK TBD] & see the film join us: [EVENT LINK]
- **.@UNIVERSITY** Every 40 seconds someone in the world dies by suicide. #SurvivorDay offers support and understanding for those left behind

- **.@LOCALCELEBRITY** There are millions of suicide loss survivors around the world. #SurvivorDay brings us together. **[EVENT LINK]**
- **.@BUSINESS RT** to help suicide loss survivors in **[LOCATION]** find hope and healing. #SurvivorDay is **[11/XX] [EVENTLINK]**.

# Working with the Media

A media story about International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day can be an important way of creating awareness about the impact of suicide on those left behind, and the resources available to help. However, the primary goal of this day is to provide a safe, healing space for survivors. It's extremely important to work closely with any media at your local event to ensure that this environment is maintained and no loss survivor's privacy is violated.

## Ask these Key Questions

- Why does the journalist want to attend? "Is he/she a loss survivor?"
- What is the objective or focus of their article/story?
- What type of media outlet is this report for? Newspaper, radio, TV, online, school newspaper?
- Do they want to record audio, video, or take photographs?
- Do they want to interview survivors, mental health professionals, or volunteers?

## Guidelines

- Be direct and clear in explaining to journalists that this is a healing event for those grieving after a suicide, and that we must be sensitive to their loss and mindful of their privacy
- Inform journalists that no audio or video recording, photography, or interviews are permitted at the event without your prior approval
- Instead, work with journalists to set up any audio/video recording, photographs, or interviews with pre-selected survivors, mental health professionals, or volunteers prior to the event; these can be done earlier in the week or in the morning before the event starts
- Journalists should review the **Top 10 Tips for Reporting on Suicide (for Journalists) Flyer** beforehand
- Any journalists who attend **MUST** wear a name tag
- Journalists are never permitted to attend breakout group sharing sessions

Visit [afsp.org/journalists](https://afsp.org/journalists) for more information.

## If a Reporter Wants to do an Interview about Survivor Day

See the **Sharing Your Story Safely** flyer to access our guidelines on how suicide loss survivors can share their story safely and responsibly. If you are able to arrange for a survivor in your community to conduct an interview with a local reporter, download the document, then forward it to the survivor in question (or consult the document yourself, if you are the loss survivor who will be interviewed).

### Interview Tips

Do	Never
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Say "American Foundation for Suicide Prevention" (not AFSP)</li><li>• Be yourself</li><li>• Be brief</li><li>• Repeat <b>talking points</b></li><li>• Make eye contact with the reporter, not the camera</li><li>• Stand firmly on two feet</li><li>• Speak up and from your heart</li><li>• Ask the reporter for a tape or copy of the story</li><li>• Tell the reporter if you are not comfortable answering a question they ask</li><li>• Say "International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day" (not Survivor Day or ISOSLD)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Say "no comment"</li><li>• Go "off the record"</li><li>• Say "committed suicide" or describe a suicide as "successful"</li><li>• Guess on statistics or facts. If they ask something you don't know, tell them you'll get back to them with the answer later</li><li>• Give one word responses to questions</li><li>• Let the reporter lead your answer or put words in your mouth</li><li>• Look away up or down at your feet (when being interviewed on camera)</li><li>• Wear sunglasses or chew gum</li></ul>

Questions about publicity, working with the media, or conducting interviews? Contact Alexis O'Brien, AFSP's Public Relations Director, at [aobrien@afsp.org](mailto:aobrien@afsp.org) or 347-826-3577.

# Getting Publicity

## Creating a Press List

Compiling a press list is an ongoing process. Your events will grow, and the media list will pay off year after year. Plus, getting a head start on building a press list makes it a lot easier to promote your event when you get busy as Survivor Day gets closer.

Start by making a list of all your local media outlets – TV and radio stations, newspapers, weekly papers or magazines, and websites. List the local media outlets you pay attention to most first, and then branch out to include all the other popular media outlets. Don't forget to consider university and college radio stations and newspapers.

For each media outlet on your list, go to their website and find a phone number. These are usually listed at the bottom of the homepage. Call and ask for the editor or assignment desk you're trying to reach, and confirm who the right contact is depending on the type of publicity you're trying to gain (see the following sections for guidance on which press materials to send to whom).

You can also use this email template to reach out and identify the right reporters:

### Email Subject

Support Suicide Loss Survivors

### Email Body

Dear [NAME],

I'll be sending press releases and media alerts from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention about our International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day event on November [XX], but want to make sure the information goes through the proper channels so you'll have an opportunity to cover the story. Should I send these to you? Or is there another contact at [OUTLET] that I should reach out to?

Thanks for your help,  
[NAME]

## Organize Your Press List

First Name	Last Name	Outlet	Email	Phone	Twitter	Notes
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## Contacts to Look Up

### Metro/City Editor, Assignment/News Desk

Print publications and TV/radio stations call these contacts by different names, but this is the person in charge of assigning stories to journalists.

