

PARENTS LEAD

Parents Lead Community Toolkit

Tips and Resources to Implement
Parents Lead in Your Community



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Introduction

Parents Lead is an evidence-based prevention program that provides parents and caregivers with a wide variety of tools and resources to support them in creating a safe environment for their children that promotes behavioral health. What is behavioral health? It's defined as a state of mental/emotional being and/or choices and actions that affect wellness. Put simply, it's our health and well-being.

Parents are a major influence in their children's lives. In fact, a strong parent-child relationship is one of the biggest factors preventing behavioral health issues like underage drinking, drug use, depression and anxiety. By practicing four proven behaviors – ongoing communication, effective monitoring, positive role modeling, and support and engagement – parents can make a lasting impact on the behavioral health of their children.

Behavioral health includes all aspects of mental and emotional health. It includes mental health issues like depression and anxiety, as well as substance use or other negative behaviors impacting wellness. And, it has been proven that when one area of wellness is impacted, either positively or negatively, other areas can be impacted as well.

The most successful efforts in promoting the behavioral health of children are collaborative and involve entire communities. Remember that behavioral health covers a wide variety of topics, making it important to tailor your efforts to issues that matter within your household, school or community.

Thank you for your commitment to supporting parents and caregivers in promoting the behavioral health of their children. When children are healthy and safe, they can learn, grow and thrive, benefiting everyone.

FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

parentslead.org

701-328-8919

info@parentslead.org

Using Key Messages

A critical step in community implementation and outreach is identifying the specific messages you want to convey to your audience. Each message should provide a key point and aid in developing the overall view of the project, event, etc.

Parents Lead has developed broad, overall messages about our program. They are available below to use along with messages specific to your project or issue. Remember that messages are most impactful when they are localized, meaning your community's local conditions specific to children's behavioral health are specifically addressed.

Local conditions allow us to more effectively address the issues important to your community and focus on specific behaviors rather than just generalized ideas.

When identifying local conditions to guide message development, ask yourself:

- What are the specific behavioral health issues in my community?
- Who, what, when, where and how are these problems presenting in my community?
- Why are these problems present in my community?
- What do you most want people to remember about your project/campaign/event?
- What do you think your audience already knows about the topic?
- What would you like them to know?
- Why should they care?

Parents Lead Key Messages

- It's never too soon or too late for parents to make a positive impact on their child's overall health and well-being.
- Parents Lead helps parents protect their child's whole health – their mind, body and emotional well-being.
- Parents have the biggest influence on the health and well-being of their children. Parents Lead helps parents identify things they can do to make a positive difference.
- Whether your child is 2 or 20, Parents Lead offers a wide variety of tools and resources addressing a wide variety of topics.
- When children are healthy, safe and well, it benefits all of us.

After you have identified your local conditions, topic and messages, choose related resources and tips from parentslead.org to make the greatest impact on your community.

Working with Community Groups and Professionals

It takes a village to make a significant impact, which means most successful implementation efforts are collaborative and involve entire communities.

Oftentimes, community groups are willing to partner or participate if the project is local and relevant to the community's needs and/or group's mission.

To implement Parents Lead as comprehensively as possible, connect with all sectors represented in your community. For a targeted approach, choose sectors that are most closely connected with the issue you are addressing.

Sectors Representing a Range of Community Connections

- Businesses
- Child Care Providers
- Civic/Volunteer Groups
- Courts and Probation
- Cultural Groups and Organizations
- Elementary/Secondary Education
- Government
- Health Care Professionals
- Higher Education
- Human and Social Service Providers
- Law Enforcement
- Parents
- Religious/Fraternal Organizations
- Senior Citizens
- Youth
- Youth Serving Organizations

Every community also includes professionals who work directly with parents and families through social service agencies, tribal services, counseling offices, public health units, youth services, educational institutions and others. These professionals can not only provide a wealth of information about what issues are most impacting parents and families in your community, but they also have a direct line of communication with families in need of support.

If you want to implement a project in your community but aren't sure where the greatest need for information and support lies, connect with these professionals for input and guidance. You may also contact Parents Lead for suggestions and tips.

Remember: Community implementation is most effective when it provides information about a topic that is directly impacting its members.

WAYS TO ENGAGE

Once you've identified a local issue, messages and groups who are willing to support your project, it's time to engage with community members. There are many ways to do this. Be creative while keeping in mind your specific issue and what age/demographic you most want to connect with.

Create your own materials [using the guidelines](#) provided in this toolkit, utilize the materials provided for communities on parentslead.org and/or contact Parents Lead for suggestions and additional guidance.

The following list provides a brief overview of general ideas for comprehensive community implementation of Parents Lead.

