



THE
IMMUNIZATION
PARTNERSHIP



A Booster Dose of Communication Strategies



IMMUNIZE. PREVENT WHAT'S PREVENTABLE.

Publication Date January 2012. Revised September 2018.



THE IMMUNIZATION PARTNERSHIP



St. David's
FOUNDATION



Acknowledgments

The Immunization Partnership wishes to acknowledge the generous support of St. David's Foundation for the original Communications Toolkit in 2012. Without their guidance and enthusiasm, this toolkit would not be possible. We are very grateful for their investment in protecting the health of all Texans.

St. David's Foundation invests in a healthy community through funding, hard work, and initiatives to better care for the underserved and uninsured. As a joint owner of St. David's HealthCare, the Foundation achieves its goals by investing the proceeds from the hospitals back into the Central Texas community. From its beginning in 1924, St. David's HealthCare has now grown to include twelve hospitals, ten surgery centers, five urgent care clinics, and nine specialty facilities reaching from Georgetown to Kyle.

Each year, the Foundation directly gives millions to the community through grants to numerous agencies, local safety net clinics, and the highly acclaimed St. David's Dental Program. By funding initiatives in six key areas, St. David's Foundation can focus on improving the health and healthcare of all Central Texans today and for years to come.

We wish to thank the local champions and partners who gave us feedback on their experiences, enabling us to make this toolkit as user-friendly as possible. We truly appreciate the following coalitions and organizations: El Paso Immunization Coalition, Immunization Coalition of Greater Houston, South Plains Immunization Coalition, South Texas Immunization Coalition, Gregg County Vaccine Awareness Coalition, Tarrant County Immunization Coalition, and Northeast Texas Immunization Coalition.

We would also like to thank the Carbonara Group for their expertise in the field of media relations and strategic communications, and for their insight and time dedicated to this project.

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INTRODUCTION

THE IMMUNIZATION PARTNERSHIP

The mission of the Immunization Partnership is to eradicate vaccine-preventable diseases by educating the community, advocating for evidence-based public policy, and supporting immunization best practices.

The Immunization Partnership has three main focus areas that address both the root causes of low immunization rates and the far-reaching policy issues that impact immunization rates in Texas. These three focus areas are:

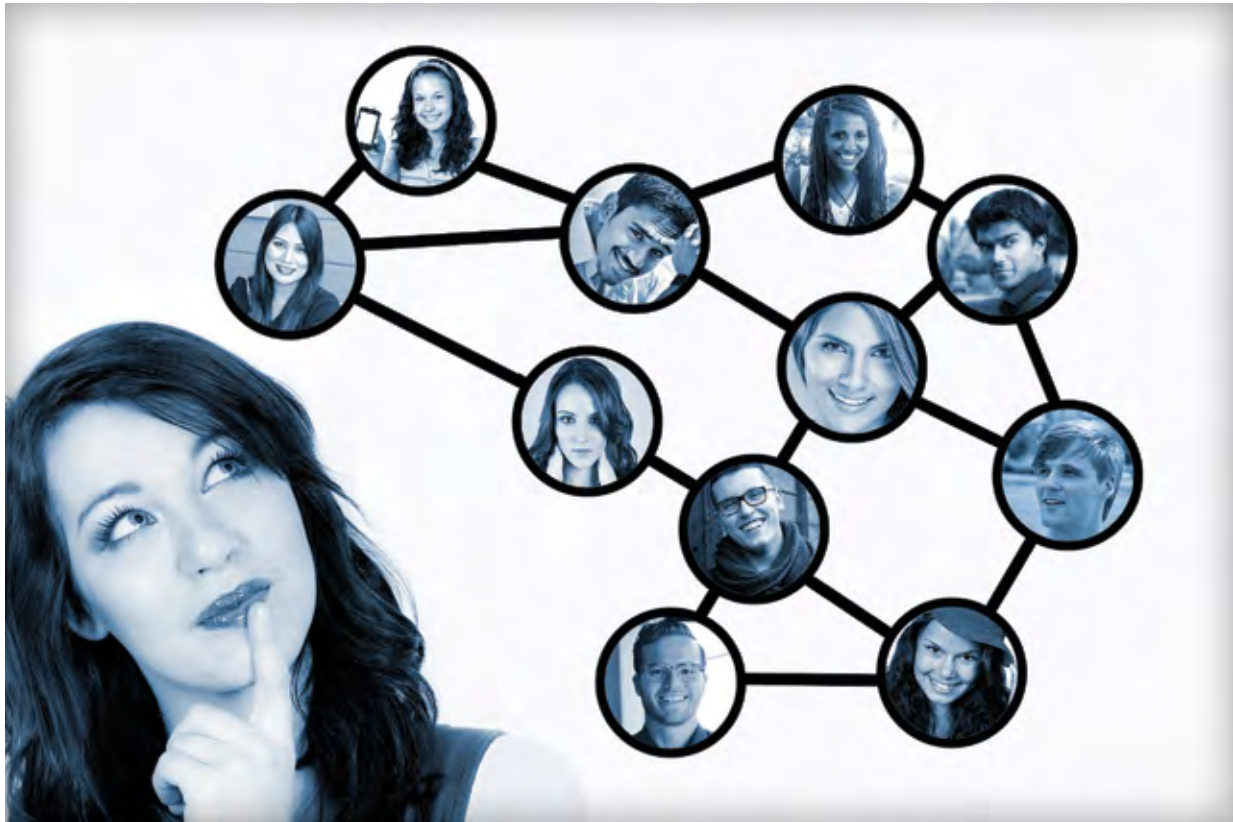
- Educating families and healthcare providers about immunizations
- Supporting the use of immunization best practices
- Advocating for laws and policies on a local, state, and national level that promote high immunization rates

For more information, please visit www.immunizeUSA.org.

ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

The Immunization Partnership works with several immunization coalitions that are working to improve immunization rates in their community and communicate the importance and safety of vaccines. After hearing from many coalitions that there was a need for more information about how to implement strategic communication initiatives, The Immunization Partnership developed a toolkit which offers best practices in media relations, social media, and other aspects of public relations.

This toolkit is divided into five sections, each focused on a specific communications topic. Section A provides an overview of media relations and how it can benefit your coalition or organization. In Section B, we discuss the importance of preparing a strategic communications plan that guides the development and implementation of your media and communications efforts. In Section C, we discuss the benefits of media relations and how best to engage the media, using the effective communication model, as well as provide detailed overview of how to interact with reporters and conduct successful media interviews. Section D presents an overview of social media strategies and how they can be leveraged to support your overall mission and goals. Finally, Section E reviews important evaluation methods for your coalition's use. The toolkit provides specific tools that can be utilized when developing and implementing your communications plan.



We acknowledge that many coalitions or collaborative organizations are structurally or programmatically associated with public/government entities and so may not have control over their media efforts. Regardless of your associations and your experience, this toolkit can help. In addition to providing basic strategies for engaging the media, this toolkit also provides a strong foundation in communication and messaging. Use this toolkit to find more effective ways of advancing your coalition's activities and efforts, communicating to donor agencies, building partnerships, developing educational mediums for parents/community members, and promoting immunizations through key messaging.

This toolkit was originally created in 2012 by public relations professionals who have extensive experience in strategizing and implementing communication campaigns about immunization awareness. The toolkit was updated by TIP's staff in August 2018. The toolkit reflects current social media practices and strategies to engage with media. We hope it will serve as a useful tool in engaging the media and developing communications that support your local immunization promotion efforts.

The toolkit reflects the work of many individuals. The update would not have been possible without the time and commitment of TIP staff: Allison Winnike, Katy Gore, David Fletcher, Hill Olson, and Carrie Fitch.

