

HOW TO:

**PROMOTE YOUR
EDUCATION AND
PREVENTION
PROJECT**



**VIRGINIA ABC
EDUCATION AND PREVENTION
TOOLKIT SERIES**

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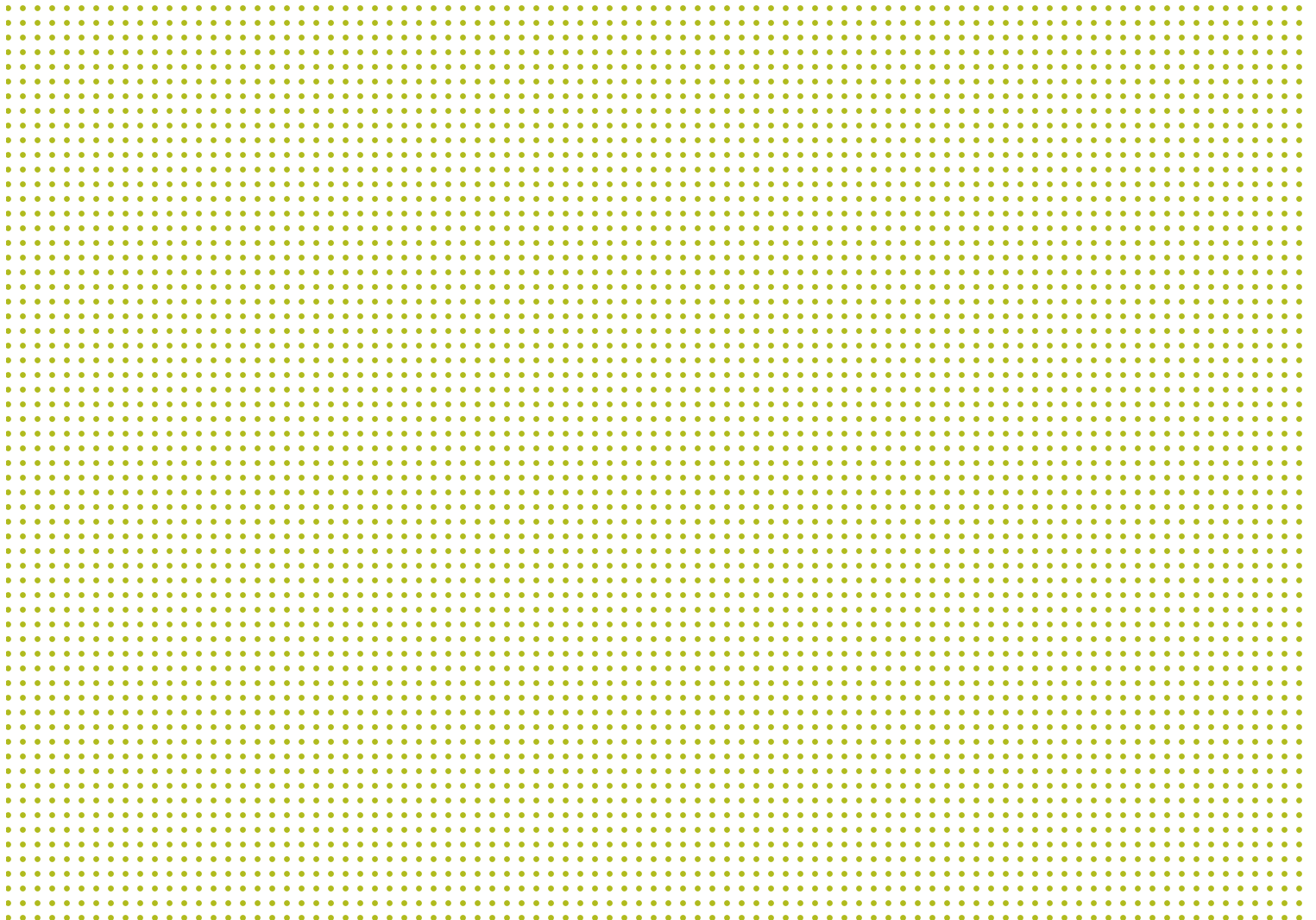
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PROMOTING YOUR EDUCATION AND PREVENTION PROJECT

Your commitment to alcohol education and prevention is important to share with your community. Not only does it showcase the work that you are doing, but it raises awareness about what is being done to create a healthier community. Additionally, it can help to increase attendance at your events and programs, and widen your reach.







