Communications and Storytelling Resource List from the Northeast & Caribbean PTTC Training

Harnessing the Power of Communication to Promote Your Prevention Message-Part 1

Strategic communication has the power to catalyze key audiences by informing their thoughts, conversations, and actions surrounding prevention efforts. As prevention professionals, our communication seeks to elevate non-stigmatizing, person-first, research-based prevention science messages which change negative perspectives and incorrect narratives.

Below you will find a variety of resources to assist you in the communication of your prevention messaging. The Northeast & Caribbean PTTC would like to thank Kimberly Elliott, Communications Director at Education Development Center, for her role in identifying and vetting these resources.

Resources for Crafting Communication

1. FrameWorks Institute is a nonprofit research group studying how people think and talk about social issues. They focus on how effective messaging and communications can spark change. Their article How to be Heard & Understood highlights how the science of framing, including what we emphasize, how and what we explain, and what we leave unsaid affects how people hear us, what they understand, and how they act.
2. The Northeast & Caribbean PTTC's Sharpening Your Prevention Skills: Using Strategic Planning to Move from Vision to Action webinar identifies the key components of Strategic Planning and offers practical advice on how to implement it in small and large efforts. The session includes a Q & A session with prevention professionals.
3. Community Tool Box's Strategic Communications Plan Guide offers guidelines on how to develop a communication plan to raise awareness about community issues and your organization's accomplishments. In subsequent sections of the same article, guidance is provided on preparing public service announcements, arranging press conferences, utilizing paid advertising, and creating newsletters.
4. The Public Health Foundation has created a Planning Before You Communicate Tool to assist in the organization of your communication plan. If you don't already use a specific tool, this is a simple, customizable file which encompasses essential information in creating your plan.

Resources for Crafting Communication Continued

5. Dr. Jeff Linkenbach's research includes how to measure and grow the positive based on the core assumption that the positive is real and worth growing – in ourselves, our families, our workplaces, and our communities. His work, An Introduction to Positive Community Norms, is a review of the Positive Community Norms framework encompassing an introductory guide to leadership, communication, integration, and reflection.
6. Prevention Communications Toolkit offers evidence-informed guidance for creating, delivering, and disseminating messages to prevent onset or escalation of substance use in youth and to build community support and readiness for substance use prevention. The Communications Toolkit for Preventing Substance Use in Youth is a supplemental webinar to accompany the guide.

Resources for Social Media Usage

1. Social Media Demographics to Inform Your Brand's Strategy in 2023 provides demographic information for a variety of social media platforms to assist your organization in having the most targeted impact in your communications.

2. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's campaign, Getting Candid, is a message guide to support youth-serving providers and other adults in their efforts to prevent substance use. Their Implementation Tools include a Youth Prevention Messaging Guide, a Community Implementation Guide, and a 30-minute interactive course. Additionally, the campaign offers the Getting Candid Campaign Social Media Tip Sheet in Spanish and Getting Candid Campaign Social Media Tip Sheet in English.

3. Social Media Image Sizes 2023 offers a downloadable cheat sheet to help in your search for the best social media image sizes for Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube.
4. How the Twitter Algorithm Works provides information on how to boost engagement, drive traffic to your site, and build brand awareness.
5. How Often to Post provides guidelines on how frequently to post on a variety of social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, and Pinterest.
6. How to Calculate Engagement Rates provides tools to assess how engaged your followers are with your social content and how your followers are interacting with your content.
7. Social Media Benchmark Report provides social media benchmarks and metrics from 14 industries, including nonprofits, to compare your social media engagement with organizations with similar missions and audiences.
8. Using Social Media to Engage Youth discusses how social media can expand the reach of your programs, engage participants, and inspire action. The tip sheet offers tips on implementation and guidance to navigating roles, responsibilities, and resources.