### Health Reporter

Generally the health reporter is the reporter who covers suicide, depending on the size of the publication. Look to see who has covered mental health or suicide in the past, as it will generally be the same person. Gauge their interest in providing pre-event coverage, or in interviewing you or another person involved with your event (loss survivor, event planning volunteer, etc.).

### Calendar Listing Editor

Some media outlets have someone who manages the calendar list; others have an electronic submission process. Call the outlet or have a look at their website to find out more.

### Public Service Announcement (PSA) Director

This is the person at a radio or TV station who reviews the PSAs provided by nonprofit organizations and chooses which ones to schedule.

### Producer/Guest Booker/Public Affairs Director

TV stations and larger radio stations often have public affairs or community shows that discuss upcoming nonprofit events. The producer may be interested in setting up an interview with you or a panel of local loss survivors – be sure to have guest suggestions for them.

## What to Send and When to Send it

What to Send	Calendar Listing	Media Advisory	PSA	Media Advisory
Who to Contact	Calendar Editor (or online submission page)	Producer/Public Affairs Director	PSA Director	Metro/City Editor, Assignment Desk, Health Reporter
When to Send	2-3 months before	2-3 months before	1-2 months before	2-3 weeks before, and again the Wednesday and the day before

### Glossary

#### Calendar Listing

A calendar listing is a one-paragraph description of International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day, which you will send to local newspapers, radio stations, and television stations for inclusion in their events section or on their events page. You will find a calendar listing template on the next page.

NOTE: Most towns and cities have their own official website, and many of them list upcoming events. Usually you can post information about upcoming events on these sites yourself. Look for a “submit an event” tab or button and enter all the required information.

#### Media Advisory

A media advisory is a full description of International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day that is written in a “Who, What, Where, When, and Why” format. You will find a media advisory template later in the toolkit.

#### Public Service Announcement (PSA)

A public service announcement (PSA) is like a commercial for an event or cause that is non-paid. By law, radio and TV stations are required to prove they broadcast “in the public interest” and PSAs are one way for them to meet that requirement. AFSP will create a Survivor Day PSA for television which will be available to all organizers closer to November. You will also find sample **radio PSA scripts** later in the toolkit.

NOTE: When you distribute a PSA, include the following information regarding AFSP's nonprofit tax status: AFSP 501(c)(3); tax ID 13-3393329.

## Following Up

Make a follow-up call to the media outlet one to two days after you email the calendar listing, media advisory, or PSA. Here is a sample script:

"Hi [NAME], my name is [NAME]. Yesterday I sent you a [CALENDAR LISTING/MEDIA ADVISORY/PSA] for International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day. Is this something you [COULD INCLUDE IN YOUR CALENDAR SECTION/MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN DOING A STORY ABOUT/COULD SCHEDULE IN YOUR PSA ROTATION]?"

If you are directed to voicemail, use the same script and be sure to leave your name and phone number. If you leave a message and do not receive a response within three days, call again and leave another message.

## Calendar Listing Template

### International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day November [XX], [XX]

**Event Title:** International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day

**Date:** November [XX], [XX]

**Time:** [XX] a.m. - [XX] p.m.

**Place:** [ADDRESS]

International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day (Survivor Day or ISOSLD) is the one day a year when people affected by suicide loss gather in their local communities to find comfort and gain understanding as they share stories of healing and hope.

Survivor Day was created by an act of Congress in 1999 and since then has been sponsored and supported by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. In 2018 there were 370 total events, including 32 international sites in 19 countries.

A local Survivor Day event will be held in [CITY] on Saturday, November [XX] at [LOCATION] at [TIME]. To learn more about International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day, visit [afsp.org/SurvivorDay](https://afsp.org/SurvivorDay), call [PHONE NUMBER], or email [EMAIL ADDRESS] for further details.

Parking information: [ADD AS NEEDED]

This event is free and open to the public.

### Media Contact

[EVENT ORGANIZER NAME], Survivor Day Event Organizer

[EVENT ORGANIZER PHONE NUMBER]

[EVENT ORGANIZER EMAIL ADDRESS]

## Media Advisory Template

### International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day November [XX], [XX]

**Event Title:** International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day

**Date:** November [XX], [XX]

**Time:** [XX] a.m. - [XX] p.m.

**Place:** [ADDRESS]

International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day (Survivor Day or ISOSLD) is the one day a year when people affected by suicide loss gather in their local communities to find comfort and gain understanding as they share stories of healing and hope.

Survivor Day was created by an act of Congress in 1999 and since then has been sponsored and supported by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. In 2018 there were 370 total events, including 32 international sites in 19 countries.

For many loss survivors, attending a Survivor Day event is an opportunity to discover that they are not alone in their experience of losing someone they know and love to suicide. In addition, all gatherings will include a screening of an AFSP-produced documentary for and about suicide loss survivors. For those who are unable to attend a Survivor Day event in person, AFSP hosts a Survivor Day program online at [afsp.org/SurvivorDay](https://afsp.org/SurvivorDay).

A local Survivor Day event will be held in [CITY] on Saturday, November [XX] at [LOCATION] at [TIME]. To learn more about International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day, visit [afsp.org/SurvivorDay](https://afsp.org/SurvivorDay), call [PHONE NUMBER], or email [EMAIL ADDRESS] for further details.