The purpose of this toolkit is to provide resources and information to any group, organization or individual looking to promote an education or prevention project. In order to share your project goals and activities with others, you need to develop a communications plan. This plan will serve as the roadmap for promoting your project with a list of tactics needed to accomplish your goals. With the most efficient strategies and tactics implemented, you can easily and effectively spread your message and succeed in informing others about your project.

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide resources and information to any group, organization or individual looking to **promote an education or prevention project.**



CREATING YOUR COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

As with any project, there are aspects within your plan that you need to determine.

	<p>GOAL: The big picture statement explaining what you want to accomplish.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Your goal should reflect the greater mission of your media campaign and how it relates to the goals of your overall project.
	<p>OBJECTIVE: Objectives are specific and measurable outcomes of each goal you plan to implement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Your objectives should be your expected success, such as reaching 100 students at all the high schools in the county with a prevention message.
	<p>STRATEGIES: How you plan to accomplish your goal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Your strategies need to outline what you are going to do in order to succeed at promoting your project. They should be a broad plan of action that will help you reach your objectives, such as a media relations strategy, community relations strategy, events strategy or social media strategy.
	<p>TACTICS: Specific tasks that carry out the strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ i.e., a news release, poster, social media post, etc.
	<p>AUDIENCES: Who you are going to target.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ You should focus your messages and strategies specifically on the group you want to impact or to take action as a result of your campaign.
	<p>TIMELINE: How long will the campaign last and what needs to be accomplished each day, week and month.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ By having a schedule in place and assigning tasks to team members, there is more accountability for what needs to get done and when.
	<p>BUDGET: Determining expenses and sources of funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ While you might be able to avoid spending money on your campaign, choosing to employ strategies or channels that require you to pay may be your best option. If that's the case, determine in advance how much everything will cost and where your funding will come from.
	<p>EVALUATION: How will you measure the accomplishment of your objectives and know that you were successful?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ There needs to be a way to gauge your success and what could be done better, such as holding team meetings to discuss the pros and cons of the plan.

▶ Once you have determined these aspects of your campaign, you need to develop a written communications plan to tell others about your project.

STARTING YOUR COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Before you can choose methods and create strategies for your media campaign, you need to answer questions about the ideas and messages you are crafting. Here are a few sample questions that will help you think about various aspects of your project. While you may have more questions that need answers for your specific campaign, these questions can serve as a guide for what you need to consider for your communications plan.

Who?

- Who needs to know?
- Who does this impact?
- Who is leading/hosting the program?
- Who do you want to participate?
- Who is your target audience(s)?
- Who are your stakeholders?
- Who is the decision maker?
- Who are the partners?

What?

- What are the key messages?
- What impact does this have in the community?
- What do you want to accomplish?
- What do you want people to do or learn?
- What does the research say?
- What are the objectives?

How?

- How much of an impact will this make?
- How long will the media campaign last?
- How can people register?
- How will you measure success?
- How will you achieve an objective?

Where?

- Where will this take place?
- Where can people register?
- Where is your target audience getting their information?

Why?

- Why are you doing this?
- Why does this matter?
- Why should people attend?
- Why should your project or message be promoted?

When?

- When will this take place?
- When should people know about it?
- When will you see results?
- When can people register?

