

**Media Tool Kit: A Resource for Families, Youth & Community Partners**

Provided by

The Pennsylvania System of Care Partnership

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Table of Contents

Checklist and Timeline\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3

Elevator Speech\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_5

Letters to Editors\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_6

Writing an Op-Ed\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_7

Public Speaking\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_8

Meeting With Congress or State Legislature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_12

Creating Public Service Announcements\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_14

Sample Public Service Announcement request Letter\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_18

Links for Radio and Television Stations in PA\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_19

Public Service Announcements 2013\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_20

Checklist and Timeline

Planning an event can be stressful even when you are having fun planning. If you can start you’re planning with plenty of lead time so that you are prepared and organized. The little glitches you encounter along the way will seem less chaotic and less likely to derail your plans or event. If this is a large event or it has groups involved that may not be in close proximity to each other your planning may want to start 9 to 12 months out.

* Determine type of event and size
* Select location
* Plan room setup
* Will there be food
* Is the site accessible
* Does site allow for audio, visual, or other needed equipment
* What is your budget
* Begin setting an agenda
* Will you need speakers
* Invite speakers
* Send “save the date” info out via email, fax, or snail mail
* Develop materials
* Develop a letter asking for donations
* Decide if you will be asking for donations at the event
* What will you need from outside vendors
  + Food
  + Beverages
  + Entertainment
  + Speakers
  + Tables
  + Chairs
  + Signs
  + Banners
  + Decorations
  + Giveaways
  + Printed material
  + Set up a binder so all records and event needs can be kept and tracked.

Confirm volunteers

Touch base with sponsors if any

Confirm any food vendors

Confirm transportation needs

Confirm any speakers

Develop your plans in phases so that you can check off items on your list. Begin the phases at least three weeks in advance so that you will have time to make small changes if needed. Add or delete items to this checklist as needed.

All materials should arrive at the venue(s) the day before your event. Make sure to pack several extra “just in case kits” so you will have them if needed.

Arrive early the day of the event to ensure everything that is needed is there, i.e., equipment, materials, and people. You should allow time for a run through by your speakers or any entertainment.

Begin the event by thanking everyone for coming, remind them of the purpose of the event, and give a brief overview of the agenda.

After the event celebrate your success!!!! Tell everyone Thank You!!! Debrief with your staff and send out handwritten thank you cards. Start discussing with your sponsors about collaborating again for next year.

**Elevator Speech**

An elevator speech is a short summary that quickly and simply allows you to define a product, service, organization or process that captures attention and says a lot in a few words. An elevator speech is a short promotion that you can use as an overview about yourself, your child or your family this may be the one chance you have to make a good first impression.

When writing your elevator speech think about who you are and what you do make this personal and you can do this by talking about your experience.

Focus on what you want to have recognized or what issues you would like solved.

The speech should take as long as an elevator ride.

Write this down and practice, practice, practice, make sure that what you are saying does not contradict anything else you want to say, that it makes sense, you want your audience to trust what you are saying and find the information valuable.

Practice your speech in front of a mirror and then practice in front of friends so that you are sure it makes sense and will grab the other person’s attention.

When practicing your speech with family and friends ask them for feedback to make sure your speech is clear, flows well and makes your point.

Have fun when creating this speech and remember this will be something you may use many times not just once.

Letters to Editors

* Check with local newspaper for any limits on length (usually run between 100 to 200 words) and how your letter should be submitted.
* Any “Model Letters” that may be sent to you please rewrite it to make it yours and that it has local information, any comments should be important to you personally.
* If using a personal story understand that this will be public and be comfortable with what you share and if about your family members or youth they are fine with it being told to people they do not know.
* If sending a letter it would better to have it typed before sending with you personal information, name address and day time phone contact for verification included.
* If emailing the letter put the letter in the body of the email do not send it as an attachment.
* In the email you will have to include your name, city or town, and a number where you can be reached during the day so the paper can verify the information.
* The newspaper may want to propose cuts or edits to shorten the letter; as long as the meaning of your letter is not changed it should be fine.
* The letter can be used as talking points for print as well as possible broadcast interviews and also used for public discussions.
* Submit your letter before the event so that the letter if published will be timely.