Ideas

- Hang posters/flyers in high-traffic areas
- Display table tents in restaurants and other gathering places
- Insert information into school newsletters and church bulletins
- Place brochures/flyers in grocery bags
- Hand out stickers or flyers at school events
- Provide activity books for kids and resources for parents at PTA meetings
- Provide public and school libraries with bookmarks for children and parents
- Place stickers on popcorn bags at local sporting events
- Participate in community events, such as county fairs or other fundraisers
- Share Parents Lead conversation starter playing cards in waiting rooms
- Place coasters in local coffee shops and dining establishments
- Provide coffee sleeves to local coffee shops and supporting partners who serve the public
- Purchase billboard space
- Place media on radio or TV
- Share information on local cable access channels
- Utilize free PSA space at local radio stations or host a weekly radio show
- Submit articles or letters to the editor to the local paper
- Post or share information on social media
- Present at teacher in-services
- Share information during announcements at a church service
- Promote at community events or meetings
- Promote social media pages
- Sign up for email updates in the community section of parentslead.org and share resources with partners

A great way to promote Parents Lead is to align your efforts with a key time of year, season, awareness month/day or important events in your community.

A strong community connection is key to successfully implementing Parents Lead. And, it's another proven factor supporting children's behavioral health. That's why it's important to not only establish relationships with different sectors represented in your community, but to also identify and align efforts with events and times of year important to your community.

Following are additional ideas for supporting community events and engaging with different sectors in your community. You can also contact Parents Lead to discuss your implementation ideas and get additional guidance.

Community Events

- Participate in community health fairs such as National Night Out®
- Share information and resources at local run/walk fundraisers
- Engage with families at local sporting events or celebrations
- Plan a town hall meeting or community-wide forum
- Host your own community event sponsored by Parents Lead

Local Businesses

- Meet with area business owners to get permission to promote Parents Lead
- Discuss Parents Lead's mission and key features with business owners
- Post stickers on takeout boxes
- Put table tents up in seating areas
- Insert materials in grocery bags
- Post posters/flyers by front entrances
- Leave post cards by cash registers at businesses, restaurants, post office, etc.

Child Care Providers

- Work with child care providers to share Parents Lead resources with families
- Share conversation starter playing cards and activity books to be distributed to families
- Partner with special events or gatherings for families

Key Community Leaders

- Schedule meetings or get on agenda for meetings with representatives from civic/volunteer groups, government, and professionals serving parents and families to present Parents Lead's mission, goals and key features
- Participate in planning and coordination of community events or activities sponsored by various groups
- Support proposed laws that support parents in promoting the behavioral health of their children (e.g., support mental health, reduce access to alcohol and other drugs, promote overall healthy environment)
- Provide promotional items and sample resources at meetings and other events

Primary/Secondary/Higher Education

- Share information for the first day of school/back-to-school night
- Host a booth or include resources at parent-teacher conferences
- Present or provide information at teacher in-services
- Attend or participate in local PTA meetings to share resources and gain support
- Develop Parent Kits for students in a certain grade that includes playing cards and other resources
- Display posters near school entrances, main office and gymnasiums
- Sponsor or share information at local sporting events
- Work with school to add Parents Lead logo and web link to website
- Share Parents Lead information and resources in school newsletters
- Utilize parent email and text notifications to share tips and tools
- Support after prom or graduation planning
- Share information with college/university housing, especially family housing
- Provide resources to college/university faculty to share with students entering the workforce
- Include Parents Lead brochures/flyers at student health services

Inspire other communities.

Please send Parents Lead details about your community implementation to be shared with others. Contact info@parentslead.org.

Health Care/Human Services/Social Services

- Share conversation starter playing cards and brochures in waiting rooms and offices
- Hang posters/flyers on bulletin boards
- Work with home visitation to share conversation starter playing cards and other resources to parents
- Partner with Child Abuse Awareness Month in April for special events

Religious/Faith-Based Organizations

- Include information in church bulletin or newsletter
- Ask faith communities to promote Parents Lead on website and social media
- Incorporate 30-day Parent Challenge into scripture or Lenten activities
- Share conversation starter playing cards and other resources in brochure stands or gathering spaces
- Co-sponsor after-service breakfasts by sharing materials or printing placemats/table tents
- Share resources with religious education/Sunday school teachers
- Present Parents Lead information during announcements at church services

Law Enforcement

- Meet with law enforcement leaders and judges to present the program and its key features
- Develop a law enforcement referral card that can be provided to parents upon various interactions
- Hang posters/flyers on bulletin boards at law enforcement offices and courthouses

Planning an Event

Events can be very effective in raising awareness and generating community involvement. A successful event requires strategic planning and attention to detail. Use the following checklists to keep your event on track and contact Parents Lead for additional guidance.

Event Basics

EVERY EVENT

should consider and identify the following:

General Information (as applicable):

Event Name:

Date:

Time:

Address:

Directions:

Parking Instructions:

Social Media Event Page/Hashtag:

Admission Fee:

Registration Website/Information:

Who to Invite?

Attendance can be the most stressful component of event planning. Consider the following when developing your guest list and how to reach them.

Special guests/dignitaries

- Which civic leaders or special guests have the greatest connection with your event/cause/topic? Consider including dignitaries such as the mayor, local members of state legislature, city/county commissioners, community leaders, school board members, local topical experts.
- Invite special guests/dignitaries to speak and participate in photo opportunities. Place dignitaries on the speaking agenda in order of their ranking (top-down). Special guests/keynote speakers typically speak after dignitaries have delivered remarks.
- Make clear what you expect of them (speaking/photos, etc.), and what date you need to receive confirmation of their attendance.
- If issuing a news release or inviting media to the event, let special guests/dignitaries know this ahead of time – invite them to provide a comment for the news release and to participate in interviews at the event.
- Offer to provide talking points to all special guests/dignitaries with brief details about the event, the topic, etc.