Before you can choose methods and create strategies for your media campaign, **you need to answer questions about the ideas and messages you are crafting.**

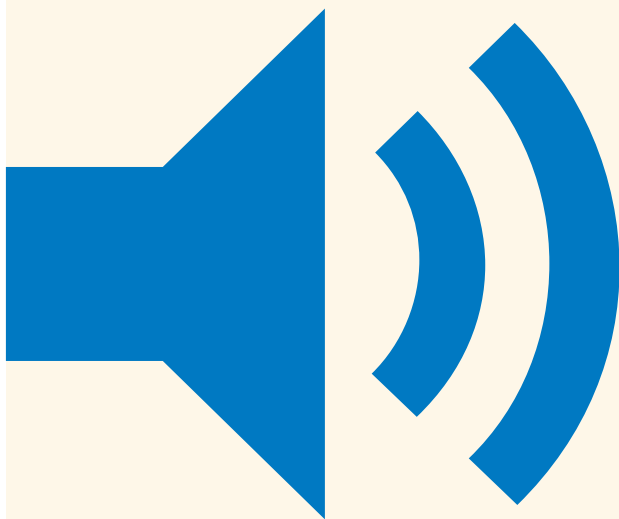
COMMUNICATION METHODS AND STRATEGIES

Choosing **effective communication methods** is imperative.

In order to share the message of your campaign effectively, it is important to distinguish the differences between communicating, promoting and publicizing your message for your target audience.

Choosing effective communication methods is imperative before, during and after your project.

Moving forward in your communication plan, it is important to choose effective strategies and the proper information channels to share your message with your audience. Three major strategies that are best for implementing your media campaign include **community outreach, social media and media relations.**



PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Managing the spread of information about your project
- Using specific prevention messages
- Sharing the successes of your project through third party sources

Example: A press release announcing the launch of your project

MARKETING

- Sharing the value of your project
- Assessing your community and understanding its problems and trends
- Communicating the right message to the right target audience

Example: A social media post promoting registration for a project event

ADVERTISING

- Communicating your prevention message
- Raising awareness about a problem
- Encouraging the audience to take action
- Persuading an audience to think about their behaviors and consider change

Example: A public service announcement

- ▶ Some things to think about, are you paying someone to send out your message? Are you sending information to the media for them to publish? Are you talking directly to your audience? Are you attempting to raise funds or promote your project? Your overall goals and budget for your campaign will affect the methods you use to relay your message.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community outreach is a powerful way to spread the word about your project directly to your audience. It can include word of mouth from influential people, speaking engagements, partnerships with different organizations and communications materials.



WORD OF MOUTH

- Parents
- Teachers
- School counselors
- Town/county communications specialists
- School system communications specialists
- Business leaders
- School board members and administrators
- Politicians and legislators



PARTNERSHIPS

- Law enforcement agencies
- Community leaders
- Legislative representatives
- Nonprofits
- Local government
- Businesses
- Community coalitions
- Local community service boards
- K-12 schools
- Colleges & Universities
- Media
- Virginia ABC