Writing an Op-Ed

An Op-Ed is an opinion piece, it is not an essay that is written to slowly unroll and build momentum it is just the opposite. It is your opinion supported by facts. One should begin the piece by stating your conclusion first, so that you are taking your audience from the beginning where you want them to end up. This means you are starting with your strongest point up front. The rest of the op-ed is you making your case, or back-filling with the facts. When done well you will be reaching an audience of opinion makers. The op-ed should be no more than 750 words, less is always better.

* Focus on one issue or idea; the first paragraph should be brief.
* Express your opinion, and then base it on factual, researched or first hand information.
* Be timely, can be controversial but not outrageous, your piece should come from a voice of reason
* Be personal and conversational
* Be humorous but only if your topic lends itself to humor.
* Have a clear viewpoint. Come down on one side of an issue, don’t equivocate.
* Provide insight, understanding: educate the audience but do not be preachy
* Near the end of your piece clearly re-state you’re your position on the issue and issue a call to action, don’t philosophize.
* Have ‘fire in the gut” indignation to go with your logical analysis.
* Don’t ramble or let your issue unfold slowly
* Use clear direct and powerful language
* Use active verbs; remember adjectives and adverbs only weaken writing.
* Avoid any clichés, jargons, acronyms and slang
* Appeal to the average reader, clarity is important.
* Make sure your piece is typed and double spaced
* Include a brief bio, along with your contact numbers, email address and mailing address at the bottom of the piece.
* Check with the newspaper to see if they accept op-ed pieces by email.
* If sending by email, place the piece in the body of the email do not send by attachment unless requested by the newspaper.

Public Speaking

Each of us has a story to tell; but it is difficult to tell our life experiences in speeches and presentations that can have an impact. It is important to understand that the best communicator is the person who is passionate about what he/she is saying and that the sincerity and dedication are readily apparent. It is your life experiences that make you a competent and believable spokesperson for family driven. You possess the motivation and knowledge to be a persuasive spokesperson.

Basics

* Organize your ideas
* Delivery and timing are essential
* You will have instant feedback from your audience, you will know if you are being effective
* Your non-verbal communication is important. Watch body language and facial expressions.

Before You Speak

* Arrive early to the site where you will be speaking, walk the area and practice with the microphone and visual aids.
* Know your audience and work at tailoring your presentation for that audience to make your speech or presentation relevant.
* Understand why you are there, to sell, to inform, to entertain.

Speech/ Presentation

* Work from an outline or notes make sure you are capturing your main ideas (about 3) but do not read your speech/ presentation.
* Use handouts or graphics where possible.
* Remember you are the expert; do not let them see you sweat.

Authority: I know because I am the expert.

Concern: My subject is important.

Enthusiasm: I am glad to be here and I sincerely like you.

* Make eye contact with your audience, engage your entire audience, and watch their reactions to what you are saying to see if your message is getting through. Watch for heads nodding with you and eyes focused on you.
* Smile when appropriate. A smile tells them that you are approachable.
* Being nervous is normal but do not apologize. Apologizing for any problems you think you may have with your speech will be calling attention to something that might not have been noticed.
* Unless hooked into a microphone at the podium moving around the stage is welcoming. Do not lean on the podium and be open with your gestures.
* It is impossible to hide your emotions when talking about something very important to you, but harness your passion inject it where appropriate.
* Gestures will help you tell your story, they will be remembered and give you energy in your delivery, but do not overdo it.
* Speak clearly and pleasantly and watch your volume, use a full range of octaves if you can, never hide your dialect, but watch your volume.
* Avoid saying “like”, “um”, ”ah”, ”you know”.
* Use pauses and be silent when appropriate.

