



## Suicide Prevention Category Film Scoring Form

### 1. How well does the film creatively explore suicide prevention in a way that is positive, hopeful, and educational? (0-30)

Films should have a positive message that is hopeful and focused on suicide prevention and support. Please assess how well the film's message is communicated as well as how effective it is in educating and encouraging others.

Examples of appropriate messages:

- **Learn the warning signs:** Films can educate viewers about warning signs for suicide. Most people show one or more warning signs before an attempt, so it is important to know the signs and take them seriously (especially if a behavior is new or has increased and/or if it seems related to a painful event, loss, or change).
- **Don't keep suicide a secret:** Films can show that it is ok to break a friend's trust and share concerns with an adult if you think they might be thinking about harming themselves.
- **Find The Words To Start A Conversation:** Asking someone "Are you thinking about suicide?" will not put thoughts of suicide in their mind. In fact, asking this direct question is important.
- **Help Someone Find Their Reasons For Living:** There are steps you can take to support a friend who is thinking about suicide. One of the most important steps is helping them find their reasons for living and reminding them that pain never lasts, and you can get better together.
- **Reach out for help:** Films can encourage people to ask for help from a trusted adult or by calling a crisis line, for themselves or a friend. If someone talks about ending their life, take them seriously and connect them to help. Remind them that they are never a bother.

Note: The message does not have to be one of those listed here as long as it is focused on suicide prevention. Messages can be conveyed through dialogue, actions, or other creative means, and don't necessarily need to be stated directly.

### 2. How successful is the film at avoiding oversimplification of the causes of suicide and/or the process of recovery? (0-20)

It is okay for films to talk about life problems that may increase a person's risk of suicide – such as family issues (divorce, abuse) or social issues (bullying, break ups) – as these can possibly contribute to a young person feeling hopeless, engaging in reckless or harmful behaviors, or isolating themselves from others (all of which are warning signs for suicide); **however, films should not point to one of these events as THE cause of suicide or thoughts of suicide.** No one event "causes" a suicide, and individuals who experience suicidal thoughts or attempt suicide are often dealing with multiple difficult situations.

Additionally, it often takes more than "a simple act of kindness" to save a life or to heal from the root causes that contribute to thoughts of suicide. For instance, although picking up someone's books when they fall is a nice metaphor for treating others with empathy and compassion, recovery and suicide are both complicated.



**3. Does the film apply appropriate language and/or safe messaging (where applicable)?**  
(Yes/No, Yes = 20 points)

Please review the safe messaging guidelines below when scoring this question. You will answer “no” if one or more of these criteria were not met.

- **The film provides a suicide prevention resource:** Most films will meet this criterion by including the required endslate, but they are welcome to incorporate additional resources in their film such as, but not limited to, the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline and Teen Line.
- **The film does not include portrayals of suicide deaths or attempts or items that can be used in a suicide attempt:** This includes, but is not limited to, a person jumping off a building or bridge, or holding a gun to their head). Portraying actions related to suicide attempts and showing items someone might use for a suicide attempt even in dramatization, can increase chances of an attempt by someone who might be thinking about suicide and exposed to the film.
- **The film avoids harmful statistics:** Statistics are a complex factor in creating safe suicide prevention messages, so we recommend that our participants not use them. Films should especially avoid using statistics that make suicide seem common or inevitable (which could encourage a young person already thinking about suicide to mistakenly believe that it is a normal and acceptable solution to their problems). Saying something such as “a person dies by suicide every 18 minutes” also takes the focus off of the help available to those who are struggling. Remember, films should be focused on raising awareness around suicide prevention, not just convincing people that suicide is a problem.
- **The film uses appropriate language around suicide (if applicable):** The suicide prevention community is trying to clarify the ways people refer to actions related to suicide. The clearer and more respectful we can be when speaking about actions related to suicide, the more we will be able to remove misconceptions that prevent people from getting support.
  - Use “died by suicide” or “took their own life” (do not use committed suicide)
  - Use “attempted suicide”. Suicide and suicide attempts should not be referred to as “successful” or “unsuccessful,” as the concept of “success” (or its lack) does not apply to suicide.

**4. How technically well-produced is the film? (Consider focus, exposure, audio clarity, use of graphics and/or special effects, good pacing, flow, etc.) (0-10)**

**5. How well does the film provide a clear and effective narrative/script that is easy to understand and makes sense? (0-10)**

**6. How well does the film creatively use colors, music, and/or graphics to support its main message and set a positive and hopeful tone? (0-10)**