



## **A Joint Statement from the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention to Reporters Covering the Death of Chris Cornell**

***News outlets are reminded to use best practices for safely and accurately reporting on suicide.***

Our heartfelt condolences go out to all those grieving the death of Chris Cornell. During this time, we are reminded that research shows that the media can influence suicide rates by the way they report on suicide. Evidence suggests that when the media tells stories of people positively coping in suicidal moments, more suicides can be prevented.

We urge all members of the media (writers, producers, editors, etc.) working on these stories about Chris Cornell or other related stories about suicide to refer to the [Recommendations for Reporting on Suicide](#) for best practices for safely and accurately reporting on suicide.

The [National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention](#) (Action Alliance), the nation's public-private partnership for suicide prevention, requests that all news outlets consider the following key elements of safe and accurate reporting on suicide:

- Examples from the [guidelines](#) include:
  - Inform the audience without sensationalizing the suicide and minimize prominence (e.g., "Kurt Cobain Dead at 27").
  - Include the "Warning Signs" and "What to Do" sidebar in your article if possible (see page 2 of [recommendations](#))
  - Include the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-TALK (8255) – a free, 24/7 service that can provide people who are suicidal or those around them with support, information and local resources.
  - Avoid misinformation and offer hope. Suicide is complex. There are almost always multiple causes, including psychiatric disorders which may not have been recognized or treated. However, it's important to note in your article that these disorders *are* treatable.
  - Avoid reporting that death by suicide was preceded by a single event, such as a recent job loss, divorce or bad grades. Reporting like this leaves the public with an overly simplistic and misleading understanding of suicide.
  - Do not refer to suicide as "successful" or a "failed attempt." Instead describe as "died by suicide," or "killed him/herself."

Please refer to the suicide prevention field's full consensus guidelines on reporting on suicide as a resource as you prepare your news content on this event: <http://reportingonsuicide.org>.

If you are interested in speaking to someone representing the Action Alliance, please contact [ktorguson@edc.org](mailto:ktorguson@edc.org).

A key priority of the *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention* is recognizing journalists for safe and responsible reporting of suicide and suicide prevention. We encourage journalists to consider applying for the [SAVE Award for Excellence in Reporting On Suicide](#).

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### **ABOUT THE NATIONAL ACTION ALLIANCE FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION:**

The [National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention](#) is the public-private partnership working to advance the [National Strategy for Suicide Prevention](#) and make suicide prevention a national priority. The [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) provides funding to EDC to operate and manage the Secretariat for the Action Alliance which was launched in 2010. Learn more at [actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org](http://actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org) and join the conversation on suicide prevention by following the Action Alliance on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#).