General public

- Will there be an open invitation to the public? Will they be required to RSVP? Consider how you will promote this event to the general public using tactics including social media, traditional media outreach, posters/flyers, direct outreach, etc., and what will be expected of attendees. It may not be necessary to RSVP unless seating is limited or you need a headcount for refreshments, for example.

Other guests

- Consider inviting local groups with an interest in the cause/topic, including parenting groups, school counselors, teachers, church groups, etc.
- Contact group leaders individually to invite them to attend and to encourage others to join them.
- Don't forget to invite co-organizers and immediate supporters!

4-6 Months Before Event

Organize a team

Choose team members with different skill sets for a well-rounded planning committee

Depending on budget and size of the event, consider recruiting volunteers or hiring an event planner to help

Identify goals and objectives

Why are you having this event?

What do you want to achieve?

Examples: increased awareness, community participation

How will success be measured?

Examples: attendance, sign-ups, media coverage

Determine a budget

Possible costs to consider:

- Venue/permits/insurance
- Speakers
- Advertising/marketing/public relations
- Event materials
- Food
- Entertainment

Identify opportunities for sponsorships, partnerships and volunteer support

Set a time and place

Considerations when selecting an event date/time:

- Be aware of statutory and religious holidays
- Avoid school holiday time periods

- Be aware of other events happening in the community
- Check schedule availability for key participants or guests
- Choose a time convenient for your target audience
- Venue availability

Once you've set a date, book the venue immediately. Venue considerations:

- Attendance capacity
- Registration area
- Food service capabilities
- Equipment inclusions, such as podium, sound system, etc.
- Availability of tables, chairs, etc.
- Accessibility
- Cost

Create a communications plan

- Select marketing/PR team lead or consult with communications firm
- Identify marketing assets needed
Examples: website, printed invitations, social media management, posters, email lists for digital invitations
- Begin early implementation of communications – traditional and social media ad development, invitation lists, speaker outreach

Consider obstacles

- Create back-up plan for unforeseen obstacles
Examples: venue availability, speaker changes, etc.
- Anticipate unexpected obstacles to arise, and identify contact person

2-3 Months Before Event

Hold regular team meetings to keep everyone on track

When necessary, include partners, co-organizers, hired help

Implement communications plan

- Schedule advertising
- Promote on social media
- Conduct media relations outreach
- Maintain website updates with event logistics as available
- Obtain and distribute printed materials
- Monitor registration numbers

Conduct site visit at venue

- Identify contact person at venue
- Confirm contract and details such as Wi-Fi, parking, setup and teardown responsibilities, venue constraints

Begin gathering necessary supplies

Items could include:

- Signage
- Podium
- Sound system, microphone, multi-box for media
- Tables/chairs
- Napkins/cutlery/glassware
- Extension cords
- Display screens
- Step-and-repeat
- Centerpieces
- Refreshments

Confirm sponsorships, catering, entertainment

Collect sponsorship contracts

Develop event agenda

- Identify emcee
- Confirm speakers, designate order and length of speaking times
- Plan for photo opportunities, tours and networking before/during/after event
- Develop talking points for speakers
- Plan transportation for speakers and other speaker accommodations

Create event contact list, including suppliers, speakers and organizers

1 Week-1 Month Before Event

- Monitor registration numbers. Boost event promotion as needed.**
 - Increase social media activity
 - Distribute media advisory, conduct additional media outreach
- Continue website updates**
- Hold check-ins with venue, catering and other suppliers**
- Continue regular team meetings, address concerns or questions**
- Confirm sponsorships and partnerships, provide final details**
- Finalize agenda, confirm speakers**
- Develop event materials including fact sheets, speaker bios and other hand-outs**
- Identify speakers or event representatives willing to participate in pre-event and on-site interviews**
- Provide final talking points and event details to speakers and VIP guests**

Day Before Event

- Hold final team meeting and event run-through**
- Confirm registration supplies, e.g., badges, check-in stations**
- Confirm quantity of refreshments, seating, other amenities that can accommodate anticipated attendance**
- Confirm supplies, create list of materials, set up at venue**
- Maintain social media activity**
- Obtain all electronic presentations from speakers, create back-ups, conduct run-through with electronic equipment at venue**
- Follow up with media, obtain RSVPs**

Day of Event

- Arrive early, check all equipment and presentations**
- Set up remaining items, e.g., signage, registration area, refreshments**
- Check team communication lines**
 - Walkie-talkies
 - Cell phone numbers
 - Wi-Fi connection
- Maintain social media activity with on-site posts, photos, video**
- Bring media assets for distribution**
 - Agenda/program
 - Fact sheet
- Have additional/extra materials on hand for speakers, guests**
 - Printed agendas
 - Talking points
 - Speaker bios
 - Backgrounder
- Greet media, provide information, coordinate interviews**
- Obtain photos/video**

After the Event

- Clean up, review list of supplies, return items**
- Thank volunteers and team members**
- Distribute formal thank-yous to speakers, sponsors, partners**
- Pay outstanding bills**
- Provide post-event wrap-up on website and social media**
- Conduct additional outreach to media**
- Hold post-event meeting, review process, identify areas for improvement**
- Analyze and compare identified goals to outcome**

Creating Your Own Materials

A wide range of materials, including everything from bookmarks to coasters to table tents, are available for your use in the community section of parentslead.org. However, you may find you need to create a specific piece for your community.

