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Supplementary Material

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Surfing for Suicide Methods and Help: Content Analysis of Web Sites Retrieved With Search Engines in Austria and the United States

Author(s):

Benedikt Till, DSc, and Thomas Niederkrotenthaler, MD, PhD, MMSc

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Supplementary eTable 1

Descriptions and Coding Examples for Types of Websites

Type	Description	Example
News item	News article about suicide or related news item.	CNN: http://edition.cnn.com/2013/01/12/us/new-york-reddit-founder-suicide
Gaming site	Website that featured a game about suicide or a game containing suicide as a topic.	Adult Swim Games: http://games.adultswim.com/five-minutes-to-kill-yourself-adventure-online-game.html
Advertising/commercial	Advertisement or commercial that uses suicide for promotional purpose or a commercial online-shop (incl. online pharmacies).	Abilify: http://www.abilify.com
Art	Visual or audio material on suicide: pictures, videos, songs, poems, lyrics, etc.	Lyrics freak: http://www.lyricsfreak.com/j/johnny+mandel/suicide+is+painless_20801409.html
Information/education	Websites to inform about the topic of suicide, including statistics, prevention, negative consequences of suicide.	Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suicide
Support (suicide prevention)	Website designed to offer support to suicide-risk individuals.	National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
Support (grief)	Website designed to offer support to individuals grieving after suicide.	Open to Hope: http://www.opentohope.com
Research	Websites related to suicide research, including case studies, letters, and scientific books.	Beijing Suicide Research and Prevention Center: http://www.crisis.org.cn/UploadFile/ReadParty/Methods--lethality.pdf
Discussion forum	Suicide-related message boards and blogs.	Suicide Forum: http://www.suicideforum.com/forum.php
Personal account	Personal accounts of own suicidality or accounts of suicidal behavior of friends or family members.	It Gets Better Project: http://www.itgetsbetter.org

Supplementary eTable 2

Code Categories, Code Definitions, and Coding Examples for the Protective (n=11) and Harmful (n=9) Item Characteristics

Code	Code definition	Coding Example ¹
Protective characteristics:		
Contains a self-quiz	Contains an interactive self-quiz on suicidality or depression (e.g. “Are you suicidal? Take this quiz to find out!”).	“Use this brief 18-question online automated quiz to help you determine if you may need to see a mental health professional for diagnosis and treatment of depression, or for tracking your depression on a regular basis.” (BT176)
Contains suicide research	Elaborates on academic research on suicide.	“Studies from Sri Lanka suggest that less than 20% of pesticides used for self-harm are bought for the purpose; the majority are freely available in the home or nearby garden (Eddleston et al., 2006a).” (BT55)
Focus on suicidal ideation	The website focuses primarily on suicidal ideation (and not on suicide, suicide attempts, or the act of planning suicidal behavior).	“If you have thoughts of suicide, these options are available to you:...” (BT139)
Mental disorder related to suicide	The relationship between mental disorder and suicidality is acknowledged, either at the level of an individual suicide, or in general terms. Colloquial terms such as ‘crazy’ do not qualify as a reference to mental disorder.	“And remember that any untreated mental illness, including depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and others, may cause suicide.” (BT142)
Myths debunked	Myths (see section with harmful characteristics) are explicitly debunked or the website contains a story or report with focus on the debunking of a myth.	“Suicide Myth: Suicide always occurs without any warning signs. Suicide Fact: There are almost always warning signs.” (BT142)
Portrays suicide as complex	Suicidality is portrayed as complex phenomenon and is not explained monocationally.	“Although the reasons why people commit suicide are multifaceted and complex, life circumstances that may immediately precede someone committing suicide include the time period of at least a week after discharge from a psychiatric hospital or a sudden change in how the person appears to feel (for example, much worse or much better).” (BT232)
Provides alternatives	Provides specific alternatives to suicide or alternative solutions for crises or ways to distract the individual from suicidal ideation (e.g. use of antidepressants, psychotherapy, talking to a friend, sports, etc.).	“Speaking to a therapist or attending a support group can help you work through your grief and improve your overall mental health.” (BT135)
Provides warning signs	Provides warning signs for suicidality (talks about committing suicide, has trouble eating or sleeping, experiences drastic changes in behavior, withdraws from friends and/or social activities, loses interest in hobbies, work school, etc., prepares for death by making out a will and final arrangements, gives away prized possessions, has attempted suicide before, takes unnecessary risks, has had recent severe losses, is preoccupied with death and dying, loses interest in personal appearance, or increases use	“These signs may mean someone is at risk for suicide. [...] Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself. Looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online or buying a gun. [...]” (BT139)