SECTION A:

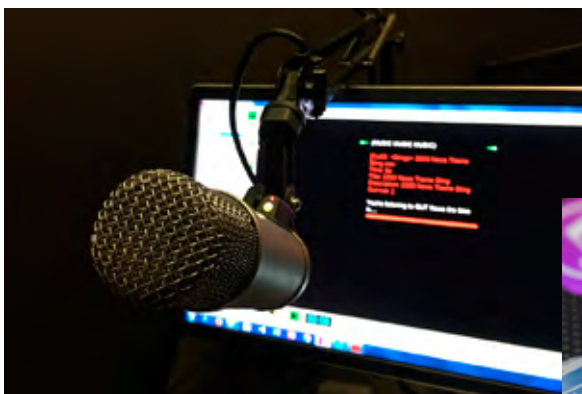
WHAT IS MEDIA RELATIONS AND HOW CAN IT BENEFIT YOUR COALITION

THE IMPORTANCE OF MEDIA PARTNERS

Media relations involves working with various traditional media outlets for the purpose of informing the public about your coalition's mission, practices, and key messages about a desired topic in a positive, consistent, and credible manner. This can be accomplished by providing newsworthy stories or using spokespersons to target media outlets and garner news coverage. Nowadays, community members get their news from a multitude of sources. Some utilize traditional media like newspapers, radio stations, and broadcast news. Others find their news on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, or internet news sites.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF MEDIA YOUR COALITION CAN UTILIZE

There are two types of media available for your coalition to utilize – traditional and owned media. Traditional media outlets are newspapers, radio, and broadcast TV stations. Whereas, owned media consists of the media your coalition has control over, such as a website, social media platforms, blogs, and email communications.



HOW MEDIA RELATIONS HELPS YOU GET YOUR MESSAGE ACROSS

Traditional media is important to your coalition because it provides an unbiased view of your coalitions' activities, and it reaches more people than owned media typically does, especially if you are not spending money on owned media. Owned media may reach more people when you spend money on advertisement. Traditional media is also important because it is your best medium to reach audiences who do not utilize social media platforms.

Owned media is important to your coalition because it allows you to fully control the messaging and narrative of your communications. Owned media is primarily used to engage with the community, build brand awareness, and inform your target audience about upcoming events and coalition news that traditional media may not deem newsworthy.

THE GOAL

The goal of media relations is to maximize positive coverage in the mass media without paying for it directly. There are some instances, however, where media relations can be leveraged through a paid campaign. For instance, if you purchase a TV, radio, or print advertising spot.

The Dallas
Morning News

CNN

St. Petersburg
Times
tampabay.com

CHICAGO
SUN-TIMES

7NEWS
TheDenverChannel.com

The
Boston
Globe

El Paso
Times
IT'S AN EL PASO THING.

Waco Tribune-Herald

The New York Times

AUSTIN
NEWS
kxan.com

88.7
kuhf-fm
hpr

SECTION B:

PREPARING A STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

The best way to ensure optimal exposure of your coalition's efforts and key messages is to develop a strategic communications plan. The communication plan serves as your guide throughout the year and ensures that your communications efforts are in line with your overall mission. It should be flexible to accommodate changes or new opportunities that may arise. You can write a communication plan for one year or more, depending on how much change exists from year to year and the number of events planned.

When writing your communications plan, it should include goals and objectives, target audiences, key messages, priority events, and campaigns for the year. In addition, it is important to take into consideration any potential partnerships that could benefit your communication efforts and appropriate media channels for each element of your plan. Most importantly, remember to build in an evaluation component to assess the impact of your efforts, whether your efforts achieved the response that you were looking for and if your messages reached your target audiences.

Communication planning can be a challenging task, but it can be accomplished with proper planning and collaboration. Do your best to think through the process and incorporate as many elements of the plan as possible, given your resources. An investment in communication planning may increase community buy-in, promote local fund-raising, and help your coalition document its progress over time.

Strategic Communications Plan

// January 1, 2019

- I. Goal
- II. Objectives
- III. Target Audiences
- IV. Key Messages
- V. Media Outlets
- VI. Spokespersons
- VII. Events/Partnerships
- VIII. Social Media
- IX. Evaluation

GOALS: Identify strategic goals that support your coalition's mission and purpose. Goals describe what you hope to accomplish in the long-term.

TARGET AUDIENCES: Consider all audiences that you might contact, attempt to influence, or serve. For instance, if your coalition is committed to increasing adolescent immunization rates, consider events and outlets that target this audience. In order to identify your target audiences, you may consider conducting a brief assessment of your community needs. When identifying your target audiences, ask yourself these questions:

- How does each audience best receive its information?
- How often should they be communicated to?
- What are the targeted media outlets to reach your audiences?
- What are the key messages that are relevant to each audience segment?
- What challenges might you need to overcome in communicating effectively with them?

KEY MESSAGES: Develop key messages that can be communicated to your target audiences throughout your program and on a consistent basis. Noteworthy messages should:

- *Apply to your objectives and to your identified target audiences.* Determine what you want the audiences to know and what action you want them to take.
- *Be succinct, clear, memorable, and relevant to each audience segment.* The messages might be about the organization, an event or a call-to-action.
- *Refrain from jargon.* Use verbiage that resonates with your primary audiences.
- *Complement existing news stories, topics, or comments.* Reinforce already covered news.
- *Reference statistical data.* When referencing data, cast the message in a way that speaks to your audience. It's more important that the audience gets the key point rather than memorizes the figures.



A statistic might say that 85% of school-aged children have received their vaccines. “[NAME COALITION] recognizes that the majority of parents, about 85%, get their school-aged children immunized. We are working to communicate to other parents that vaccines are safe and are the best way to protect children from diseases.”

OBJECTIVES: Identify communication objectives—the results you want to achieve for each audience. These benchmarks are attached to a timeframe and are measurable. Measurable objectives help your coalition stay focused on what needs to be achieved and evaluate the effectiveness of your initiatives. Most objectives typically measure awareness, acceptance, or action. Below are some examples of communication objectives.

- By August, promote and host a back-to-school immunization fair for at least 100 families.
- Over the next year, increase annual earned media coverage by ___ %.
- By the end of the year, attract 100 followers/fans on Facebook and Twitter.
- By December, position Dr. XXX as a local expert on immunizations by placing him in four media stories.
- By the end of the year, solicit at least 100 new contacts for your e-blast database.



MEDIA OUTLETS: Identify which media outlets reach your primary audiences. Media outlets include radio stations with news departments, television news stations, newspapers, and magazines that are read and viewed by your constituents. The quantity of media outlets is not the goal; it is more effective that the selected media outlets reach your target audiences. Here are some steps on how you can accomplish this important element:

- *List all outlets in your media market.* This includes daily newspapers, community publications, magazines, news stations, and radio stations. Also, include organization newsletters, and relevant blogs.
- *Survey your stakeholders.* This can be done formally or informally to determine preferred outlets.
- *Watch newscasts and read publications.* Know firsthand the types of stories that broadcast and print media cover. This will give you insight into how to propose stories about your coalition.
- *Research the reporting style of certain health reporters, school reporters, and relevant journalists.* It is ineffective to send every news release and/or media advisory to every outlet in the market. Identify the most appropriate publication or news station, given your target audience.

MEDIA RELATIONS TOOLS: Explore which tools and techniques should be used to propose your story to the media. Media relations tools can include a pitch, media advisory, calendar release, news release, fact sheet, media kit, or a public service announcement (PSA). Regardless of which method you choose, it is important to incorporate the following elements: 1) key message/call to action, 2) intended audience, 3) explanation of why your story is newsworthy, 4) resources (statistics or factsheets), and 5) brief background on your coalition.

SPOKESPERSONS: Identify a couple of people who are the face and voice of the organization. These are individuals who can be positioned as expert sources on the topic of immunizations and who can be called upon for media interviews. Depending upon the size and objectives of your coalition, you may have one or more spokespersons. For instance, you may have various spokespersons for specific immunization topics (e.g. vaccine safety, provider reimbursement, or influenza). You may also have a spokesperson who specifically addresses medical/scientific issues and one who serves as your coalition representative. It may be helpful for your spokespersons to participate in media training to help develop their public speaking skills.

EVENTS/PARTNERSHIPS: Identify community partners that share similar immunization promotion objectives. Before agreeing to commit to a partnership, consider the following:

- *Make certain that the union is mutually beneficial and that BOTH parties will gain from the partnership.*
- *Ensure the partner's goals, objectives, audiences, and activities align with your communication plan.*
- *Establish expectations for the partnership up front.*

Example: How will you publicize the event or partnership? Will you share communication platforms? Will the partner want to be included in your communication materials? Do they have media contacts that you can leverage?



TIMELINE: Create a calendar which outlines what activities need to be accomplished and by **when**. The calendar can include annual events, promotion opportunities, and appropriate times to pitch stories. For instance, back-to-school immunization events would be posted on the calendar for July or August.