Please use the Parents Lead fonts, colors and logo guidelines to ensure consistency across materials.

Send us your materials for approval and additional guidance

info@parentslead.org

PRIMARY DISPLAY FONT

Raleway Bold

Raleway is an elegant sans-serif typeface family intended for headings and other large size usage. Initially designed by Matt McInerney as a single thin weight, it was expanded into a 9 weight family by Pablo Impallari and Rodrigo Fuenzalida in 2012 and Kerned by Igino Marini.








A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z	Regular	DISPLAY FONT: RALEWAY DESIGNER: MATT MCINERNEY
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z		
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z	Bold	
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z		
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0	Figures	
! " \$ % & / () = ? ` ; : ' i " ¶ ¢ [] { } # ¨ ¸ ' « » € ® † Ω " / o π · ± ' æ œ @ Δ ° ª © f ð , á ¥ = ç	Special Characters	

COPY TEXT	Body copy	Raleway Light Arial Regular (use only if Raleway is not available)
HEADLINES	Subheads	RALEWAY MEDIUM - CAPS ARIAL REGULAR - CAPS (use only if Raleway is not available)
	Headlines	Raleway Bold Arial Bold (use only if Raleway is not available)

IDENTITY COLOR SYSTEM

Explanation:
 Parents Lead has three colors in its complete logo mark: Navy, Royal and Gray.

Usage:
 Use them as the dominant color palette for all internal and external corporate communications of the company.

		NAVY CMYK : C100 M57 Y0 K36 RGB : R0 G70 B127 Web : #00467f
		ROYAL CMYK : C100 M40 Y0 K0 RGB : R0 G117 B191 Web : #0075bf
		GRAY CMYK : C0 M0 Y0 K70 RGB : R112 G111 B111 Web : #70666f
		UX/WEB ORANGE Web : #fbae27 RGB : R251 G174 B39

COLOR VARIATIONS



LOGO CLEARSPACE

EQUAL TO THE HEIGHT OF THE "P"



MINIMUM SIZE

1.5 INCHES [IN PRINT]
140 PIXELS [FOR WEB]



RESTRICTED USE



Do not stretch or distort any elements



Do not alter color of any elements



Do not alter any fonts



Do not alter positioning of elements



Do not allow other elements to encroach on clearspace

Paid Media

Tying all of these steps together will help you to effectively and efficiently plan, execute and evaluate a media plan that will create results.

Set your goals: This step will help you evaluate and narrow down options and mediums. You should ask yourself these questions when deciding what your goal(s) for the campaign/communication should be:

- What do you want to accomplish? Is this a campaign to help with brand awareness? Awareness of a specific topic? Are you having an event?
- Next, decide on a time frame. When is this event going to happen? Or how complicated is my brand/message, and how long will it take people to understand?
- Finally, figure out who you are trying to reach. Is your target audience parents of pre-school children? Are you trying to reach parents of high school seniors in your county? Defining who you are trying to reach will help in deciding how to reach them.

Set a budget: How much can you afford to spend on this campaign? What do you expect in return? Is it event attendance? If so, how many? Think about your outcomes and how much you want to spend. Is 100 people at an event successful? Then spending \$10,000 probably isn't realistic. Be smart and conservative with your budgets.

Plan and purchase media: After narrowing down your timing, audience and budget, you are ready to start deciding which mediums are the most appropriate. Information on traditional and digital media options follow.

Sales reps should be able to back up their proposals with reach and frequency or circulation numbers. Ask them about the highest-rated stations or programs or the publications with the highest circulations to reach your audience. And use yourself as an example (*if you are in the target audience*). When do you listen to the radio or watch TV? Do you subscribe to the newspaper or read it at work?

Gather all of the information and then compare it before you finalize your media plan.

Evaluate: Did you meet your goal? What were your results?

TRADITIONAL

Traditional media does not have the ability to target parents specifically. However, it does offer a broad reach and can add value by reaching your secondary audiences.

You can also look for local advertising opportunities. These can range from high school theater program ads to sponsoring the local pancake feed to having a booth at the county fair. They show that you are invested in the people and success of your community.

Execution will vary depending on location and what the advertising is. The best way to find out about local options is to be involved in your community and/or work with the local chamber of commerce to identify events, etc., that might make sense.

