

## Media:

- ✓ Rule 1: *Media exposure never helped anyone cope with a suicide loss.*
- ✓ Rule 2: *Direct attention to the school's response to the loss; the less said about the suicide the better.*
- ✓ Rule 3: *Encourage survivors to focus on getting support and to avoid any media contact.*
- ✓ Rule 4: *Discourage coverage that may promote a preoccupation with suicide among other at-risk youth.*
- ✓ Rule 5: *Remember that the survivors are in shock and will be unable to offer much insight into the cause of their loss.*

### **Dealing with the Media – Don't!**

This may seem impractical advice, but it will grow on you after you see or hear how the loss in your school community is portrayed in the days after it occurred. The media are poorly informed about suicide and suicide loss and are likely to be more hurtful than helpful.

The media has questions, here are some for them: What interest is served by details on the means used? Do we need simplistic speculations on causality? Why aren't parents, teachers, and students who are in shock getting support instead of contending with insensitive interviewers?

Thankfully most suicides receive no media attention. This raises the question of why any suicide should find its way into a newscast or newspaper. Suicides by well-known, young, or multiple victims, suicides by dramatic means, and highly visible suicides are all deemed newsworthy. Regrettably a school-related suicide will always become the center of a media feeding frenzy.

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