EVALUATING YOUR EFFORTS: Monitor and evaluate the impact of your efforts. Evaluation is the only way to determine what aspects of your communication plan are working and how efforts can be improved for future communication planning.

SECTION C:

ENGAGING WITH MEDIA

Media relations provides a unique opportunity for coalitions to use traditional media to inform the public about important immunization topics and encourage the public to take action in helping your coalition improve immunization rates. As your coalition works to improve immunization rates and institute policies that benefit the community at large, it is best to establish working relationships with the local news and health reporters. Having reporters who understand community immunization challenges will work to your advantage when garnering media coverage to increase awareness about your coalition, its efforts, and how it is working to overcome local challenges.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MEDIA RELATIONS

When it comes to immunization coverage, the vaccine exemptions in schools debate and recent disease outbreaks are hot topics in the media. Reporters are always looking for expert sources and it is beneficial to them—and to your coalition—to become a valuable source of information about immunizations.



It is imperative that immunization coalitions establish positive relationships with media outlets in both a *proactive and reactive manner*.

OPPORTUNITIES

Proactive media relations is sending news content or utilizing a spokesperson to convey a message that you want the media to cover. **Reactive media relations** is when the media calls your coalition looking for information and/or a spokesperson for a news article or segment.

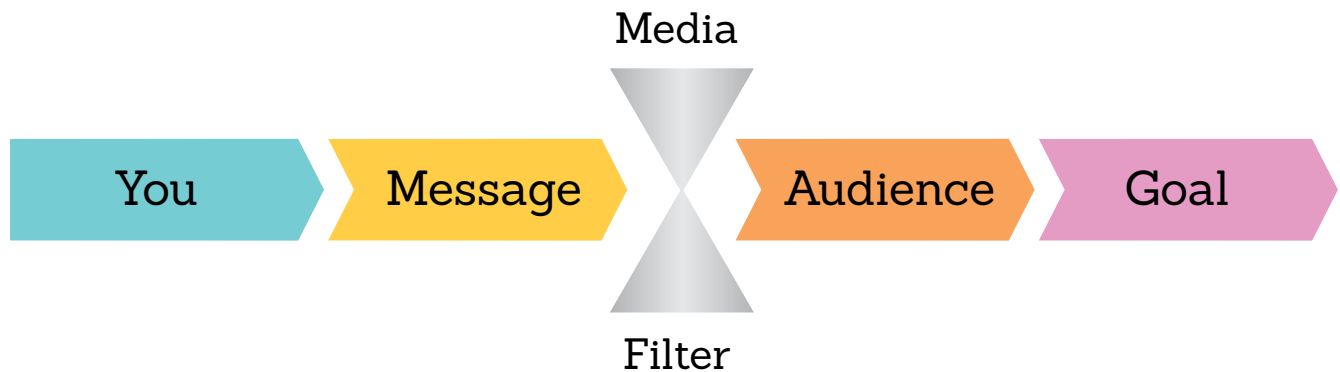
Reactive opportunities often result from establishing key relationships with journalists, who come to rely on your coalition as a trustworthy source and thought leader on the topic of immunizations.

UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION MODEL

Before promoting your coalition and your messages to the media, it is critical to understand the effective communication model. The four parts of the communication model are *you* – the way you communicate, *the message* – what you're communicating, *the audience* – who you're communicating to, and *the goal* – what you're trying to achieve through your communication efforts and/or what action you want the audience to take. For instance, your end goal may be “parents getting their children immunized for flu season”. Effective communication model:



A fifth part of the communication model, the **media filter**, is added when communicating through the media.



The *media filter* is the way that the media interprets your message. This interpretation may or may not be aligned with your goal. The media filter can exist for a variety of reasons, including reporters' limited understanding of the issues, reporter bias, sensationalism, and the editing process. To overcome the media filter, it is critical that you speak through the filter directly to your audience. The more concise and direct your message is, the less chance your intended goal will be lost in interpretation. A more detailed explanation of messaging is discussed in the next section.

HOW MEDIA RELATIONS HELPS YOU GET YOUR MESSAGE ACROSS

The media is not your audience. The media is the vehicle or filter that your coalition can use to communicate important immunization messages to your audience. The media can be your ally when your various immunization messages have newsworthy elements.

YOUR MESSAGE

In the news industry, your story or message has a strong chance of being communicated through the media if it passes these questions

- **Timely** – *Does your story have to do with something that is currently in the news?*
- **Impact** – *Does your message resonate with a large segment of the outlet's audience?*
- **Prominence** – *Think in terms of "firsts." Are you unveiling, launching or introducing a new product or idea to the public?*
- **Conflict** – *Does the story have potential to have opposing viewpoints?*
- **Unique** – *Does your story offer something new, provide a fresh perspective or reiterate an important message?*
- **Proximity** – *How closely does it affect the audience?*

Newsworthy immunization stories often achieve the following:

- Inform the general public about the benefits of immunizations
- Counteract widely circulated myths and misinformation
- Explain new CDC recommendations and describe at what ages the vaccines should be given
- Show the serious consequences of vaccine-preventable diseases
- Demonstrate an understanding of vaccine concerns, but use scientific facts to make claims
- Cover a story about an immunization fair, back-to-school immunizations or disease outbreaks

INTERACTING WITH REPORTERS

Reporters are not out to get you. The truth is—they do not care about you. Reporters care about getting a good news story that is interesting, accurate, and that will inform their viewers or readers. They want to know why they should be interested in your news and if your news answers the 5Ws and H: **who, what, where, when, why, how.**

When interacting with the media, remember that the media can have a negative bias and that what is reported is often out of your control. The only thing you can control is what you say, how you say it, and your demeanor. You may find that some outlets or reporters will want to turn an informative story about immunizations into a provocative headline that sensationalizes the topic. It is normal for the media to balance a story; however, it is critical for you to determine if it is a fair platform in which to deliver your information.

Do not avoid the media. If you are requested to conduct an interview, you have a right to know the context of your remarks, so always ask questions. Find out the premise of the story, what prompted the inquiry, who else is being interviewed, and what the reporter's main theme or angle may be. For instance, you do not want a medical expert from your coalition to be positioned against someone from the anti-vaccine movement who is arguing an emotional case, and does not acknowledge the science. The key is to remain on message and use the media to convey your position to the audience.

You can have a reporter come to your coalition events. The most common way to do this is by emailing traditional media entities in the area a press release to inform them about important information regarding your coalition or any upcoming events. A **press release** is just a short message that includes the who, what, when, where, how, and why. This alerts the media so they can decide whether or not to show and cover the events or news that you want to get out into the public. You can search for email addresses on the websites of the entities you want to approach. Remember to keep press releases short and interesting.



INTERACT

Interacting with vocal vaccine deniers can be a challenging task due to the emotional nature in which vaccine-related topics are discussed. Whether or not you chose to interact with a vaccine denier is completely up to your coalition. However, it is important to keep all interactions professional. Engaging vaccine deniers in random encounters could lead to bad publicity for both you and the coalition you represent. Below are a few tips for handling interviews with vaccine deniers.

- *Maintain your composure at all times*
- *Stick to your talking points*
- *Stick to the facts – science is on your side!*
- *Do not belittle the opposers*

One important thing to remember if your coalition does decide to engage is that the general public is your target audience not the vaccine deniers. A tailored response is an opportunity to inform vaccine supporters and the vaccine hesitant.



EXAMPLES OF MEDIA RELATIONS TOOLS

Think of all the tools that you can use to reach out to the media. You can use these in any combination, but below we've identified the typical uses and value of each. Each of these typically answer the 5Ws and H: who, what, where, when, why, how.