OTHER

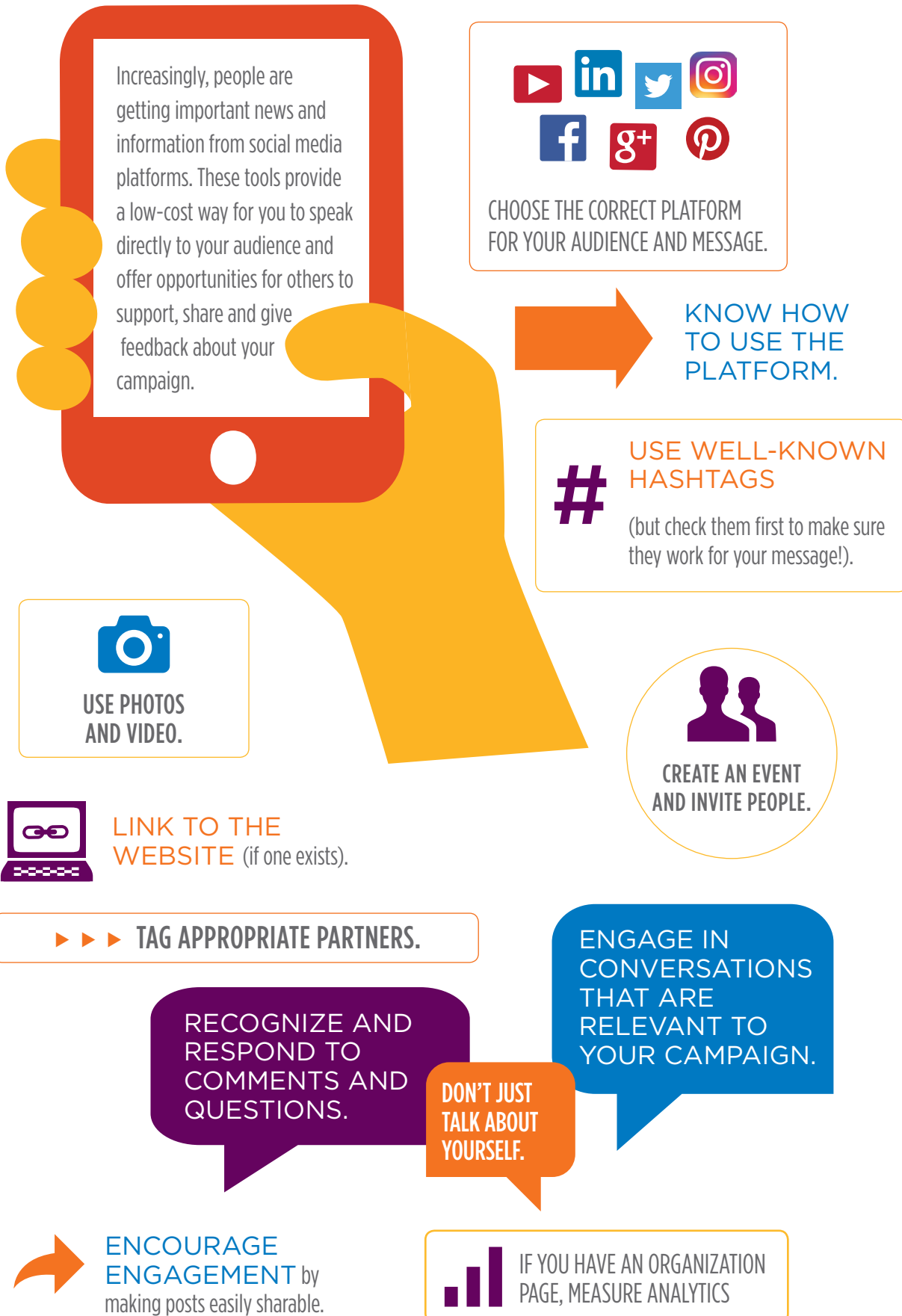
- Billboards
- Displays
- Car magnets
- School marquee
- Stickers
- Buttons
- School yearbook
- Posters
- Flyers
- Brochures
- Church bulletins
- Newsletters
- Emails

► Remember, some of these methods might be free, but others may require money in the budget to execute.

Community outreach is a **powerful way** to spread the word!

SOCIAL MEDIA

Increasingly, **people are getting important news and information** from social media platforms.



MEDIA RELATIONS

When you need to contact the media, many factors come into play such as reaching out to the appropriate outlets for your audience, reaching out with a suitable timeline in mind and having the proper information and materials to send to those you are contacting.



You should contact the media **before** your campaign to encourage registration and/or attendance, **during** your campaign to encourage participation and **after** your campaign to highlight the impact, outcomes or success.

