

**Effectively Communicating with Policy Leaders
and Funders in Your Local Community**

*The California Wellness Foundation Annual Conference
May 22, 2008*

PRESENTATION NOTES

Issue Overview

Challenges:

- Teen birth rates are back on the rise after 15-year decline
- Higher costs to communities and taxpayers
- Reduction in programs funded by the State
- Harder to get media attention

Opportunities:

- Economic downturn creates opportunity for relevant stories in the media
- Election year means politicians are looking for media opportunities
- Technology & digital media means there are ever more ways to communicate with target audiences

Media Audit

- Review of more than 30 articles written in past 6 months
- Vast majority focused on research recently released
- Topics such as:
 - New data released by CDC
 - New teen birth rate data
 - Columns related to movies (Juno) and celebrity teen pregnancies
 - HPV vaccine controversy
 - Ongoing abstinence-only vs. comprehensive sex education debate
- Asked reporters series of questions such as:
 - What angles are most interesting to them?
 - Will you be covering this topic in the future?
 - What information would be helpful to you?
- Got answers such as:
 - Only covered this when it was assigned to me
 - Needs to illustrate some new aspect of the issue (socioeconomic linkages, new contraception)

- Needs to be geographically relevant
- New research is always good
- Big outlet needs “big perspective”
- Local outlet needs “local perspective”

Creating a Message Platform

- Who is your target audience?
- What is your offering / your “brand promise”
- What do you want them to know? (your narrative, what’s your story?)
- What do you want them to do?
- Why should they care? (your “proof points”)

Target Audience Analysis

- Policymakers/elected officials
 - Adults/stakeholders
 - Adults/parents
 - Other CBOs
 - Teens
 - Media
 - Others?
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- What do we know about each of these audiences?
 - Where do they get their information?
 - Who do they listen to?
 - What will make them pay attention to you & your cause?

Developing the Message

- Three simple, concise sentences
- Tailored for each audience
- Know? Do? Care?

Utilizing Your Messages to Generate Results

- Create strategies & tactics for each audience
- Tactics could include:
 - Briefings with legislators
 - Site visits for media
 - Surveys on teen or parent behavior (specific to your community)
 - Testimonials you can use in media outreach and briefings
 - Op/ed submissions or columns to local paper
 - Digital media strategy: MySpace page / Facebook presence / Twitter messages / YouTube channel
 - BRAINSTORM OTHER TACTICS...

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