Media Relations Tools	Important Elements
Media Pitch <i>A short, concise statement that can be delivered by email or phone. It provides a succinct, but comprehensive summary of details that tells the reporter what you want them to cover and why.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief and impactful (not a story or news script) • Limited to pertinent information • Delivered by email or telephone • Explains why the story is newsworthy (this can be done by linking the pitch to a recent study or another story that was in the news) • Explains why viewers/readers would be interested in the topic • Brief background on the coalition • Contact information for the coalition
Media Advisory <i>An alert sent to the media to invite them to attend and cover an event. For example, if your coalition is hosting a health fair or a large-scale immunization event, you may want to consider distributing a media advisory.</i>	<p>A media advisory outlines the “5Ws and H” in the following order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What – Explanation and newsworthiness of the event. • Who – Lists the people that will be available to conduct interviews. • When – Provides the date and the best time slot for media to take video, photos and obtain comments from spokespersons. • Where – Gives the name of the location and address. Also lists special instructions like where to park. • Why – Provides a “hook” or reason why the media outlet should cover the event. Includes background information on the coalition. • How – Explains how the event will take place and impact the public. • Visuals (Optional) – Include this section if the event is extremely visual (particularly appealing to television). Tell reporters what type of visuals they can expect (e.g. fifth grade children receiving free flu shots from a mobile clinic outside their school).
Press release <i>A news release that is written about something “new,” such as a new immunization update or study, an announcement about the coalition, a post-event recap, or to call the public’s attention to an issue or position.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted for specific outlets and serves a specific purpose. • Example: Some releases are for your website, some are sent to community news outlets, and some are appropriate for city reporters to keep them abreast about a topic or your coalition. • Written according to the Associated Press style with the most important news at the top and less important details occurring later. This “inverted pyramid style” allows an editor to “cut from the bottom” and still retain the most salient news in the release. • Written in a manner that could run word-for-word in the newspaper. Tip: The best way to write for journalists is to read how journalists write and emulate their style. • Before sending a news release, ask yourself the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Why would the reporter care about the news? – Is it newsworthy for the media outlet’s audience? – What do you want the reporter to do with the news? ** You can purchase an Associated Press Stylebook from the local bookstore or access it online at APStylebook.com.

Media Relations Tools	Important Elements
<p>Calendar Release</p> <p><i>Similar to a media advisory, but differs in purpose. A media advisory is an invitation to cover an event and a calendar release is an invitation to the general public to attend an event.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details how much the event costs. • Explains how an individual can buy a ticket or sign up. • Most community papers and some TV stations will have a community calendar either in print or online.
<p>Public Service Announcement (PSA)</p> <p><i>A short, but informative or persuasive news brief aired for no cost on radio, television stations, YouTube and other video outlets. PSAs are aired when no commercial time has been sold for a particular time slot. Because there is no cost for the air time or space, the station airs the message as a public service on an as-available basis.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written to fit a 15- or 30-second timeslot. • In rare instances radio stations will use a 60-second PSA. • Before developing your PSA, reach out to the news director at the media outlets and ask if they accept PSAs and if so, their preferred format. • Consider recording your PSA and sending an electronic file of the PSA to the stations in your market. Another option is to send a script to be read by an on-air personality.
<p>Fact sheet</p> <p><i>A tool that gives a reporter background information about your coalition, a subject, or event.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A bulleted list of supporting facts on your coalition or a topic. • Example: A fact sheet on your coalition may include its mission, leadership, key facts, and positions. • Your coalition may have multiple fact sheets. • Example: You may have one just on the coalition, one on a major program or event, one on a specific vaccine or one on general immunizations for children/adolescents.
<p>Media Kit</p> <p><i>There are two types of media kits: coalition-specific media kit and event/initiative-specific media kit.</i></p> <p>Coalition-specific media kit: <i>a tool used when introducing the organization for the first time to a reporter.</i></p> <p>Event/initiative-specific media kit: <i>a tool that gives reporters who are covering the event important information to their story development.</i></p>	<p><i>Coalition-specific media kit</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News release highlighting the coalition's purpose and efforts. • Biography on the coalition's chair or primary spokesperson. • Fact sheet that outlines the coalition's goals. • List of story ideas and an article or feature story that was written by someone outside the organization about the coalition. <p><i>Event/initiative-specific media kit</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News release about the event (e.g. health fair or panel discussion). • Fact sheet about the event or topic. • Biographies of the event speakers. • Coalition fact sheet. • USB with graphics.

Dear [Insert Reporter's Name],

There is just over a month left before school starts (August 23) in the Houston area. Are you interested in interviewing an immunization expert about the importance of children being immunized before they return to school? [INSERT NAME OF COALITION SPOKESPERSON] is the [INSERT TITLE/POSITION] and is very well versed in school law and the immunizations that are required prior to school entry.

Making sure that students are properly immunized before returning to school is essential to keeping students healthy and decreasing the number of school days they miss each year.

The number of parents claiming immunization exemptions for their children is increasing and some parents undoubtedly have questions. This may be a good time to have a knowledgeable and approachable authority on the show to talk about this important issue.

I will follow up with you shortly to see if I can coordinate an interview for you with [INSERT NAME OF SPOKESPERSON].

[INSERT YOUR NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION].

Headshot
Of
Spokesperson

NAME, CREDENTIALS

TITLE

LINK TO COALITION WEBSITE

Dear [Insert Reporter's Name],

Flu season is here and [INSERT NAME OF COALITION] will be giving FREE flu shots on [INSERT DATE], from [INSERT START AND END TIME]. Are you interested in covering this event to report about the importance of getting vaccinated against the flu?

[INSERT NAME OF COALITION SPOKESPERSON] from [INSERT NAME OF COALITION] is available to talk about the increase that the local health department has seen in influenza cases. He can also address the differences in the various flu vaccines and which population groups are at increased risk of contracting influenza, including children, healthcare workers, and pregnant women.

Below, I have included a media advisory about the influenza event and more information about [INSERT NAME OF SPOKESPERSON]. Please feel free to contact me if interested in this opportunity and I will be happy to coordinate an interview for you with [INSERT NAME OF SPOKESPERSON].

[INSERT YOUR NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION].

Headshot
Of
Spokesperson

NAME, CREDENTIALS

TITLE

LINK TO COALITION WEBSITE

CONTACT: PR / MEDIA RELATIONS CONTACT
 COALITION NAME
 O: (713) 555-5555
 C: (713) 555-5555
 E-mail address

COALITION TO GIVE FREE IMMUNIZATIONS AT BACK-TO-SCHOOL FAIR

WHAT: The [INSERT NAME OF COALITION] will offer FREE immunizations to middle school students at its first back-to-school fair on [INSERT DATE] at the [INSERT LOCATION]. Prior to attending the first day of class, Texas middle school students are required to show proof that they received their Tdap, varicella and meningococcal vaccinations.

During the fair, coalition representatives will also talk to parents about the importance of immunizations in protecting their children from vaccine-preventable diseases. [INSERT COALITION SPOKESPERSON] will be available during the fair for media interviews and can address why public health officials are concerned that more parents are opting out of immunizations for their children.

WHEN: Saturday, Aug. 1, 2018
 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Spokesperson available 10:00 a.m. - noon

WHO: [INSERT NAME OF SPOKESPERSON]
 [INSERT RELEVANT TITLE]
 [INSERT NAME OF COALITION]

WHERE: [INSERT NAME OF COALITION]
 [INSERT ADDRESS]
Media parking available in the _____ parking lot

VISUALS: Public health officials vaccinating middle school students
 – Children enjoying activities such as face painting, coloring and sidewalk chalk drawing
 – Representatives from [INSERT NAME OF COALITION] talking to parents about the importance of immunizations

WHY: Since the state allows immunization exemptions based on philosophical and conscientious concerns, more than 3,000 students in Fort Bend, Harris and Montgomery counties went back to school last year unvaccinated. This event allows [INSERT NAME OF COALITION] to fulfill its mission to improve immunization rates in this community by reminding parents that vaccines are safe and that they are the best way to protect children from life-threatening diseases.

CONTACT: PR / MEDIA RELATIONS CONTACT
 COALITION NAME
 O: (713) 555-5555
 C: (713) 555-5555
 name@coalition.com

COALITION TO GIVE FREE IMMUNIZATIONS AT BACK-TO-SCHOOL FAIR

WHAT: The [INSERT NAME OF COALITION] will offer FREE immunizations to middle school students at its first back-to-school fair on [INSERT DATE] at the [INSERT LOCATION]. Prior to attending the first day of class, Texas middle school students are required to show proof that they received their Tdap, varicella and meningococcal vaccinations.

During the fair, coalition representatives will also talk to parents about the importance of immunizations in protecting their children from vaccine-preventable diseases.

WHEN: Saturday, Aug. 1, 2018
 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

WHO: [INSERT NAME OF OF COALITION]
 [INSERT NAME OF EVENT PARTNERS / REPRESENTATIVES]

WHERE: [INSERT NAME OF COALITION]
 [INSERT ADDRESS]
 Public parking available at _____

EVENTS: Public health officials vaccinating middle school students

- Attendees can also enjoy free entertainment and activities such as face painting, coloring and sidewalk chalk drawing
- Parents will have the opportunity to ask public health officials vaccine-related questions

WHY: This event allows [INSERT NAME OF COALITION] to fulfill its mission of improving immunization rates in this community by reminding parents that vaccines are safe and that they are the best way to protect children from life-threatening diseases.