#### Media Contact

[EVENT ORGANIZER NAME], Survivor Day Event Organizer

[EVENT ORGANIZER PHONE NUMBER]

[EVENT ORGANIZER EMAIL ADDRESS]

## Sample Radio PSAs

Below are three scripts you could share with the radio stations in your area.

### 10 Seconds

Have you lost a loved one to suicide? International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day is Saturday, November [XX]. To find an event near you go to [afsp-dot-org-slash-survivorday](https://afsp-dot-org-slash-survivorday). That's [afsp-dot-org-slash-survivorday](https://afsp-dot-org-slash-survivorday).

### 15 Seconds

Have you lost a loved one to suicide? International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day is Saturday, November [XX]. For more information and to find an event near you, go to [afsp-dot-org-slash-survivorday](https://afsp-dot-org-slash-survivorday). That's [afsp-dot-org-slash-survivorday](https://afsp-dot-org-slash-survivorday).

### 30 Seconds

Have you lost a loved one to suicide? International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day is Saturday, November [XX]. There will be events for survivors of suicide loss in hundreds of cities, including here in [CITY]. For more information about Survivor Day and other programs sponsored by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, go to [afsp-dot-org-slash-survivorday](https://afsp-dot-org-slash-survivorday). That's [afsp-dot-org-slash-survivorday](https://afsp-dot-org-slash-survivorday).

NOTE: When you distribute these sample PSAs, include the following information regarding AFSP's nonprofit tax status: AFSP 501(c)(3); tax ID 13-3393329.

# Appendix

# Sharing Your Story Safely

## Speaking Out About Suicide



Telling your story can save lives, but only if you share it safely. Sharing your story lets people know they are not alone and shows them recovery is possible. If done safely, your story will encourage people at risk to seek help.

### Do

**Be at a safe place in your recovery.** Reflect on your own frame of mind. As a general guideline, wait at least one year after the attempt or loss before speaking.

**Define key messages.** Your story should not simply express pain. Your goal should be to educate and inspire hope.

**Practice.** Sharing your story may bring up unexpected emotions. Be sure to practice aloud so that you're prepared to speak calmly and slowly in front of others.

**Emphasize the journey.** Talk about both before and after the loss or attempt, and how far you've come in your recovery.

**Know your audience.** Consider who you will be talking to (e.g., students, clinicians, survivors) and tailor your remarks accordingly.

**Be honest and comprehensive.** Do not focus solely on the loss or attempt. Include the full range of your experience, both the positive and the negative, and how you manage your mental health today.

**Provide mental health resources** for your audience to take home, like the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), the Crisis Text Line (text TALK to 741741), or [afsp.org](https://afsp.org).

### Avoid

**Don't use phrases like "commit suicide" or "successful attempt."** These phrases perpetuate suicide's stigma and moral judgment. Preferred terms are "ended one's life" or "died by suicide."

**Avoid details about suicide methods.** Don't refer to lethal means unless your story would be incomplete to the listener without it. If mentioned, avoid including details, since graphic descriptions can be triggering to those who struggle, and cause contagion.

**Don't simplify suicide.** Reducing the attempt or loss to a single cause fails to educate the public about the many warning signs and risk factors that can signal an attempt.

**Don't glorify suicide.** Portraying suicide as honorable or romantic can lead others to view suicide as a viable option.

**Avoid portraying suicide as an option.** Suicide is not a rational backup plan or coping behavior.

# Top 10 Tips for Reporting on Suicide (for Journalists)



## Top 10 Tips for Reporting on Suicide

1. Do not use the word “committed”; instead, use “died by suicide” or “took his/her life”
2. Always provide helpline information – “If you are in crisis, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), or contact the Crisis Text Line by texting TALK to 741741”
3. Do not include details or images of lethal means or method used, which can be triggering for those who are struggling and has shown to cause contagion
4. Do not refer to suicide as a “growing problem”, “epidemic”, or “skyrocketing” as this has shown to cause contagion
5. Exclude graphic depictions of a suicide death or glamorizing method used, avoid details about the location of death, and sharing notes left behind
6. Do not refer to a suicide attempt as “successful,” “unsuccessful” or as a “failed attempt”
7. Avoid reporting that a suicide death was “caused” by a single event, such as a job loss or divorce, since research shows no one takes their life for one single reason, but rather a combination of factors (which you can learn about at url [afsp.org/signs](https://afsp.org/signs)) – reporting a “cause” leaves the public with an overly simplistic and misleading understanding of suicide
8. Convey that suicidal thoughts and behaviors can be reduced with the proper mental health support and treatment, and are not weaknesses or flaws
9. Use up-to-date suicide data – AFSP summarizes the most recent CDC data at [afsp.org/statistics](https://afsp.org/statistics)
10. Share the hopeful message that suicide is preventable in language, tone and images used; when in doubt, contact [aobrien@afsp.org](mailto:aobrien@afsp.org) for more information or to talk to an expert

[afsp.org/journalists](https://afsp.org/journalists)



