# LANGUAGE MATTERS

Language can be powerful. One way we can help prevent suicide is by changing the way we talk about suicide and mental health. Consider the following tips as they can help take the shame and judgment out of the suicide topic and help a person feel safer to ask for help.

Tips for Talking About Suicide Safely

CONSIDER SAYING	INSTEAD OF	WHY
Attempted suicide	Failed or unsuccessful suicide	To avoid presenting suicide as a desired outcome or insinuating the person is a failure.
Died by suicide/took their own life	Committed suicide	To avoid association between suicide and 'crime' or 'sin' that may reinforce stigma.
<Name> is thinking of suicide/has experienced suicidal thoughts	<name> is suicidal	To avoid defining someone by their experience with suicide; they are more than those suicidal thoughts.
Person experiencing/living with a mental illness	Suffering from mental illness or emotionally disturbed	People who experience mental health conditions can and do live healthy, fulfilling lives. Suffering implies one is unhappy or can't recover.

If changing our language can help people feel safer asking for help, then changing language can save lives.

When sharing information about suicide and mental health, ask yourself if the language and images are "helpful" or "hurtful." Refrain from using pictures that may make the audience feel dark, lonely, and hopeless. Only use images and language that show connection, hope, help-seeking, and healing.
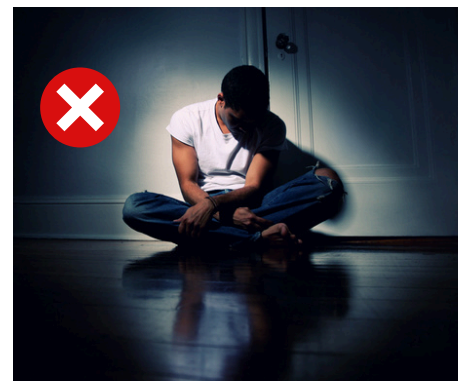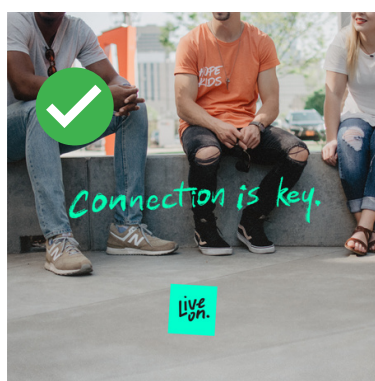
If you would like to learn more about safe messaging, scan the QR code or visit https://tinyurl.com/SafeMessaging15Min to watch a short training video.

For more in-depth information and tips like this, you can request a Safe Messaging Training by calling 801-525-5070