For more information visit [INSERT COALITION WEBSITE ADDRESS] or call [INSERT COALITION CONTACT INFORMATION].

CONTACT: MEDIA RELATIONS CONTACT
COALITION NAME
O: (713) 555-5555
C: (713) 555-5555
name@coalition.com

BACK TO SCHOOL PREPAREDNESS: ARE IMMUNIZATIONS AT THE TOP OF YOUR CHECKLIST?

HOUSTON – (August 3, 2018) With school starting, parents may be in a frenzy shopping for new clothes and school supplies, but they should make immunizations a top priority before sending their children back to school. Adhering to the immunization schedule recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is essential to keeping children healthy, in school and protected from illnesses that are preventable, but still exist.

Periodic outbreaks, such as the recent pertussis epidemic, are a reminder that if children are not immunized, then diseases can quickly infiltrate the community. Among public health experts, schools are long believed to be a primary source for the spread of infectious diseases. With children being in close proximity to each other and frequently sharing supplies, immunizations can prevent the spread of germs and diseases that are easily transmitted in schools.

“We are reminding parents that harmful diseases still exist, and that immunizations are safe and the best way to protect children against infectious diseases,” said [INSERT COALITION SPOKESPERSON]. “By immunizing school-age children, we are not only protecting them, we are also increasing the collective immunity for the entire community. The more people who are immunized, the less likely it is for disease outbreaks to occur.”

Parents are encouraged to make an appointment for their children’s back-to-school immunizations as soon as possible, to avoid the last minute rush. Some schools will send students home on the first day if they have not provided proof of vaccination. For a list of the required immunizations at each grade level, visit www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/.

For more information about vaccines in general, visit [INSERT COALITION WEBSITE ADDRESS].

CONTACT: MEDIA RELATIONS CONTACT
COALITION NAME
O: (713) 555-5555
C: (713) 555-5555
E-mail address

**PSA: COALITION TO GIVE FREE FLU SHOTS
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2018.**

:15 SECONDS –

FLU SEASON IS HERE. DID YOU GET YOUR FLU SHOT? IF NOT, COME OUT TO [INSERT NAME OF COALITION] ON [INSERT DATE] TO GET YOUR FREE FLU SHOT. THE FLU IS NOT JUST A COMMON COLD. IT IS A DANGEROUS DISEASE. SO PREVENT WHAT'S PREVENTABLE. VISIT [INSERT COALITION WEBSITE ADDRESS] FOR MORE DETAILS.

:30 SECONDS –

FLU SEASON IS HERE. DID YOU GET YOUR FLU SHOT? IF NOT, COME OUT TO [INSERT NAME OF COALITION] ON [INSERT DATE] TO GET YOUR FREE FLU SHOT. THE FLU IS NOT JUST A COMMON COLD. IT IS A DANGEROUS DISEASE THAT CAN CAUSE HIGH FEVERS, PNEUMONIA AND SEIZURES. YOU CAN EVEN MISS A WEEK OR MORE OF WORK OR SCHOOL. SO PREVENT WHAT'S PREVENTABLE. VISIT [INSERT COALITION WEBSITE ADDRESS] FOR MORE DETAILS ABOUT THIS FREE FLU EVENT ON [INSERT DATE].

WHAT TO DO WHEN A REPORTER REQUESTS AN INTERVIEW

Before accepting a media interview, it is important to screen the opportunity to ensure its right for your coalition. Here are some helpful questions and points to consider before committing to an interview.

1. What is the story about? What position or angle is the reporter interested in taking?

2. What position does the reporter want you take?

Example: You may be requested to provide background information, a viewpoint, or commentary.

3. Who else will be interviewed for the story?

Example: If the story will include a parent who is convinced that a vaccine harmed his/her child, it is improbable you will be able to persuade the parent otherwise. A skilled spokesperson can navigate this type of story with scientific facts, but may face harsh criticisms from the parent. Determine if there is a benefit to participating in this story for your coalition.

4. Be respectful of the deadline. The reporter may be working on a story for that day or to air in the future. Here are some general guidelines:

- Daily print publications go to press between 3pm-5pm. *Do not call a reporter during this time unless he/she is expecting your phone call.*
- Deadlines for weekly print publications are typically mid-week.
- Deadlines for broadcast stations vary because there are multiple newscasts. Just ask the reporter or the person on the news desk what the deadline is and which newscast the story will be featured on.

5. Will the interview be live or taped-to-live? Regardless, remember that what you say is fair game!

- Live interviews are typically conducted at the studio. There is no editing so what you say will air.
- Taped-to-live interviews do not air while being taped; however, there is limited editing (longer lead stories require more editing). Most broadcast interviews are done this way when the story will air the same day as the interview.



6. **Never do an interview on the spot.** While respectful of the deadline, give yourself time to prepare.

Example: If a reporter calls and asks for an interview, buy time. Suggest that you need to complete a task or have someone waiting for you. Briefly, find out what the story is about, what the deadline is and who else is being interviewed. When you take 10 minutes to gather your thoughts and prepare your messages before calling back, you will give a better interview than answering off the cuff.

7. **There's no such thing as "off the record."**

- Assume that everything you say will be quoted. Even statements that provide background information are subject to be quoted.
- The interview begins as soon as you start talking regardless of whether or not the camera is rolling or the reporter has started taking notes.

8. **Preparation is key! Before an interview, consider the following:**

- Align your key messages with the topic of the story.
- Gather any critical facts that you may be asked to incorporate in your response.
- Research what was recently covered in the media on the topic.
- Anticipate sensitive subjects and tough questions.
- Review what the reporter has covered in the past and get familiar with the reporter's expertise and interviewing style.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Throughout the next section, we will discuss several tips for interacting effectively with reporters and conducting successful interviews. Throughout your interactions with the media, remember these basics:

1. *Tell the truth*
2. *Be accurate*
3. *Be quotable by saying something interesting*
4. *Be yourself*
5. *Be enthusiastic*
6. *Be brief*
7. *Be sincere*

Never ever do an interview immediately: *When you take 10 minutes to gather your thoughts and prepare your messages before calling back, you will give a better interview than answering off the cuff.*

DECLINING AN INTERVIEW

It's your prerogative to decline a media request if you feel like the reporter's motive or the angle of the story will not place your spokesperson or the coalition in a positive light. Before declining, weigh the risk of losing credibility with your stakeholders because you participated in a sensationalized story with the risk of potentially being "blacklisted" by a reporter or station. Explore any other sources you can offer who may be willing to speak with the reporter. Suggesting other sources when you are not the appropriate one is viewed as helpful by reporters. If you decide to decline, tell the reporter why you are declining. The reason has to be a legitimate reason. The reporter may not agree with your reason for declining the interview and you will risk not being called by him/her in the future for other stories.

CONDUCTING A SUCCESSFUL MEDIA INTERVIEW

BODY LANGUAGE/APPEARANCE: Your body language and appearance communicates a message to the reporter and, in the case of TV, directly to the audience. Here are some helpful tips:

- Make eye contact with the reporter. Ignore the camera or other equipment. Think of it as having a discussion with an individual, and that individual represents a larger audience.
- Sit up straight and lean in slightly. This gives a sense of forthrightness, honesty, and confidence.
- Make hand gestures minimal and purposeful.
- Be thoughtful and take your time. Don't rush your speech.
- Keep a neutral expression on your face, regardless of what is said. Do not shake your head or nod in agreement with any question or statement.
- Do not hide your hands behind your back.
- Watch what you wear. Avoid wearing white, distracting patterns/prints, or flashy jewelry.
- Keep a few notes with you, but do not read them. Use the notes as a tool to remember your key points.

LOCATION: Remember that you have power and can negotiate where the interview takes place.

If the reporter is interviewing you at your office, identify a location that has a good background and minimal noise. You can also request what will be in the background. For instance, you may have your organization's logo or signage displayed, as opposed to a bare wall. Also, if the story is controversial and representatives from an anti-vaccine agency are present, you would not want to be interviewed standing with protesters nearby or in the background.