EXAMPLES

- **Before:** “The event is happening August 1. Sign up by July 31 to attend.”
- **During:** “Our speaker is talking to high school students about how to be leaders amongst their friends.”
- **After:** “The event was a success! We made our goal and the governor attended.”

MEDIA OUTLETS	EXAMPLES	WHO TO CONTACT	WHEN TO CONTACT
Print Media	Newspapers (daily, weekly and student) Alt-weeklies Magazines	Reporter Columnist Editor Calendar Coordinator	Newspaper: two weeks prior Magazine: two to four months prior
Broadcast Media	Television Radio	Reporter/Anchor/Talk Show Host Producer Assignment Editor	Radio: two weeks to 15 minutes prior Television: two weeks to 15 minutes prior
Digital Media	Websites Blogs Social Media	Webmaster Account Administrator	Websites: two weeks to 15 minutes prior Social Media: almost instantly

- Choosing which media outlet to contact is highly dependent on your target audience. You want to choose the outlet from which your key demographic receives their information rather than waste your efforts with a media outlet that will not reach those you want to hear your message.

Choosing which media outlet to contact is highly dependent on your **target audience**.

Remember the **Rule of Seven**: People need to hear your message seven times to make it stick!

When contacting the media, it is best to have certain resources and tools at your disposal that make your campaign easier to report on and a higher-quality story for that outlet. Tools for contacting the media include:



PHOTOS



VIDEOS



STATISTICS



**PRESS
RELEASE**



**MEDIA
ADVISORY**



**INFO-
GRAPHICS**

PRESS RELEASES	MEDIA ADVISORIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written in full article form in a standard format that the media can cut and paste into publication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written in bullet form.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes an interesting introduction to catch the reader's attention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answers the basic questions (who, what, when, where, why, how).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answers the basic questions (who, what, when, where, why, how) but also gives additional details. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media can get a quick glance at the facts.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes quotes (which can have opinions). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves as a reminder, invitation, update or photo opportunity.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be included in the actual email or attached to the email. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sent out two to four weeks before the event/campaign.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be uploaded on your website. 	

- ▶ A sample letter to the editor, press release and media advisory is included in the back of this toolkit for you to adapt and use.

MEDIA RELATIONS TIPS

- Provide all of the information you can so that the reporter doesn't have to ask for anything. The more work they have to do, the less likely they will be to cover your story.
- Keep the material concise.
- Make sure that all materials include your logo and contact information.
- Connect the project locally. Explain how the identified problem is impacting your community.
- Materials should look and sound professional.
- Tell a story. If you can connect your prevention message to an individual's experience, do it. It makes the information or topic seem more relatable.
- Make sure you explain your relationship to the project.
- It's okay to follow up.
- If you do get media coverage, it's always nice to thank the reporter for helping you promote your project and establish a relationship with them.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

This document should be concise and succinct. Although it is called a “letter to the editor,” the best way to send this is by email.

For the editor to publish your note, it will need to be well written and brief to get your point across. The letter (email) should be submitted so the editor can take what is provided and use it as is.

Proofread your email when you are finished to make sure there are no spelling, grammar or punctuation errors.

Dear Mr./Ms. [editor’s last name],

Introduction: Briefly provide important information about who you are. This will help the editor/readers understand your connection to the topic.

Supporting paragraph: Explain your reason for writing. This communication is different from a press release because you may express your point of view rather than sticking strictly to the facts. You are expected to give an opinion as this helps explain why you are writing to the editor.

Additional paragraph: Describe what action you are requesting (visit, read, attend, promote, etc.).

Close: Thank the person for considering your email for publication. Remember, if you are writing to the editor, you either want them to publish your letter or write their own opinion article about the issue addressed in your letter. The closing to your email will not show up in a printed version of the letter to the editor so do not include information important to the letter in the closing.

