Creating News that Reaches Target Audiences

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The findings and conclusions presented during this training are those of BMSG and do not necessarily represent the views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
Today’s Workshop

- Recognize what makes a story newsworthy.
- Understand the needs of the news media.
- Learn how to use messages and story elements to frame goals for reporters.
- Be prepared to create news that advances your overall program, strategy and communication goals.
Newsworthiness

- Research breakthrough
- Broad interest
- Local news/local angles
- Injustice
- Irony
- Conflict/controversy
- Anniversary/action day
- Seasonal link
- Celebrity
Activity: Assess Your Communication Capacity

• Which staff/partners can help you carry out your plans?
• What training does your team need?
• What research will support your goals?
• What media materials do you need to make your case?
• How can you create media relationships to get your story out?
• What organizational systems are needed to help your efforts?
Proactive News Coverage

• What can you do to create news coverage?
• Who are the sources?
• What will the sources say?
• What might reporters ask? To whom?
• How could systems improvement be included?
Tools to Generate News

- Working with community members and partners
- Monitoring the media, developing a press list
- Creating news
- Paid advertising
- Piggybacking on breaking news
- Editorial strategies (editorials, op-eds, letters)
Responding to what some health officials feared could be the leading edge of a global pandemic emerging from Mexico, American health officials declared a public health emergency on Sunday as 20 cases of swine flu were confirmed in this country, including eight in New York City.
Activity: Letters to the Editor

• Follow the news your target follows.
• Piggyback on related coverage.
• Be timely (1-2 days) with response.
• Use strong, succinct language.
• Stay within length limits (150-250 words).
• Engage your partners.
Developing Story Elements

- Identify a range of authentic voices.
- Develop media bites.
- Use compelling visuals and symbols.
- Calculate social math.
Members of the Teen Task Force and ALMA (Adolescent Latinos Motivating Action) show support for non-smoking restrictions by dining at local restaurants which had previously had smoking sections but became smokefree following regulations enacted in January 2010.
“1000 people quit smoking every day – by dying. That is the equivalent to two fully loaded jumbo jets crashing every day with no survivors.”

– American Cancer Society
“Having a no-smoking section in a restaurant is like having a no-pee section in a swimming pool.”
– Tobacco control advocates

“We've built ourselves out of getting a healthy amount of physical activity.” – Dr. Eric Frykman, Riverside County Public Health Officer

“Kids need sports, not sports drinks.”
To make his healthy food message more visual, “Naked Chef” Jaime Oliver had a school bus filled with the amount of sugar added in one week to the flavored milk served by the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Story Elements Brainstorm

What story elements might help you support your goals and advance your message?
Activity: Making the Pitch

Practice pitching newsworthy stories to reporters.

- Break into pairs. One person plays the reporter, the other makes the pitch.
- You have 3 minutes to pitch your story.
- Then switch roles.
When a Journalist Calls

• What’s your story?
• Who else have you talked to?
• What do you need?
• What’s your deadline?
Thank you!

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