MESSAGES: Prepare your key messages prior to the interview.

- An ideal key message for media interviews is 8-10 words. When applicable, include facts, anecdotes and personal stories to support your messages and to convey your sincerity and passion.
- A good sound bite for broadcast media averages 8 seconds.
- Compose and practice your 8-word and 8-second key message as a sound bite.

Example: "Vaccinating is the safest, most effective choice for protecting children from disease."

- Repeat your key messages throughout the interview. Often a reporter will ask you the same question multiple ways to evoke a negative or emotional response. Stay calm, focused, and reiterate your key messages.

COMMUNICATION: Respond using the straight answer or the respond and bridge technique.

- With a straight answer technique, the reporter asks a question and you provide a response.

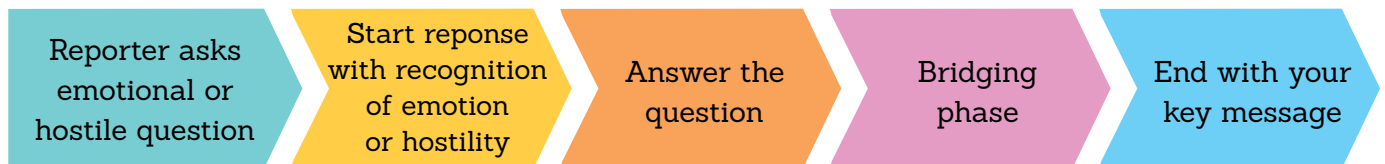


Example:

Question: “When does flu season typically peak?”

Answer: “Flu season typically peaks in December and January.”

- The respond and bridge technique is a 5-part process that incorporates your key message. The goal of bridging is to direct the interview and focus the reporter on a few key messages that are true, accurate, clear, concise, and memorable. Bridging significantly increases the probability of your key messages making the story. Here is the 5-part process:



1. Question – in some cases the question can have some tinge of emotion, hostility, and/or controversy.
2. Acknowledge the intent or emotional content of the question when responding.
3. Answer or respond to the question.
4. Use a bridging phrase.
5. Return to your key message and a supporting statement.

Q&A SAMPLE

Question: “If flu season doesn’t typically peak till January why is there such a push to get people vaccinated as early as August?”

Answer: “Although there is a noticeable increase in flu cases in December and January, the flu virus begins circulating as early as August and so we encourage people to get the flu vaccine as soon as it’s available. **The most important thing to remember** is that the CDC recommends that everyone 6 months and older receive the flu vaccine because it’s the best way to protect yourself from the flu and it’s safe.”

BRIDGING STATEMENTS DURING INTERVIEWS

- “And what’s most important is...”
- “However, the real issue here is...”
- “Let me point out again that...”
- “What’s most important to remember is...”
- “And if we take a closer look, we would see...”
- “Before we leave the subject, let me just say...”
- “One of the things I want to point out is...”
- “However, the real issue here is...”
- “You have raised an issue that is important to me...”
- “And the bigger point is...”
- “What’s important to remember here is...”
- “What I really came here to say is...”
- “And let’s not forget that...”
- “Let me put this into perspective by saying ...”
- “I’ll get to that question in a moment, but let me start by saying...”
- “Having said that, let’s not forget...”
- “With this in mind, if we take a step back...”
- “If we take a broader perspective...”
- “If we look at the big picture...”
- “What all this information tells us is...”
- “Before we continue, let me repeat that...”
- “Before we continue, let me emphasize that...”
- “This is an important point because...”
- “What this all boils down to...”
- “What matters most in this situation is...”
- “And as I said before...”
- “I understand what you’re saying, but...”
- “The issue I have with what I just heard is...”
- “Where I need to respectfully disagree...”
- “I hear what you’re saying, but what I can’t agree with is ...”
- “The evidence doesn’t support what you said, but...”
- “I recognize you’re really concerned about this, but...”
- “I know this a popular notion, but...”
- “This is not the first time I’ve heard this...”
- “While I appreciate you raising this...”

And countless more...

WRAP-UP: Be thoughtful of what you say and how you say it at all times. At the conclusion of your interview, the reporter may make small talk. Assume that you are still on the record, and that anything is fair game! Remember the following:

- Ask the reporter when the interview is scheduled to be printed or aired. The reporter will not let you review the story prior to airing or publication, so do not ask.
- Give the reporter your contact information and get his/her information.
- Send a thank-you note or email. This is a good tool to provide requested follow-up information, clarify key messages or correct misinformation given during the interview.
- Offer to be an ongoing resource for vaccine-related stories.

COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES FOR CONDUCTING A SUCCESSFUL MEDIA INTERVIEW

1. **Stop talking after answering a question.** Nature abhors silence. Reporters know that. Do not feel pressured to fill a silent gap. When you finish your answer, stop talking.
2. **Correct any incorrect statements without repeating the misinformation.**
Example: Question: “Since only children need to get the flu vaccine, can they get it with their other back-to-school immunizations? *Answer:* “Actually the CDC recommends that everyone 6 months of age and older receive the flu vaccine. If flu vaccine is available at the time of back-to-school immunizations, the child should receive it. Both children and adults should receive the vaccine as soon as it’s available at their doctor’s office or local pharmacy.”
3. **Never repeat a negative word or phrase because then it becomes your statement.** Even if your intent is to refute the statement, stay on message. Respond to the question without responding to the style in which it was asked.
4. **Answer only one question at a time.** If the reporter asks more than one question, you may choose to answer the one that best supports your message first in case you are cut off before given a chance to answer the second question.
5. **When possible, speak in personal terms.** This enhances credibility.
Example: “My experience is...”
6. **If you don’t know the answer, say so.** Tell the reporter you will get that information to him/her.
Example: “I don’t know, but I’ll get back to you.”
7. **Never speculate or predict.** Avoid answering “what if” questions.
Example: “Answering that question would be speculating and I really can’t speculate.”
8. **Do not attempt to provide an answer for something that is outside of your expertise.**
Example: Question: “Do you think Rick Perry was aptly criticized for mandating the HPV vaccine for young girls in Texas?” *Answer:* “I’m not a politician so I won’t speculate about the mandate itself, but as a pediatrician/public health official I know that the HPV vaccination is most effective when given to adolescent boys and girls at 11-12 years of age.”
9. **Avoid industry lingo, scientific terms or acronyms.** If you use a term, then define it and do not leave it up to the reporter to define.
10. **Never say “no comment.”** It sounds as if you are hiding something.
11. **If you made an incorrect statement, call the reporter immediately to correct the statement.** You may also want to send an e-mail reiterating the correction.
12. **Take advantage of the question: “Is there anything you want to add?”** This is your opportunity to reiterate your key message. Make your message relevant and credible. It should not sound like a commercial.

SECTION D:

LEVERAGING OWNED AND SOCIAL MEDIA

In this new digitized era, your website, blog, e-mails, Facebook page, Twitter accounts, and other social media platforms can also be used as media. These are typically classified as **owned media**. Owned media is any communication platform where the content is produced, edited, and controlled solely by your coalition, such as your website or your published newsletter. Social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Linked In, and YouTube are the most recognizable examples of owned media.

ADVANTAGES OF UTILIZING OWNED MEDIA

Social media provides a variety of advantages for communicating your messages effectively and rapidly to a large network of individuals. ***When using social media, remember that your coalition controls the content and can determine what information is newsworthy and how it should be portrayed.***

SOCIAL MEDIA

- *Share an announcement, update, or event that may not be newsworthy for print or television.*
- *Cross-promotion: drive traffic from one owned media platform to the next with targeted updates.*
- *Post a link to media appearances, interviews, press conferences, etc.*
- *Ask followers to share updates, messages, and links with their colleagues, friends and family members.*
- *Ask followers to visit your website and sign up for the newsletter.*
- *Promote social media sites on your website and ask visitors to become followers.*
- *Post live events as they are happening to encourage the community to come.*

CREATING A SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY AS PART OF YOUR COMMUNICATION PLAN

Like any other media initiative or effort, social media requires planning. When developing your communication plan, be sure to incorporate your strategies for using social media platforms in addition to your traditional media outlets. ***When creating your social media strategy, think about what you hope to accomplish, with what audiences, how you will communicate to those audiences, what messages you would like to convey, and the frequency of those messages.***

FOLLOW

- [@Immunize_USA](#)
- [@immunizetexas](#)
- [@ImmunizeNV](#)
- [@stopHPVcancer](#)
- [@immunizenjnow](#)
- [@carevantexas](#)
- [Voices for Vaccines](#) – Facebook page
- [Vaccinate your Family](#) – Facebook page
- [@vaccinemakers](#)
- [@avacnow](#)
- [@CDCgov](#)

EXAMPLE:





If you would like to reach out to a new audience (like teens), research which media platforms best fit your strategy to reach this audience. This is important because social media demographics are constantly changing. For instance, according to the Pew Research Center (PRC), Facebook was just recently dethroned as the primary social media outlet for teens (ages 13-17). The PRC revealed that in the Center's 2014-2015 survey of teen social media use, 71% of teens reported being Facebook users. No other platform was used by a clear majority of teens at the time: Around half (52%) of teens said they used Instagram, while 41% reported using Snapchat. In 2018, three online platforms other than Facebook – YouTube, Instagram and Snapchat – are used by sizable majorities of this age group. Meanwhile, 51% of teens now say they use Facebook.