Sincerely,
First and last name
Title and organization (if applicable)
Address
City, State Zip
Phone
Email

PHOTO RELEASES

Permission to Use Photographs Statement for an Event's Printed Materials:

[Organization] may take candid pictures of participants during the [special event name]. These photos may be posted on the [organization]'s website, social media and/or used in prevention and promotional materials. No names or personal information will be associated with any picture without permission.

Photography Release Form for other Project Activities:

I, _____, have voluntarily elected to attend/participate in [special event name] on [date]. I understand that any pictures taken of me at the event may be used on [organization]'s website, social media and/or in prevention and promotional materials. I agree that my signature on this release form gives permission to use photographs of me at any time and with no compensation.

Printed name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian: (If photographed person is less than 18 years old) _____

LETTER TO LEGISLATOR OR COMMUNITY LEADER

Your first and last name
Title and organization (if applicable)
Address
City, State Zip
Phone
Email
Month Day, Year

Legislator/community leader first and last name
Title and organization
Address
City, State Zip

Dear Mr./Ms. [last name],

Introduction: Describe who you are. Explain your connection to the topic.

Supporting paragraph: Tell the reader your reason for writing. Express your point of view.

Additional paragraph: Describe what action you are requesting (visit, read, attend, promote, etc.).

Close: Thank the person for reading your letter.

Sincerely,

[Leave this space blank. Print the letter and sign your name here.]

Type your first and last name

MEDIA ADVISORY AND PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

Contact: Name, Title, Organization
(ex: Clark Kent, Student Government Association President, Walter High School)
Phone: (804) 555-5555
Email: XXXXX@gmail.com
Date: Month Day, Year

Clear Headline that Conveys Most Important Message Does Not Need to be Complete Sentence

[Just like a news release, covers the most important information, but in quick, easy-to-understand bursts. Write in short sentences. Stick to the facts. Cover all your key messages. Proofread before sending and ensure all information is accurate. If there will be a specific photo opportunity, include that information.

The who, what, when, where, why and how headings may be reordered, if necessary. A heading may also be left off if no information fits into that category as long as all of the important information and key messages are communicated in others areas.]

What: What is happening? What do you want people to do (register, attend, read, click, etc.)? What's in it for the reader?

Who: Who is the advisory about? Who is the host? Who can participate? Who is impacted? Who is attending?

When: When will this happen? When should people register? When will this take effect?

Where: Where will this happen? Where should people register?

Why: Why should people care? Why is this important for the community?
Why is this happening now?

How: How should people register? How much does it cost?
How do they get more information? How will funding be used?

###

Boiler plate. This is a short description of the organization sending the release. It provides basic background information that may not be directly related to the subject of the release, but may be helpful to the reporter so he/she has a better understanding of the organization. It may also contain the organization's website.

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Name, Title, Organization
(ex: Clark Kent, Student Government Association President, Walter High School)
Phone: (804) 555-5555
Email: XXXXX@gmail.com
Date: Month Day, Year

Clear Headline that Conveys Most Important Message in Release Does Not Need to be Complete Sentence

LOCATION – Lead. This paragraph must catch the reader’s attention. It introduces the person to the most important information in the news release. You will provide more details later in the release. The reader must be able to quickly determine if this release contains information important to them and their audience. If you don’t hook your reader here, they will not keep reading.

Supporting paragraphs. Write in clear sentences. Create a new paragraph for each new key message to keep paragraphs between two and four sentences. Within the first few paragraphs, explain the who, what, when, where, why and how.

The release should be written so a reporter can simply take what is provided and use it as is. Provide all the details needed—don’t make the reporter have to ask for anything. Stick to the facts. Cover your key messages. Make sure all information provided is accurate (ex: address, spelling of someone’s name, full organization name, correct title). Proofread your release when you are finished to make sure there are no spelling, grammar or punctuation errors.

“Include a quote from someone related to the subject you are discussing in your release,” said Walter High School Principal Minnie Mouse (give the name and title of the person you are quoting). “The quote is where you can include opinions (ex: This program is the best one I’ve seen all year.). Remember to make sure the person you are quoting in the release knows you are quoting them and has approved the quote.”

