

Creating PSAs

Public-service announcements (PSAs) are short messages intended to raise people's interest in an issue so they will take action. It is often one of the many civic actions people take when they are trying to make a difference.

A PSA should give your audience at least one idea about what they can do to make a difference. Choose your audience wisely.

You want to get your message to people who can actually DO something! For example, if you're creating a PSA that urges people to drive safely, then your audience should not be middle school students who can't drive. Remember, by creating a PSA you are taking a civic action that will help you move towards the goal of making an impact on your problem or issue.



PSAs are often published on the radio, television, or on social media sites. If you post a PSA video on a video-sharing site like YouTube, it has the potential to be viewed by hundreds or thousands of people. You can also use a PSA on a social media site such as Tumblr, Facebook and Twitter. Remember, the purpose of the PSA is to make others aware of your issue and gain supporters who will take action!

Tips for creating a PSA:

Create a clever title. Titles can entice people to watch the video and make the PSA memorable.

Write the exact words you want the announcer to say. If you are creating a video, write a script and decide what images you want to show.

Create a compelling story about why your issue is important. Use facts, statistics, and personal statements to show why your issue is important and why people should care. Don't forget to include how the listener or viewer can take action.

Answer the five W's. In a written or video PSA, you must answer: Who, what, when, where, and why? Often PSA's will focus on a person or issue to create a story that answers the five "W's."

Check its readability. Read your PSA out loud to make sure you haven't written words that will tongue-tie the announcer.

If written, write “PSA” in capital letters at the top of your document. See sample PSA below.

Label how long it is. Broadcasters usually prefer short PSAs of 15- to 30-seconds long. If you are creating a video, try to keep the video to 2-3 minutes.

Post, mail, email, or fax your PSA early. Broadcast stations like a lot of lead time.

Sample PSA for local radio station:

PSA

Length: 10 seconds.

Right now over half a million Americans are using their cell phones while they are driving. Right now 25% of the teenagers who are behind the wheel are texting. Right now, if you are driving, put down your phone and pay attention.

[**Click here for a list of media outlets**](#)

Video:

[**INSERT Example of PSA**](#)

*As a reminder, please do not use any copyrighted music, images, or text without the express permission of the copyright owner.

[**Click here for more information on video-sharing sites.**](#)

If you create a video PSA, consider entering it into the CAP PSA Contest. For more information click on the link below:

[**CAP PSA CONTEST**](#)