GETTING STARTED WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

Begin to use social media the same way you would start any other coalition activity. Start slow and realize that it takes time, effort, and maintenance to build a consistent following via social media platforms. Although there are numerous platforms, your organization does not have to implement all of them. Only do what fits with your communication objectives and provides the greatest exposure for your target audience. Below are some helpful hints for getting started with social media and for engaging your followers:

EXAMPLES OF MEDIA MEDIA TOOLS

Think of all the tools that you can use to reach out to the media. You can use these in any combination, but below we've identified the typical uses and value of each. Each of these typically answer the 5Ws and H: who, what, where, when, why, how.

Social Network	Description/Advantages
LinkedIn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the oldest and most established social networking sites • Conservative; business-oriented • Historically an online CV/bio • Link to coalition's website • Good search engine visibility • Good to connect with like organizations
Twitter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief text messages of 280 characters or less • Can send "Tweets" via web, SMS on cell phone, email • Hybrid of blogging and text messaging • Twitter is "real time", so it's a good tool to promote event happenings and news from conferences • Many journalists and reporters are on Twitter and they have been known to get story ideas from organizations on Twitter
Facebook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a page for the organization • Enables users to blend personal and professional interests • Good for posting links to news coverage, announcements, and photos of events • One of the easiest ways to solicit feedback and engage followers • Ask followers to share your organization's content with their Facebook followers
Instagram 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photo and video sharing platform (completely visually oriented) • Allows users to share creative visuals to build brand awareness and engagement • Good way to show the impact of an organization's cause • Appeals to shorter attention spans, a growing trend in the age of technology

Discussion Tools	
Blogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great tool for proactive public relations • Blog content can be longer and more thorough than Twitter and Facebook updates, but it should still be concise and to the point • Comment sections facilitate controllable feedback from followers • Many blog platforms can be embedded into the website and are easy to manage and update
Video Sharing	
You Tube 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coalitions can create their own YouTube channel where they can create and post videos. Your audience/community members can “subscribe” to the channel and then they will be notified when new content is posted • Examples of video content include public service announcements, video from an event, footage from a press conference, or an update from the coalition spokesperson. Also, consider shooting and posting video testimonials of people who were impacted by your coalition’s advocacy work or a vaccine-preventable disease. • Keep your videos short, concise, and to the point. The average length of online content videos is 5 minutes, but keep in mind people have a short attention span. Public service announcements should be kept under a minute • Remember to post your YouTube videos on your website, blog, Twitter profile, and Facebook page. You can also embed a YouTube video into your e-newsletter

PROS

Although all social media platforms have similar features and marketing benefits, each social media platform provides a different strength over its counterparts. The biggest marketing pros for each platform are listed below.

- **Facebook: Advertising** – *Paid advertisement is an effective tool on Facebook due to the large number and diversity of Facebook users. Your coalition would best use this platform by paying to boost one of your post so more people see your content.*
- **Twitter: Hashtags** – *Twitter is an effective platform for viral marketing because of frequent user engagement. Using hashtags on Twitter allows your coalition to build brand awareness. A hashtag (#) is also known as the pound sign. When they are used properly, people will begin to associate certain words and events with your coalition.*
- **Instagram: Visuals** – *As a primarily photo-oriented platform, Instagram provides a great opportunity to build your brand through visuals, which is the second most effective form of communication after videos. Your coalition should use Instagram to show photos of different events, as well as other creative images and graphics to convey your message.*
- **YouTube: Teaching opportunities** – *YouTube is an effective platform to share engaging, educational information through videos. Your coalition can utilize this platform to educate your audience/community members on information that they may zone out of if it is in writing. Videos are also the most effective marketing measures.*

GETTING ORGANIZED WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

1. **Research social media platforms and determine which one(s) fit your goal.**
2. **Follow organizations that are using your preferred platform and doing it right!**
3. **Follow community members, similar public health organizations, and media outlets.**
4. **Know your audiences.** Understand why you are participating and who you want to communicate with.
Example: Are your Facebook and Twitter audiences primarily donors, parents, or providers? Are the blog followers the same people who read your newsletter?
5. **Know your messages and tailor them for each platform.**
 - Twitter/Facebook messages should be short, address key details, and include where to find more information.
 - Blogs, websites, and newsletters have more space for content and can provide additional details*Example:* Use your Facebook page to share details about your upcoming immunization fair and to target attendees. Use your newsletter to present highlights from the fair and showcase all the great work your coalition is doing in the community.
6. **Make sure your updates are relevant and appropriate, given your audience.** Think before you hit “update” or “send”. Always stand behind your statements.
7. **Respond in a timely manner to posts that may be negative or inaccurate.** Likewise, respond positively to favorable posts.
8. **Update your profiles frequently, but not so often that your followers are inundated with messages.** Update when you have something relevant and/or newsworthy to share with your followers.

Another item of note when it comes to social media are acronyms. They can be used as a fun way to target audiences or to help save space when you have a character limit, like the limits Twitter and LinkedIn utilize on their platforms. See below for a list of a few of the currently most used acronyms on social media and their meaning.

COMMON ACRONYMS

- FB: FACEBOOK
- IG: INSTAGRAM
- DM: DIRECT MESSAGE
- RT: RETWEET
- PM: PRIVATE MESSAGE
- ICYMI: IN CASE YOU MISSED IT
- AMA: ASK ME ANYTHING
- POTD: PHOTO OF THE DAY
- QOTD: QUOTE OF THE DAY
- TIL: TODAY I LEARNED...



SECTION E:

EVALUATING YOUR MEDIA EFFORTS

Evaluation is the most effective way of determining what aspects of your communication plan are working and how efforts can be improved for future communication planning. When evaluating, compare your results to the measurements outlined in your objectives. Use this as an opportunity to look beyond whether or not your benchmarks were met. If the benchmark was met, great! If not, evaluate by how much it was missed. This analysis will tell you how you need to change your efforts. Below are several techniques for measuring traditional media, social media, website, and event coverage.

ANALYZING MEDIA COVERAGE

1. **Quantify your number of print articles and broadcast articles.**

2. **Evaluate the amount of coverage you received from each outlet.**

Example: Does it appear that the local Fox station covers your news more than the local NBC affiliate?

3. **Assess your proactive and reactive coverage.**

Example: Did the majority of your coverage result from you pitching stories to reporters? Or, did a good portion of the coverage result from the media calling you as a resource for immunization-related stories?

4. **Quantify your messages.** Evaluate your coverage to see how many times your key messages are pulled through the story. This might tell you if you need to rework your key messages to make them more concise, repeatable, and quotable.

5. **Assess circulation.** Circulation provides an idea of the number of people who might have seen or read the media coverage. It is based on a print publication's subscriptions/circulations and a television station's viewers for each newscast.

– The number itself is not what is most helpful. It is more important to identify which outlets your target audience is using.

Example: Look to see which newspapers in the market are read most by your target audience. Likewise, see if one television station has far fewer views than the other stations and if the demographics of those viewers match up with your target audience. The best way to access this data is by requesting a media/advertising kit from each media outlet.

6. **Use Advertisement Value Equivalency (AVE) to measure your return on investment.** This is a method of calculating the amount it would cost to place an advertisement in the same spot that the article appeared in a print publication or in the same segment of a television or radio broadcast. AVE provides important information, but it should not be your primary method to calculate your return on investment.

