



September 25, 2017

Dear Funeral Director,

We represent a Vermont statewide coalition of organizations who are working to support the families and friends who have suffered the loss of a loved one due to suicide. We also work throughout Vermont to support mental health and other prevention programs designed to assist individuals who may be considering suicide.

Funeral home directors and their staff are often in a position to offer comfort and support to families in crisis. We are providing Vermont funeral directors these packets for distribution to families who have had a family member or friend die by suicide. Suicide is an especially intense tragedy for families and we would like for you, as a professional who assists families at the time of their loss, to have resources available to assist with your customers.

For further information about suicide and its tragic effect on families, please visit our website as below. Also, as you work with families, please try to use the following language which has been determined to be more respectful of their situation rather than certain phrases that have historically been used when referring to suicide. For example:

Please Try to Avoid:

- Committed suicide
- A successful suicide
- A completed suicide
- Failed suicide attempt

Terms to Use Instead:

- Death by suicide
- Took her/his own life
- Died by suicide
- Killed him/herself
- Suicide death

We ask for you to give one of our packets to families as you feel appropriate. Please feel free to contact us for more information on this initiative and if you need more packets. We thank you for your willingness to partner in this effort to assist grieving families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'JoEllen Tarallo'.

JoEllen Tarallo, ED.D., MCHES, FASHA
Director, VT Suicide Prevention Center