When going from one subject to another

When you want the message to sink in

When you need to collect your thoughts

When you receive laughter and applause

* Use of humor or jokes is okay; if it is appropriate, the caution around this is that what is funny to you or me may not be seen as funny to members of the audience, so choose your humor and material with care.
* Avoid distractions so such as pulling on your hair, jingling change in your pocket, playing with your glasses.
* Personalize your story by sharing your information up front, carefully decide what parts of your story you feel safe and comfortable sharing. Once it is out there you have no control of how it is disseminated.
* Think about how sharing your story will affect those in your life, family, friends and the youth. You may need their permission to tell their story or how they played a role in your story.
* Consider how your story may impact you with people you have contact with in the community and how that may be altered when sharing your life experiences.
* Practice, Practice, Practice, then Practice Perfectly. This will help make for a perfect presentation.

Development

Introduction (15%)

* Greet them, this can be ad lib
* State your purpose
* State your plan of presentation ( at least 3 points)
* Tell a story or give a background
* Startle them
* Ask a question that has an obvious answer
* Give a familiar quote
* Try a joke (if appropriate)
* Give a surprising statistic
* Refer to your subject, how it is timeless, and it’s importance
* Refer to the current occasion.

Body (75%)

* Lead the audience
* Use visual aids to support you such as Power Point, but do not read from the slides
* Face the audience if using a projector do not block the screen
* Use notes but do not read from them
* Watch the crowd for their reaction
* Remember the tips about delivering your presentation/speech such as voice and body language

Conclusion (10%)

* Two great words to remember ‘In conclusion”
* Can end with a story that illustrates your point
* May summarize
* Never raise a new point

Recap

* Prepare Practice, Practice, and Practice!!!
* Memorize your opening sentence
* Have something physical, slides, handouts
* Move around, to reduce tension, change a point or secure the audiences reaction
* Have the right attitude, like the audience, be sincere, give people something to think about, secure their buy in
* Remember to use.
  + Authority
  + Concern
  + Enthusiasm

After the presentation/speech

* If you are asked a question you are not able to answer, or if you are not sure of the answer, then say so. If possible always get the person’s name and how to contact them and make sure you get that information to them
* Remember this is adding to your experience, experience builds confidence, and experience is one of the keys to effective public speaking.

**Meeting with Congress or State Legislature**

Meeting with your elected officials can be more difficult than sending them a letter, although sending letters is something that can and should be encouraged. Many times we receive templates for sending out letters and there is nothing wrong with that approach but handwriting a letter might get your issue noticed. When sending a letter please include your personal information such as name address phone numbers and email. When writing a letter make sure to have all of your facts correct and double check your information and have someone read the letter to make sure you are clear about what you are asking or supporting.

When making plans for a personal visit you should call or email their office requesting an appointment time, even if you are asking for time in their home district most members will have a schedule they are following so it is common sense and courteous to call and schedule ahead. To find out where they will be you can call their local office or check their web site for that information. Their phone and fax numbers can also be found on their web sites.

The written or email request should be short and simple:

Date

The Honorable their full name, title and address

Dear Senator or Representative (insert his/her last name):

I am writing to request an appointment with you on (date). I am one of your constituents in (list your town or city).

I realize you have a difficult schedule and would appreciate any time you have on the (date).

I believe (state your issue) is important. (use only a few sentences)

Thank you for considering my request for a meeting and that you will follow up with call a week before to confirm.

Close with Sincerely, your name, address and contact number.

Once you have a meeting time and date set plan to discuss your issue and creating your elevator speech will help with this meeting if you have two issues then create two elevator speeches and you should not have more than two issues to talk about at this meeting.

Learn everything you can about your issue learn any points of opposition to your issue and be ready to be asked about them

Any supporting information you have should be given at this meeting

Before meeting, find out the voting record of your congress person or legislator ahead of time.

Stay on topic; do not let yourself become side tracked always come back to your issue

Arrive at least 10 minutes early

Don’t be upset if you end up meeting with the staff they may know more about your concerns and will inform them of your visit

Be ready to answer questions and have discussion about your issue. Always attempt to end the conversation on a positive note

Try and get a photo of you and the legislator or staff and then send them a copy.