	Television	Cable	Radio	Newspapers	Magazines
Audience	Adults 35+	Adults 35+	Adults 25+	Adults 35+ (weekly) Adults 65+ (daily)	Adults 30+
Reasons to use	Mass reach. Storytelling with sight and sound.	Targeting ability. Storytelling with sight and sound.	Used for timely messages. Can be started quickly.	Used when message needs explanation or is more complicated.	Great for brand awareness. Tend to stick around for a long time.
Cons	High spot and production cost. Limited targeting.	High production costs. Doesn't reach younger demographic.	Targeting is limited to station format and age demographics.	Circulations are declining. Tends to skew much older.	Lacks immediacy. Targeting is limited.
How to purchase	Generally sold in :30 spots. You can choose where your ads run by programming or dayparts (early morning, daytime, early news, prime access, primetime, late news and late fringe).	Similar to television. Sold in :30 spots. Spots are purchased by specific network (example USA or TBS) or by specific programming (e.g., Walking Dead or College Game Day).	Radio is generally purchased by timeslots and by number of spots per week. You can also choose specific programming (e.g., high school basketball game broadcast or the ag market report).	Purchase on a cost per column inch basis. For example, a 3 col x 10" ad is a total of 30 total inches. Color is usually a separate fee and can be a flat fee or based on the size of the ad.	Generally sold by size. Common sizes are full, half and quarter page. Generally, color is already figured into the pricing. Discounts when you purchase more than one month.
Creative	:15 or :30 spots	:15 or :30 spots	:15 or :30 spots	1 col x 1" up to 6 col x 21"	Sizes depend (see above).
Measurement	Reach and frequency	Reach and frequency	Reach and frequency	Circulation	Circulation

DIGITAL

Digital media is in almost everyone's life and in fact it is hard to ignore it. It is very trackable and accountable, which makes it a very attractive medium because of the measurable results. In digital, you can target just parents in a certain geography.

In addition to the digital options outlined below, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat offer affordable advertising options. The self-service models allow you to easily control your audience, geography and budget. They have several options depending on your goal. For example, on Facebook, you could run ads to parents of teenagers in Burleigh County inviting them to RSVP for an event.

	Paid Search	Online Display	YouTube	Digital Radio (Pandora and Spotify)
Audience	Adults 18+	Adults 18+	Adults 18+	Adults 18+
Reasons to use	Users are already actively looking for you or products and services you provide.	Targeting ability. Low cost. Measurable.	All the advantages of TV with a lower cost and better targeting options.	All the advantages of radio with additional targeting options.
Targeting	Keywords	Several options depending on site. Including but not limited to demographic and interests.	Several options depending on site. Including but not limited to demographic, interests, specific channels or content.	Geographic and demographic. For example, Men 18-24 in the ZIP code 58103.
Cons	Can be time intensive.	Click-through rates tend to be low.	Setup can be time intensive. Ads are skippable after five seconds.	Scalability. Some geographies do not have enough users to run campaigns.
How to purchase	Keyword bidding with the Google Ads environment .	Sites sell impressions and you will pay on a cost per thousand. For example, if you are purchasing 100,000 impressions and your CPM is \$10, your total cost is \$1,000.	Executed through Google Ads. Purchased on an impression basis.	Purchased on a CPM basis similar to online display. However, it has two creative options: audio and display.
Minimum Spend	Ideally \$25/day, but in some cases \$10/day would be sufficient, but no less.	Depends on site and geography, however \$300-500 is an average spend.	Ideally \$25/day, but in some cases \$10/day would be sufficient, but no less.	\$5,000 for Pandora and \$250 for Spotify
Creative	Text ads	728x90, 300x250, 160x60 and 320x50	:10, :15 or :30 spots in various formats	:15 or :30 audio plus standard online display ads (see online display column)
Measurement	Click-through rate (CTR)	Impressions, CTR	Views, CTR	Audio ad completion and CTR

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Impressions: The number of times your ad is viewed or served.

Reach: The number of potential customers who see/hear your ads.

Frequency: The number of times customers were exposed to the message.

Engagements: An assessment of an individual's response to some type of offering, such as a product, service or website. An individual's degree of engagement may be determined directly through interaction or may be assessed through observation of the user's behaviors, e.g., a "like" on a Facebook post would be considered an engagement.

Clicks: The number of times people clicked on your ad. Clicks can help you understand how well your ad is appealing to people who see it.

Views: The number of times people watched or engaged with your video ad.

CTR: Click-through rate (CTR) is the number of clicks your ad receives divided by the number of times your ad is shown. $\text{Clicks/Impressions} = \text{CTR}$

Paid search: Traffic from search engine results that is the result of paid advertising on Google AdWords or another paid search platform.

Online display: A form of online paid advertising that is typically a designed image or a photo and copy, also known as a banner ad. Viewers can click on the image with the promotion to be taken to the corresponding landing page/website.

Column inch: A measurement of an ad size in newspapers.

Cost per column inch: The cost you pay per column inch in newspapers. Here's an example of how the formula would work for a 3 column x 5" ad when the cost per column inch is \$10.

Columns x height = total column inches ($3 \times 5 = 15$)

Total column inches x cost per column inch = total cost ($15 \times 10 = \$150$)

Circulation: Number of copies of a newspaper or magazines distributed.

Working with the Media

Coverage from local news sources can help get your message out to a wider audience and enhance credibility. While this channel is free, it can also take time to make the right connections.

HOW TO PITCH A STORY

Identify your contact: Weekly newspaper editors are often also the main reporter. Daily newspapers have larger staffs and may have a reporter whose "beat" matches your topic or event specifically. When in doubt, contact the general news editor. In general, TV and radio stations handle coverage requests through news directors and producers.

Be prepared: Be ready to immediately provide succinct information via phone or email to the identified media contact. If you'd like media to attend an event, have logistical information on hand (who, what, when, where, why) and explain why it would be worthwhile for them to attend the event/cover your story. Ask yourself: So what? Who cares?