	of alcohol or drugs).	
Contains mastering of suicidal crisis	Provides the portrayal of an individual's mastering of his/her suicidal crisis.	"I have created these sites from my own life experiences going through and coming out of some terribly suicidal times. [...] What I wanted and needed to know, was that I could absolutely, positively, get rid of the terrible suffering I could no longer endure." (BT565)
Provides details of a contact support service	Provides phone numbers or other contact information for crisis intervention or suicide prevention resources in the website's country of origin.	"The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a 24-hour, toll-free suicide prevention service available to anyone in suicidal crisis. If you need help, please dial: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)" (BT176)
Contains potentially protective picture or video	The website contains a prominent placed picture or video that portrays a therapy or any medical or psychological treatment.	-
<hr/>		
Harmful characteristics:		
Details of a suicide method	Provides detailed suicide methods or instructions (at least two consecutive steps in the accomplishment of a specific suicide method are reported; excludes humorous or sarcastic descriptions, statistical reports of suicide rates by method, sociological or historical information about suicide in the context of cultural research, and brief lists).	"Most experts recommend combining drugs with alcohol and a garbage bag over the head, secured with an elastic." (BT301)
Information on celebrity suicide	Contains information about a celebrity's suicide or suicide attempt (e.g. Kurt Cobain).	"For example, Cleopatra supposedly had an asp bite her when she heard of Marc Antony's death." (BT314)
Name of a suicide victim reported	The first and/or family name of an individual that committed or attempted suicide is reported.	"Lindsay died by suicide." (BT142)
Method in headline	Reference to a specific method in the headline.	"Factors influencing the decision to use hanging as a method of suicide: qualitative study" (TN48)
Suicide location or site reported	Readers are provided with enough information to identify the location or site where the event took place. The exact mail address is identifiable, a well-defined area of local interest is reported or a map showing the location is provided.	"In 1933, Kiyoko Matsumoto committed suicide by jumping into the Mihara crater." (BT314)
Reference to a suicide 'epidemic'	Wording that describes suicide as spreading and involving more and more individuals, or an extraordinarily high number of individuals.	"Over the last decade, the suicide rate among young children has increased dramatically." (BT380)
Public myths reported	One or more of the following public myths is enhanced by the text: those who talk about suicide are less likely to attempt suicide; there are no preceding warning signs; there is nothing you can do about suicidality; someone who has a history of making 'cries for help' will not commit suicide; talking about suicide encourages suicide; only the mentally ill exhibit suicidal behavior; once a person is suicidal, he or she is always suicidal; suicide can be a blessed relief for the individual or those around him or her.	"People who are so unhappy and decide to do a suicide are very determined would do anything, no one can usually stop them (unless you are next to them all the time, but you can't really find out whether she/he is actually going to do it)..." (TN41)

Suicide is heroized	Suicidal behavior is described in a heroic way, portraying suicide as an desirable goal (e.g. characterized as “special death”).	“Or maybe she saved somebody else with doing this [committing suicide] not realizing of course.” (TN41)
Contains potentially harmful picture or video	The website contains a prominent placed picture or video that portrays a suicide method, the location or site of a suicide, the body of a suicide victim, or a suicide note.	-

¹References to the location of the text segments in the material are given in parentheses.