Try and have some goodies for the legislative staff since they work hard at getting your information to the legislator and scheduling the appointment.

Always follow up with a letter thanking the legislator or staff for their time and include any additional information you may have

Creating Public Service Announcements

There are several types of Public Service Announcements (PSAs ) video and radio the information may be needed for both and some of the suggestions will be the same for both types of PSAs

The first question for one to think about is

“What Do You Want The World To Know?”

When we create a PSA there are some important things to think about or understand so that your PSA will have impact.

PSAs are created to persuade an audience to take a favorable action

To create awareness

To show the importance of an issue or problem

To create behavioral change

Public Service Announcements should create a forum for others to actively participate in a project or event that allows them to become stewards and/or advocates for social change.

A PSA has anywhere from say 10 to 90 seconds to get your message across to radio or TV audiences. This is why you need to quickly capture the attention of the target group quickly, so keeping your PSA simple should be kept in mind.

The federal Communications Commission (FCC) requires TV and radio stations to donate a small portion of their airtime to support the community. Sending community calendars and PSAs over the airwaves helps fulfill this requirement. Many newspapers carry print versions.

PSAs can be used in mail notifications brochures and pamphlets or phone calls as reminders for people to take action, emails may also be able to be used in this way also. If there is a marketing campaign that is being used make sure your PSA is tied to the marketing. To also add to this thinking about you PSA/marketing campaign remember repetition is the best way to have your PSA/ campaign noticed.

Keep in mind with video PSAs

Choose your topic

Pick your subject

Keep your focus narrow and to the point

One main idea per PSA

Know your stuff

Information is current and up to date

Be convincing and accurate

Think about your audience

Who is your target audience (families, systems?)

Think about their needs and preferences

What may turn them off?

Your target audience is who you want to rally to action

Those actions will be what your PSA will be suggesting

The action desired can be spelled out or implied in the PSA

Make sure your message is clear

Grab the attention of your audience; you could use visual effects with

A video, an emotional response, humor or a surprise to catch your

Target audiences attention

Create a script and keep to the script to a few simple statements

A 30 second PSA will require 5-7 concise assertions

Highlight the major and minor parts

Check to make sure the information is based on accurate up to date

Research findings and/or data

Create a story board for a video script

Film your video footage and edit

Did you achieve your goals, was your audience reaction what you

Expected? Was the response what you expected?

With Radio Public Service Announcements there are some things to think about beyond the ideas already mentioned.

If possible contact the local radio station(s) to request information about any specific requirements, restrictions or limitations. Most stations will provide this information.

Decide the length of the PSA options 30, 60 or 90 second spots

Keep in mind the obvious questions that should be covered when drafting your PSA, who, what, when, where, why and how

Think about how to best capture the audience’s attention and that will be the first part of your PSA

Draft the PSA and make sure all of the components are in place, if not rewrite

Time the drafted PSA(s) to make sure they fit in the time allotted 30, 60, 90 seconds.

Write short succinct sentences

Answer all questions

If necessary ask the station for guidance

Listen to other PSAs to help you understand what works

Check to make certain all the information is correct

Never give false information or data

Try never to use an untrained voice talent unless it cannot be avoided

If you are providing the radio station with your potential PSAs have them typed clearly and make all spelling corrections. Indicate the time needed that indicated for the PSA 30, 60 or 90 second PSA. You could fax your PSA with cover information requesting the time frame you are asking the PSA to be aired and provide your contact information so that not only it can be verified but if changes are needed or the station has questions needing clarified to make sure your PSA is aired or the station may want you to record the PSA to be aired.

**Sample PSA Pitch Letter**

**[Date]**

Dear Public Service Director:

One owns a local business. Another is a social worker. And another just made states for high school wrestling.

What do they have in common? They have or are family members of people in our community that have mental health struggles.