Keep it local: Local media prefer to cover local stories. Provide local examples and sources to make your story more appealing and relevant to their audiences.

Give notice: Be cognizant of deadlines and provide plenty of notice for media to plan to attend your event or cover your story. If you aren't sure when deadlines are, ask.

Provide resources: Media outlets that cannot cover your story in person may include it in a broadcast/publication if you are able to provide them with resources including a news release or recap of the event/story and/or high-resolution photos/video. Offer to send information, assets like event photos and ask what specific items would be most valuable.

Be helpful: Follow up individually via phone or email immediately after an interview/event to thank media members for coverage. Offer to answer questions or provide additional information as needed and be prepared to immediately help.



Media contact: **First name, Last name**

Business/organization name

Email address

Phone number

NEWS RELEASE TEMPLATE

Headline

Subhead

[CITY], NORTH DAKOTA (Month day, year) – MAIN POINT – 1-2 sentences. [Are you having an event, sharing results of a recently completed survey, announcing newly available materials or resources? Someone should be able to read the first paragraph and have a basic understanding of what you are announcing.]

QUOTE FROM LOCAL ORGANIZATION – 1-2 sentences. [Make clear why you are sharing the information – why should people care about this? Be specific to the topic you are addressing locally.]

INFORMATION ABOUT EVENT– 1 paragraph. [Briefly state details including date, time, location, who should attend and why the event is being held. Provide website address/social media page or other contact information for people to obtain more information.]

CLOSING – 1-3 sentences. [What action do you want your audience to take? Invite them to attend event, meet with contact, visit a website for resources, etc.]

BOILERPLATE/ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION – 1 paragraph. [A basic description of your organization/company/group and its primary focus. Include your website address and social media outlets.]

###



Contact name

Business/organization name

Email address

Phone number

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

Resources available to help North Dakota parents guide children's well-being

ParentsLead.org provides tools, resources for variety of behavioral health topics

[YOUR CITY], NORTH DAKOTA (Month Day, 20xx) – In recognition of parents as the most important influence in their child's life, North Dakota's Parents Lead program has been expanded to provide tools and resources for parents to support their children's overall behavioral health.

Launched by the North Dakota Department of Human Services' Behavioral Health Division, the website – ParentsLead.org – provides materials for a wide range of topics facing parents and their children from ages 2 to early 20s. Expanded tools and resources address all areas of behavioral health, from bullying to suicide.

"Mental, emotional and physical health are all connected to overall wellness," said **INDDHS division contact**. "Our goal is to help parents protect their child's whole health and make a positive impact on their lives by using four proven parental behaviors: ongoing communication, effective monitoring, positive role-modeling, and support and engagement."

Parents, caregivers, community members and professionals are encouraged to visit ParentsLead.org for comprehensive resources, tips and guidance to support parents in preventing and identifying issues. All materials are focused on supporting parents in practicing proven behaviors to have a positive impact on their children's lives.

Parents Lead is an evidence-based prevention program with the primary goal of providing parents and caregivers with tools and resources to support them in promoting the behavioral health of their children. To learn more, visit ParentsLead.org or connect with Parents Lead on Facebook and Instagram.

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WRITING AN EFFECTIVE EDITORIAL

Opinion columns and letters to editors are best received when written by a specific person rather than an organization. Be sure to include the author's full name, title and organization if submitting the letter/column as a representative of the organization, email address and phone number and, when possible, a headshot of the author.

Larger publications often have a specific op-ed contact, but in general, it is acceptable to send your submission to the publication's editor via email. The email subject line should make clear the purpose of your email.

Example: SUBJECT: Letter to the Editor Submission.

Provide a suggested brief headline/title that accurately summarizes the main idea of your column or letter.

Present your main idea within the first two sentences of your letter or column. Use the remainder of the piece to back up your point and provide additional information as needed.

Be concise. A letter to the editor or column should be no longer than 300 words. Try to keep sentences short for easy scanning. A general rule of thumb is no more than 30 words per sentence.

Keep it simple. Newspaper standards recommend articles be written for a sixth-grade reading level. Avoid using professional jargon or acronyms, and assume that most people will not be familiar with the topic you are addressing.

Finish strong. The final two sentences of your letter or column should reiterate your point and provide a closing reminder to readers about what action you want them to take or point that you want them to remember.

SAMPLE EDITORIAL COLUMN

ParentsLead.org is a great resource to help parents with many difficult topics. The North Dakota Department of Human Services' Behavioral Health Division recently expanded its Parents Lead program with more tools and resources to help parents protect their children's mental and emotional health. ParentsLead.org previously focused on underage alcohol use but now provides tips and resources addressing a wide range of topics, from screen time to mental health, impacting children ranging from toddler to early adult.

This is a valuable resource for all North Dakota parents, communities and organizations who want to support parents and promote the overall wellness of kids. Parents can get more information about early warning signs, education on a variety of topics, and helpful tips to foster a strong and healthy relationship with their children. Community members and organizations can easily utilize resources to act at the local level and help parents implement strategies to recognize and prevent issues.

