

# Media Advocacy

## How to Develop an Action Oriented Media Advocacy Plan and Messages

# What is Advocacy?

Advocacy: working to influence a change in a policy, legislation or program

Speaking up; drawing attention to; directing decision makers towards an issue

Putting a problem on the agenda

# Media Advocacy

Media Advocacy: do public health issues get the attention they deserve in public media?

What can be done to position these issues in the media for attention and action?

# What is Media Advocacy?

- \* Process of disseminating policy-related information through the communications media, especially where the aim is to effect action, a change of policy, or to alter the public's view of an issue
- \* Use of Mass Media to advance public policy initiatives.
- \* Use of Mass Media to influence opinion, mobilize community activists and influence decision makers to create a change in policy
- \* Purposeful and planned use of mass media to bring problems and possible policy solutions to the attention of the community and policy-makers.

## What is Media Advocacy?

- \* Strategic use of mass media to support community or groups of individuals working to advance a social or policy initiative
- \* Goal is to stimulate dialogue, debate, diagnosis of the problem
- \* Media advocates target policymakers and those who can be mobilized to influence them
- \* Media advocacy treats audiences as citizens in a democratic process designed to change policies that shape environments

**Important:** have to reach the right decision maker with the right message at the right time

# Goal and Objectives

The goal of media advocacy is to refocus the framing of a problem and its solutions from an individual level to policy or environmental level.

## \* Goal

Long-term outcome to describe the overall mission or purpose of a project, usually supported by several objectives

## \* Objective

Brief statement of intent describing the specific outcome sought

## \* Quick Win

Discrete, critical policy or funding decision that must occur in the near term to achieve a broader goal

# SMART Objectives

- \* **Specific** - indicates what will be achieved and by what means
- \* **Measurable** - framed with quantitative or qualitative descriptors
- \* **Attainable** - is within reach
- \* **Relevant** - contributes to the overall goal of your advocacy efforts
- \* **Time-bound** - sets a specific date for achievement

## Why the Media and Advocacy?

- \* Issues are not considered by the public and policymakers unless they are visible. Media has the capacity to bring issues to light.
- \* Media highlights issues of public concern.
- \* Media instigates action where other avenues may have failed therefore the media practitioners' role as advocates.
- \* Media advocacy is practiced at all levels, national to community-based campaigns.
- \* The main targets of most media advocacy are politicians and other decision makers.
- \* The strategic position of the media in reaching politicians, decision-makers

# Developing Action Oriented Messages

## Key Elements

- \* What ideas do you want to convey? Why?
- \* What arguments will you use?
- \* What words will you use to get the message across clearly?
- \* How will you deliver the message?
- \* What are the likely reactions (positive and negative)
- \* When is the appropriate time to deliver the message?
- \* What platform/channel will give the message credibility and more political impact?
- \* What action do you want the audience to take?

# Developing Action Oriented Messages

- \* Review the context
- \* Know the Decision maker
- \* Determine the Ask

Key Question: what do you want the audience to do?

# Reporting on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Messages can be:

- \* Rational arguments : Use facts or evidence
- \* Emotional arguments : Use evocative stories and photos
- \* Ethical arguments : Use a rights-based approach

# Group Work

Identify Decision maker

Develop Action Oriented Messages that will attract the eye of the Health Editor

# Elements of Media Advocacy Plan

- \* Advocacy issue
- \* Audience
- \* Messages
- \* Media/channels/tools
- \* Time frame

THANK YOU