Unfortunately, many people and family members do not seek out or receive treatment. The common reasons people do not seek treatment include cost, fear, not knowing where to go for services, and concern about confidentiality and the opinions of other family members, neighbors and the community. This fear of what people may think – the stigma that surrounds mental illness – is a serious barrier to treatment and recovery. This is why we need your help **to SHATTER the STIGMA.**

Fortunately, it takes just a few seconds for you to help shatter stigma. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ has created an upbeat, informative public service advertisement that will help your audience understand the facts about mental health – that those who have mental illnesses recover and that they contribute to a better community and a better society. May is Mental Health Month and it provides a perfect opportunity for your station to launch this important PSA campaign.

Please take a minute today and throughout the year to remind your audience that good mental health makes good sense.

Sincerely,

**[Name]**

**[Title]**

**[Organization]**

**[Phone Number**

Links for Radio Stations

<http://www/radio-locater.com>

<http://www.ontheradio.net/states/pennsylvania.aspx>

<http://streamingradioguide.com>

<http://www.usnpl.com/radio/paradio.php>

<http://radiostationworl.com/locations.United_States.of_America/Pennsylvania>

Television Stations

<http://newslink.org/patele.html>

Wikipedia is another source for locating Radio and Television Stations.

PSA sample 1

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Think of your family, friends, co-workers and neighbors. 20% of them have a child with mental health challenges. Think about them when you have something to say about people with mental health challenges, because you are saying something about people they love. Help us to “SHATTER THE STIGMA”

This public service announcement is brought to you by Pa System of Care Partnership and your contact information should be placed here or go to [www.pasocpartnership.org](http://www.pasocpartnership.org)

PSA sample 2

Mental Health challenges are not a “race thing”

Mental Health challenges are not a “religious thing”

Mental Health challenges are not a “sexual orientation thing” Mental health is a “HUMAN THING”

Mental Health challenges are not a character flaw,

Mental health challenges are not caused by personal weakness or negative thinking.

Mental Health challenges cannot be overcome by will power.

Mental Health challenges cannot be treated by a “change in attitude.”

Over 50% of youth with mental health challenges age 14 and older drop out of high school, this is the highest drop out rate of any group.

Mental Health recovery is increased by positive community and peer supports.

Let’s unite together to “SHATTER THE STIGMA”

This announcement brought to you by PA System of Care Partnership and your contact information should be placed here or go to [www.pasocpartnership.org](http://www.pasocpartnership.org)

PSA sample 3

Mental health challenges are not caused by personal weakness. Mental health challenges cannot be overcome by will power or a “change in attitude.” 20% of all children in this country have a behavioral health diagnosis and almost 5 million of those youth live with serious mental health challenges.

Let’s unite to “SHATTER THE STIGMA” of Mental Health Challenges in Pennsylvania.

This announcement is brought to you by PA System of Care Partnership and you’re your contact information [www.pasocpartnership.org](http://www.pasocpartnership.org)

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PSA sample 4

Mental health challenges are often biologically based disorders and may be caused by environmental stress, genetic factors, biochemical imbalances, or a combination of these. It disrupts a person’s thinking, feeling, mood, ability to relate to others and daily functioning. About 20% of all children have a behavioral health diagnosis with 5 million of those living with serious mental health challenges. These youth have the same needs as those without mental health challenges: access to a quality education and acceptance by family, peers and community members. Youth living with mental health challenges experience discrimination every day at school and in the community. Support and appropriate services enable people with mental health challenges to lead healthy, fulfilling and productive lives. Fewer than half of those with mental health challenges seek help and the rest make an effort to keep their difficulties a secret for fear of discrimination. Stigma builds the walls and stops people from seeking effective services and recovery. It is time to take the walls down and “SHATTER THE STIGMA”

This announcement brought to you by PA System of Care Partnership, and Pennsylvania Families Inc. for more information or call 1-800-947-4941 go to [www.pasocpartnership.org](http://www.pasocpartnership.org)