Kids and parents today face many issues that can impact their entire lives. We know that when a child is impacted mentally, emotionally or physically, it has an effect on every other area as well. We also know that when parents have access to resources, they can make better-informed decisions.

ParentsLead.org provides the most comprehensive resources for North Dakota parents. I believe parents are the biggest influence on their children's lives, but it also takes a village to keep kids safe, healthy and well. ParentsLead.org provides support for parents, grandparents and anyone with an interest in keeping our state's youth happy, safe and well. Visit ParentsLead.org, share the link with parents you know and support them in being a positive influence in their children's lives.

Author's name

Title, organization/company

Email address

Phone number

Social Media

Social media allows organizations to initiate meaningful conversations. These interactions support relationships with your key audiences to help you achieve your overall goals.

Successful social media hinges on a strong yet flexible plan, high-quality content, daily activity, plus ongoing analysis and community management.

Four Key Components

- Develop and update a social media plan and content strategy that aligns with your organization's plans, including messaging, audiences and overall goals. Use this to develop social media calendars so you're posting regularly and at optimal times.
- Create, share and optimize on-target content.
- Monitor performance.
- Manage your social media community.

Social media images are available for download in the community section of parentslead.org.

BEST PRACTICES

There are many social media platforms, various types of content and a growing number of ways to distribute the content. These best practices guide you in creating content and selecting where it will appear based on who you're trying to reach and actions you'd like users to take.

- Humanize your content.
- Create and share relevant, helpful, engaging content.
- Encourage conversations through questions, polls and fill-in-the-blank posts.
- Repurpose user-generated content and consider contests.
- Keep posts short, specific and consistent with other content.

Always include images or video (preferred) to increase interaction, and follow image guidelines.

Resource: [The Sprout Social image size guide](#) is always up to date.

- Use trackable bit.ly links.
- Find and follow several organizations that align with yours on social media. Curate and periodically share relevant posts/tweets.
- Respond to all comments, recommendations and messages. For users' complaints or in-depth questions, comment once and include the invitation to take the conversation to private/direct messages.
- Set aside a monthly budget for paid social. These can be either boosted posts and/or placed social ads. Boost posts to targeted audience(s). Consider boosting posts for events, announcements and well-performing posts.
- Monitor insights and analytics.

BEST PRACTICES

	Facebook	Twitter	Snapchat	Instagram
Audience	Adults ages 18+	Ages 16+	Ages 13 – 35*	Ages 18 – 64
Best practices	<p>Keep all sections complete and current.</p> <p>Use pin to top, events, tabs, tagging and other page and platform features.</p> <p>Periodically change your cover image/video.</p> <p>Maximize stories to boost coverage and engagements.</p> <p>Use Insights to learn more about your audience and which types of content resonate with them.</p>	<p>Ensure all sections are completed and kept current.</p> <p>Use pin to top, hashtags, tagging and links to build engagement.</p> <p>Periodically change your cover image.</p> <p>Consistently use targeted hashtags and trending topics (with caution) to stay relevant.</p> <p>Interact with others through live chats, live-tweeting sessions, retweets and comments.</p> <p>Use Insights to learn more about your audience and which types of tweets resonate with them.</p>	<p>Understand it is brief, short-lived format focused on humor and creativity; younger yet dedicated audience.</p> <p>Consistently use filters, emojis, tags, stickers, lenses, links (to your website or other URL) and other features to enhance your snaps and snap stories.</p> <p>Invite people to ask questions; answer directly or add answers to your stories.</p> <p>Save and share user generated content.</p> <p>Share your own snaps on other social media platforms.</p>	<p>Optimize your bio with an eye-catching visual and succinct profile with industry keywords. Optimize your content with authenticity in images and captions; Use location and hashtag stickers in stories; Post albums of your best posts. Consider Instagram Stories. Also consider spotlighting influencers and ambassadors to increase engagement (tag them in posts or captions). Embrace user-generated content. Find and use the right hashtags for each post. Consider contests and Link In Profile.</p>
How to enhance with paid social	Click “Boost Post,” select or create audience, set timing and set budget.	Promote existing tweets with revised links to track clicks. Use Twitter ads to place ads or cards, which allows you to select budget, audience, timing and build your promoted tweets.	Use Snapchat Publisher. The ads manager allows you to select budget, audience, timing and build or upload your snapchat ads.	Create and place specific Instagram ads and Instagram Stories ads in Facebook business manager or “boost” Instagram posts, also through business manager.
When to enhance with paid social	Boost posts based on performance as well as for events, lead generation and to share resources such as downloadable materials, etc.	If a tweet is outperforming other tweets. For events and programs.	Create filters (great for events and designated “weeks” or “days” to help build awareness). Create snapchat ads to encourage downloads of materials or to a targeted audience (to high school students if it’s a bullying awareness program, for example).	Place paid Instagram based on performance and for events and to share resources related to designated “days” or downloadable resources.
Minimum spend	Boosted posts: \$5/3 days	\$5/day	\$50/day	\$10/day
Ad creative specifications	<p>Headline: max 25 characters</p> <p>Text: max 90 characters</p> <p>Link description: max 30 characters</p> <p>Link image: Various options available; when possible, use video or use more than one image to create a “video”</p>	<p>Caption: Ideal is 125 characters including symbols and emojis and no more than 10 hashtags</p> <p>Image: 1080x1080</p> <p>Maximum of 280 characters; ideal is 70-100 characters (handles at the beginning of a reply and images do not count towards your character limit)</p> <p>Image: 1024x512</p>	<p>Width: 1080 pixels</p> <p>Height: 1920 pixels</p> <p>Aspect ratio: 9:16</p> <p>Format: .MP4, .MOV, H.264 encoded</p> <p>Audio: 2 channels only, PCM or AAC codec, 192 minimum kbps, 16 or 24 bit only, 48 KHz sample rate</p> <p>Length: 3 to 10 seconds</p> <p>File size: 32MB or shorter</p>	<p>JPG or PNG, max 30MB</p> <p>Images: Landscape 1200x628 pixels, 125 characters recommended (max caption length is 2,200 characters) Square 1080x 1080 pixels</p> <p>Videos: Landscape: .MP4 and .MOV Max 4GB (30MB for Stories), 120 seconds, 30fps Minimum 600x315 pixels Square: Minimum 600x600 pixels</p> <p>Instagram Stories ad sizes: Recommended 1080x1920 pixels (minimum 600x1067) Limit overlay text.</p>

