

Go Public with a PSA

Find your voice and speak up! A Public Service Announcement, or PSA, is a great way to raise your voice and communicate your message.

A PSA is a short video or audio segment, usually aired on T.V. or radio, intended to alert or educate the public about a particular issue. Since radio and T.V. stations donate free airtime for PSA's, they are a very useful tool in your mission to spread awareness about issues that concern you. Video PSA's can also be uploaded to streaming video service like YouTube and shared on social media.



Define Your Goals –

Decide upon and clarify the purpose of your PSA? What do you want to accomplish with a PSA?

Identify Your Audience –

Your audience will determine how you present the message and how you broadcast your message. Make your message strong and compelling to make your viewers care as much about your topic as you do.

Determine Your Media and Broadcasting Outlets –

Contact your local radio or TV stations. Talk to the Program manager or the station manager in small markets, or with the person who's responsible for choosing PSA's for broadcast. Ask about their requirements for PSA's – what format they want to receive them in, preferred length, when to submit them, etc. Also ask your school about playing the PSA on the morning announcements or in an assembly.

Create Your PSA –

You have a lot of topics to choose from when making your PSA. Propose a thought-provoking or controversial question, answer it, and persuade your audience to take action.

• Write your PSA Script:

- ♦ **Keep your PSA brief, but thought-provoking.** PSA's are usually 15–30 seconds. Make every word count and make your message crystal clear.
- ♦ **Use words and phrases that grab your audience's attention** - You want a “hook” to capture their attention.
- ♦ **Use statistics, examples, or emotional appeals to emphasize your point** and make the listener or viewer interested enough to watch or listen to the rest of your PSA. When in doubt, play the first 5 seconds of your PSA to someone. If the PSA doesn't retain his or her interest after those first 5 seconds, you need to fine-tune your video.
- ♦ **Provide a “call to action”** – Your PSA should evoke a desire to do something as result of what they have heard.

• Produce your PSA:

- ◆ **Use every resource at your disposal** – Talk to your school’s broadcasting or video production program and ask if they will help produce your PSA, or if they have equipment/props you can use.
- ◆ **Recruit your cast and crew:** Be sure to contact your school’s drama dept./club for potential volunteers. Be sure they sign the Performance Release Form before recording the PSA. Stick to having only two or three main characters in the PSA to help your audience focus on the message. Rehearse your PSA several times before recording.
- ◆ **Record/Edit your PSA:**
 - ▶ **Camera** – If you do not have access to a camera and video editing software, then using your phone may be your best shot. Most phones are equipped with a camera that can take good quality videos and have a basic editing feature that you can use to trim down your video and arrange the scenes you want. Don’t forget other means of recording video, such as a GoPro.
 - ▶ **Set** – Do you have your backgrounds or props in place?
 - ▶ **Lighting** – Lighting is very important for a video PSA. Set up and test your lighting before recording the PSA.
 - ▶ **Audio** – What kind of background music or sound effects will be needed? Do you need a microphone?

• Broadcast your PSA:

- **TV and Radio** – Different stations have different policies for PSA’s. Some stations require the PSA script, while others require you to send in the ready-to-air version. Find out ahead of time the station’s requirements for PSAs. Once you’re familiar with submission requirements, send your PSA, following station guidelines, along with a cover letter, and any specific requests or instructions. Be sure to thank them for airing your PSA!
- **Social Media** – Websites or apps such as YouTube, Vine or Instagram offer free space for you to post, as well as a large audience to whom you can broadcast your message. Remember to keep e-SAFETY in mind when posting online.

Here are a few examples of topics for your PSA:

- Cyber Terrorism
- Sexting
- Intellectual Property Theft (Plagiarism)
- Bullying/Cyberbullying
- Online Sex Trafficking
- Identity Online

Measure Your Success –

How will you measure success (# of attendees, feedback form comments, # Agents recruited, etc.?)

Don’t forget to notify us at www.idrivetvonline.com/contact. Submit your PSA to i-SAFE and it may be featured on our website or in future iDrive campaigns.

And be sure to encourage students over 13 yrs. of age to register online at <http://www.idrivetvonline.com/get-involved/become-an-agent/> to become i-SAFE Agents.