To wrap up the release, provide any additional information or directions needed for follow up, registration, resources, etc. (ex: To register for the dance party, visit www.walterhighschooldanceparty.com.) Any information placed this low in the news release should be less important than what was included in the opening paragraphs.

“A release can have more than one quote, if needed,” said Walter High School Counselor Mickey Mouse. “You do not need to include a quote from more than one person, but you may if it helps tell the story. You may also include another statement from the person you quoted earlier in the release. Putting a quote at the end of a release can add a positive closure, leaving the reader with an impactful and memorable takeaway.”

###

Boiler plate. This is a short description of the organization sending the release. It provides basic background information that may not be directly related to the subject of the release, but may be helpful to the reporter so he/she has a better understanding of the organization. It may also contain the organization’s website.

RESOURCES

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (www.samhsa.gov)

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) promotes and implements prevention strategies to reduce the impact of mental and substance use disorders in America's communities.

Canva (www.canva.com)

Canva is a free graphic-design tool website. Canva makes graphic design amazingly simple for everyone, by bringing together a drag-and-drop design tool with a library of more than 1 million stock photographs, graphic elements and fonts.

Easely.ly (www.easel.ly)

Easel.ly is a simple web tool that empowers anyone to create and share powerful visuals for infographics and posters.

Wideo.co (www.wideo.co)

Wideo is an online video creation platform that enables users to create, edit, and share online videos.

Virginia ABC Education and Prevention Resources

The Virginia ABC Education and Prevention Section provides programming and resources for all age groups. Please call or visit us online for more information.

Phone: 804-977-7440

E-mail: education@abc.virginia.gov

Web: www.abc.virginia.gov

[Facebook.com/VirginiaABCEducationAndPrevention](https://www.facebook.com/VirginiaABCEducationAndPrevention)

Miss Virginia School Tour

In partnership with Virginia ABC, Miss Virginia travels across Virginia to elementary schools spreading a message of health, wellness and prevention with students and teachers.

Being Outstanding Leaders Together (BOLT) **Against Drugs and Alcohol**

Provides drug and alcohol prevention knowledge to middle school students through regional community collaboration and high school peer leadership.

Project Sticker Shock

Supplies are provided to community groups in an effort to decrease social providing. The project includes stickers being placed on alcohol packaging reminding buyers to not provide to minors and is done in conjunction with a press event to help raise awareness.

Youth Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Project (YADAPP)

A high school youth-led leadership conference equipping teens with a strategic plan and empowering them to keep their schools and communities alcohol and drug free.

Higher Education Alcohol and Drug Strategic Unified Prevention (HEADS UP)

Strengthening and supporting the mission of healthy and safe campus-communities through strategic initiatives, resources and capacity building.

Responsible Sellers & Servers: Virginia's Program (RSVP)

Managers' Alcohol Responsibility Training (MART)

Two courses are offered to help licensees become more responsible and to better understand Virginia laws, rules and regulations. Both courses are available online and in classroom settings, instructed by a team of Virginia ABC special agents in your region.

Alcohol and Aging Awareness Group (AAAG)

A statewide affiliate group that provides education, training and resources to prevent the misuse of alcohol and medications as adults age.

Virginia Office for Substance Abuse Prevention (VOSAP)

An organization that promotes collaboration among state and local agencies, organizations, coalitions and faith communities that address substance abuse prevention.

Educational Materials

Brochures, posters, training DVDs and public service announcements are available to the general public at no cost.

Grant Program

Alcohol education and prevention grants assist community partners to develop and enhance initiatives related to alcohol education and prevention. Grant cycle is July through June with applications due in the spring.

NOTES



Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control
www.abc.virginia.gov • (804) 977-7440
2901 Hermitage Road • Richmond, VA 23220

Design by the Office of Graphic Communications: Virginia Department of General Services