7. **Assess if and how you maximized the value of your garnered media coverage.** It is not enough to get covered on the evening news or on the front page of the newspaper. Think about what you did to take your coverage and put it in front of as many people as possible. Creating and distributing a media toolkit is a great opportunity for maximizing the value of your garnered coverage.

Example:

- Link coverage on your owned media platforms – newsletter or e-blast, social media, website.
- Send media coverage to your constituents to make sure they saw it.
- Share the coverage with board members and potential donors.
- Include positive coverage in information packets and donor solicitations.

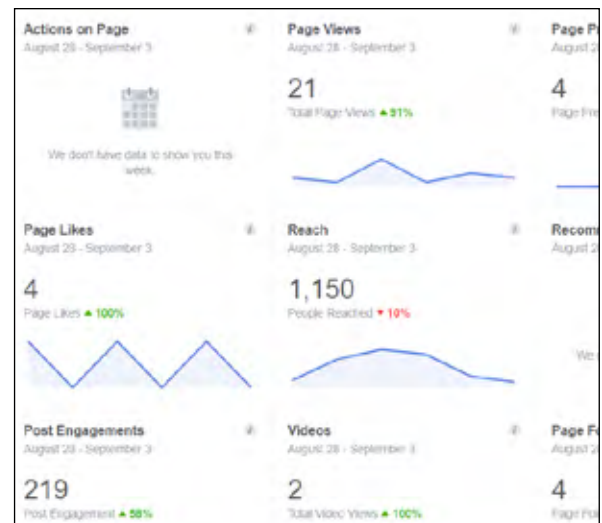
EVALUATING SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

1. **Analyze your followers on all social media profiles. Consider doing this on a monthly basis.**

- How many do you have?
- Are they growing at a steady or stagnant growth rate?
- Are you meeting your communication objectives?

2. **Determine how many times someone shares or reposts your social media statuses.**

- Look at the quantity and quality of the comments made on blogs and on social media profiles.
- There are many free tools to analyze social media engagement and Facebook offers one to each Fan Page Administrator.

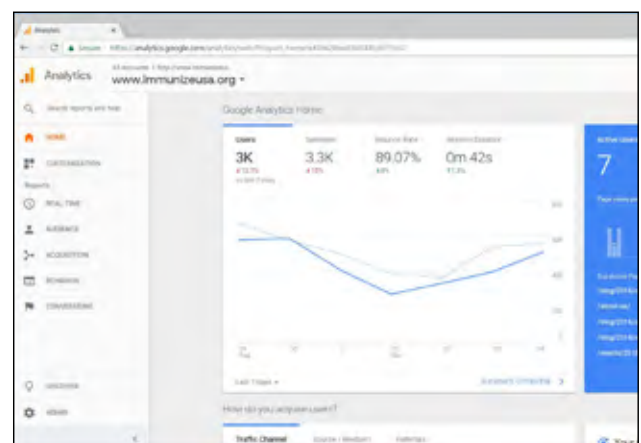


ASSESSING WEBSITE TRAFFIC

Use internet tools to measure web traffic. Google Analytics is the most commonly used free tool. It helps you identify how you can improve your site and how often you should update the content.

Google Analytics can provide:

- The number of visitors going to the website.
- The pages on your website with the highest traffic.
- The length of time visitors stay on the website.
- What visitors are doing and reading on the site.
- How visitors found the site.
- When your web traffic peaks and dips (e.g. around events or during holidays, after a media story placement, or during a campaign).



SURVEYING/EVALUATING EVENTS

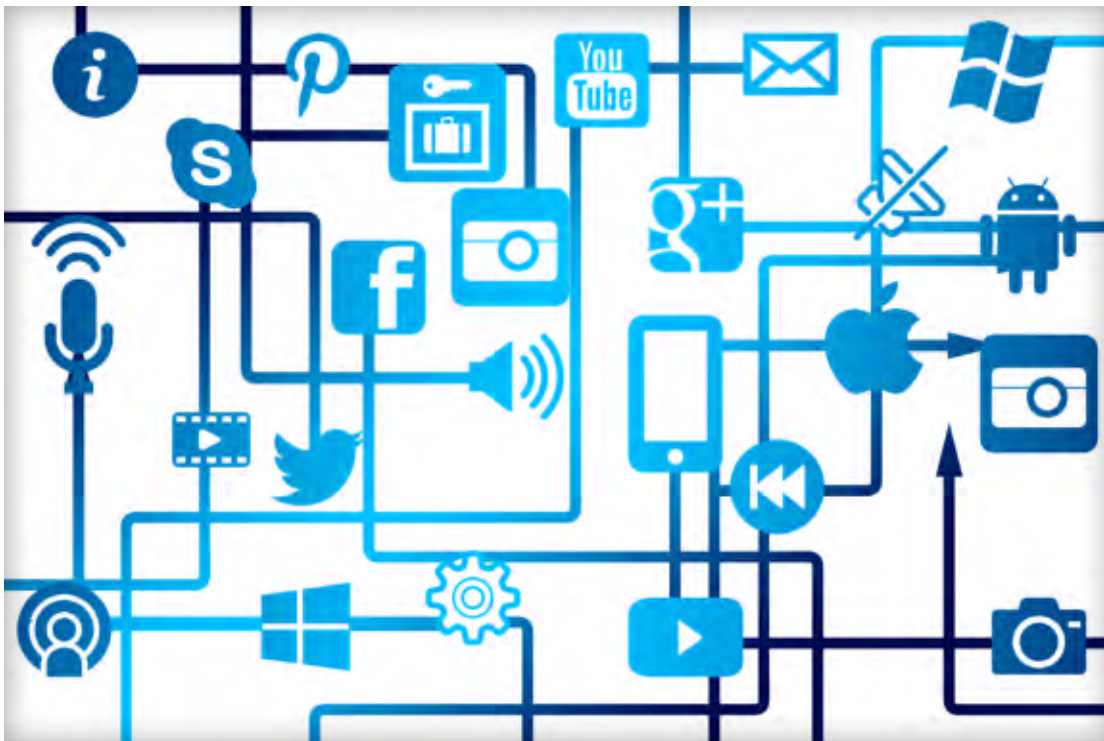
Surveys are effective tools used to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of your communications efforts with your audiences. They are often used when evaluating the impact of a specific event or program (e.g. health fair, coalition meeting, panel discussion, school-based event, etc.). Here are some helpful surveying tips:

1. **Survey your target audience.** This can be done annually or as needed. By surveying your target audiences, you can determine what communication efforts and key messages are resonating. You can also find out their opinions of your coalition or how efforts might be improved to better meet their needs.
2. **Evaluate your events.** When evaluating an event, consider asking participants the following questions:
 - Was the event a success?
 - What would they change about the event?
 - How did they hear about the event? This will give you insight into which owned and traditional media outlets are best reaching your target audiences.
3. **Be persistent and creative, in order to obtain your survey results.** It's often difficult to encourage people to complete surveys. Here are some helpful tips:
 - *Involve the participants.* Explain to them the purpose of the survey and how the results will benefit their community and the services offered.
 - *Offer an incentive.* Tell people that by completing the survey, they will be entered into a raffle for a prize or a gift certificate.
 - *Give the survey prior to the conclusion of the event.* Once people leave, it is difficult to track them down and access their opinions. Response rates are higher when the survey is given at the time of an event.
 - *If a survey cannot be administered at the time of the event, consider distributing a post-event survey online using an inexpensive online survey tool like SurveyMonkey.*

CONCLUSION

Working with the media is more than just placing an advertisement in the newspaper or distributing a press release. Conducting media relations requires a strategic and comprehensive approach. Just as with your other coalition efforts, media efforts involve planning and coordination. Effective communication strategies always begin with a thorough understanding of your local immunization challenges, what you would like to accomplish, and with whom. Once you have a good idea of your target audiences, you can focus on how you would like to accomplish your objectives and who will be able to help. Build strong relationships with the media and leverage community partnerships that will support your communication objectives.

Throughout your implementation process, maintain consistent messages that can be evaluated to determine if your communication strategies accomplish your overall goals. Most importantly, know that the media can be used to support your efforts in a positive way. Explore what outlets are going to be most appropriate for your coalition, whether they be traditional or, social media. And, continuously find opportunities to use media to mobilize your community, promote your coalition and achieve institutionalized changes.



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