SAMPLE CONTENT CALENDAR

Be sure to include an image, link, bit.ly and UTM, as well as special notes about each post in your content calendar.

Day	Facebook Post	Instagram Post	
WEEK 1	Sunday	If you think vaping and e-cigarettes are dangerous, you're right. Yet 1 in 5 North Dakota teens report using e-cigarettes in the past month. Learn about the risks and ways you can help your teen here:	NA
	Wednesday	Holiday parents-only parties? Get age-by-age guidance on whether kids are old enough to stay home alone:	Parents-only #HolidayParty? Get age-by-age guidance on whether kids are old enough to stay home alone. #parentslead #parents #parenting #northdakota #positiveparenting #safekids #healthykids #mentalhealth
	Friday	It's not just the holidays that can be tough. In fact, North Dakota experienced a 58% suicide increase in a 2-year span. There is also HOPE to prevent suicide with education, resources, and commitment to mental health. If you or someone you know is struggling with thoughts of suicide, get help now. - Talk with a friend, family member, counselor, or therapist More resources: - Text "START" to 741741 - Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)	NA
WEEK 2	Tuesday	It's National App Day. Get help on guiding kids to healthy use of apps and other technology:	This National #AppDay, guide kids to healthy use of apps and other technology at the link in our profile. #parentslead #parents #parenting #northdakota #starttheconversation #positiveparenting #safekids #healthykids #mentalhealth
	Thursday	Extra time with your kids during holiday break? Remember that the #1 influence in kids' lives = parents. Key way to influence them = talking. See what to say:	Extra time with kids during #holiday break? Parents are the #1 influence in their lives. Get tips on what to say at the link in our profile. #parentslead #parents #parenting #starttheconversation #northdakota #positiveparenting #safekids #healthykids #mentalhealth
WEEK 3	Sunday	1, 2, 3, 4: there are four skills of a strong parent-child relationship: Talk, Monitor, Role Model and Support. Learn how to fine-tune each one:	There are 4 skills of a strong parent-child relationship. Learn how to fine-tune each one at the link in our profile. #parentslead #parents #parenting #starttheconversation #northdakota #positiveparenting #safekids #healthykids #mentalhealth
	Wednesday	Talk. They listen. Holiday break is an ideal time to talk to your kids about behavioral health. Tips to start the conversation:	NA
	Friday	Ask your kids, "What do you think about that?" If you get a shrug, eye roll or "I dunno," say, "Well, let me share what I think." More guidance:	When you ask your kids, "What do you think?" and they shrug, say "Let me share my thoughts." More of what to say at the link in our profile. #parentslead #parents #parenting #starttheconversation #northdakota #positiveparenting #safekids #healthykids #mentalhealth
WEEK 4	Sunday	DYK? Children who sip alcohol are more likely to become teens who get drunk. Reserve alcoholic beverages for those 21+ at your holiday gatherings.	DYK? Children who sip alcohol are more likely to become teens who get drunk. Reserve alcoholic beverages for those 21+ at your #holiday gatherings. #parentslead #parents #parenting #starttheconversation #northdakota #positiveparenting #safekids #healthykids #mentalhealth
	Wednesday	It's National Thank You Note Day, a perfect time to connect with your kids while you all jot thank you notes for holiday gifts.	This National #ThankYouNoteDay, connect with your kids while you all jot thank you notes for #holiday gifts. #parentslead #parents #parenting #starttheconversation #northdakota #positiveparenting #safekids #healthykids #mentalhealth
	Friday	Ring in 2019 right! Plan a family-friendly, alcohol-free New Year's Eve for teenagers and college students. Party tips:	Ring in 2019 right! Plan an alcohol-free #NYE for teenagers and college students. Check online (Pinterest!) for great ideas. #parentslead #parents #parenting #starttheconversation #northdakota #positiveparenting #safekids #healthykids #mentalhealth
Sunday	Parents, you can't control your kids. You can influence them. Some guidance as you ponder 2019 parenting plans:		



For additional support

parentslead.org

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