



People-First Language: Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Stigma

Mental health issues and thoughts of suicide are very often misunderstood. The stigma that people experience can prevent them from discussing their conditions and from seeking help when they need it. Using person-centered language to talk about mental illness ensures the person is seen as a person first, not as their illness.

Respectful	Stigmatizing
Died by suicide/ death by suicide/ lost their life to suicide	Commit/committed suicide
Died by suicide/ survived a suicide attempt	Successful/ unsuccessful suicide
Fatal suicide attempt / non-fatal suicide attempt	Completed/failed suicide
Risking, increasing	Epidemic, skyrocketing
<name> is facing suicide/ is thinking of suicide	<name> is suicidal
He is facing suicide / thinking of suicide / experiencing suicidal thoughts	He's suicidal
They have schizophrenia / are living with schizophrenia	They're a schizophrenic
She has bipolar disorder	She's bipolar
People with a mental illness	The mentally ill