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Agenda

- Opening Circle
- **Topic: Adapting Your Communications Strategies During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A New Prevention Peer Webinar Series**
  - **Presenters:**
    - Sabrina Hughes
    - Nicole Zárate
    - Janae Sargent
    - Arti Kothari Allard
    - Jessica Merrill
  - Q&A
- Discussion: Shared expertise, emerging issues, challenges, triumphs
• Please type in your name, agency and location
Adapting Your Communications During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Pitching Your Prevention Story to Journalists

Jessica Merrill
Communications Manager

Carissa Gutierrez
Communications Manager

April 30th, 2020
With your strategic goal & audience in mind, get your story elements ready.

Journalists want to report on topics that elicit an emotional reaction from their readers & viewers. Think of the spectrum of Facebook emoticons.

There is so much to 😊 about prevention!

Start a storybank with narratives from authentic messengers.
A Constellation of Stories

Over time, connected stories can change culture.

Frames revisited: We are not our talking points!

We connect with our values & experiences.
The Power of Authentic Messengers
| Youth in the Lead: Our Orange Day Rally

Youth were the lead speakers (no adult advocates or preventionists), with legislators using their privilege to affirm their support.

Media coverage increased

Strengthen your story. Invite parents and educators who can speak to the benefits of prevention.
The Initial Pitch to Leadership

Preventionists can effectively tell the story of your organization & mobilize community members to action.

Poll: How many have engaged in media advocacy for their organization?

Build relationships with reporters who have written about DV. Also, think of possibilities for education reporters.
Advocating for Prevention Work

Media advocacy allows others to carry your message forward

We have always been in a state of crisis

You are the expert of your work and your experience

Poll: What does prevention work look like in your organization?
COVID-19 should be tied into every pitch.

Acknowledge good reporting from past articles.

Refer to heightened risks for survivors right now; include any stats on calls to your organization’s hotline.

Pivot to prevention: Discuss why prevention is more important than ever. Offer an inside perspective into the work & opportunities to support the community.

Say that you have interviewers lined up and ample visuals (if print).
Didn’t Hear Back? Don’t Sweat it. Follow Up!

It’s natural to feel discouraged if you don’t hear back—but try not to take it personally.

Follow up. If this pitch wasn’t of interest, ask if you can have a virtual tea or coffee with them to discuss what they’re looking to report on—and how you can help.

Whenever you have news to share, contact the reporter. You don’t always need a polished press release—sometimes a quick note will suffice. Ask authentic messengers to be ready to interview.
Inspiration for Newsworthy Virtual Events & Connecting with the Community

- Virtual Town Halls – Engage your local policymakers, educators, & students.
- Art & PSA contests for youth – partner with local businesses
- Partnering with restaurants and grocery stores to include materials with all purchases
We’re Here to Support You!

got

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Adapting your communications during the COVID-19 pandemic: Overview of framing and communication strategy

April 30, 2020

Pamela Mejia, MS MPH
Berkeley Media Studies Group

- Research on news coverage and other narratives about public health and social justice issues
- Media advocacy training and strategic consultation for community groups and public health advocates
- Professional education for journalists
What is media advocacy?

Media advocacy is the strategic use of mass media to support community organizing to advance a social or public policy initiative.
Five principles of communicating strategically about prevention

• Know what you want to change
You can’t have a media strategy -- or a message strategy -- without an overall strategy.
Message is never first:
The layers of strategy

- Overall strategy
- Media strategy
- Message strategy
- Access strategy
Five principles of communicating strategically

- Know what you want to **change**
- You can’t be comprehensive and **strategic** at the same time
Being strategic about problems and solutions

Problem

Solution

Do your problem and solution “line up”? 
Five principles of communicating strategically

• Know what you want to **change**
• You can’t be comprehensive and **strategic** at the same time
• Illustrate the **landscape**
Frames are mental pathways that help people understand the world.
How are news stories framed?

^ Thematic or “landscape” stories

< Episodic or “portrait” stories
How are stories framed?

(personal responsibility)

(community or institutional responsibility)
How can you illustrate the landscape in developing your pitch?

What pieces of information do you want to highlight to show prevention is possible and is happening?
Five principles of communicating strategically

• Know what you want to **change**
• You can’t be comprehensive and **strategic** at the same time
• Illustrate the **landscape**
• Elevate shared **values** in your message
Message strategy

Basic components of a message:

- Statement of problem
  What’s wrong?

- Value dimension
  Why does it matter?

- Solution
  Who should do what by when?
What values motivate your work?
Five principles of communicating strategically

• Know what you want to change
• You can’t be comprehensive and strategic at the same time
• Illustrate the landscape
• Elevate shared values in your message
• The messenger matters!
Identifying a “messenger mix”

Audiences are most likely to believe in and connect with speakers they identify with in some key way.

Speakers from a range of backgrounds (race, gender, orientation, age, etc.) are important.
Who could be in your “messenger mix”?
Thank you!

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Shared expertise and discussion

- Current emerging issues?
- Challenges or triumphs in your prevention efforts?
Together we’re stronger

Prevention at the Partnership

Public Policy  Communications  Capacity Building

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