

NAME:

GROUP:

P<sub>repare</sub> O<sub>rganize</sub> W<sub>rite</sub> E<sub>ducate</sub> R<sub>eform/Reflect</sub>

# PRODUCING A PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

**Public Service Announcements (PSAs)** are short messages produced on film, video or audio and given to radio and television stations. PSAs are used by advocacy organizations, government campaigns and other public interest groups to:

- Raise awareness about an issue
- Encourage the audience to do something – call for information, wear a condom, etc.
- Encourage the audience NOT to do something (change behavior) – text while driving, smoke, etc.

When writing your PSA:

- 1) Choose a **clear focus/message**. For example “If you have asthma, don’t smoke.”
- 2) Brainstorm **creative** and relevant ideas – ask the people you are trying to reach.
- 3) **Fact-check!** Make sure your information is accurate and you are recommending a trusted organization for help.
- 4) **HOOK** your audience with a emotional or shocking images/words. Do something that will make the viewer not want to change the channel: something funny, catchy music, shocking statistic, emotional appeal, etc.

*When using a verbal message, 30 seconds = about 60-75 words.*

**Types of PSA formats:**

- **NARRATIVE** (tells a story) –example: “text while driving,” “what’s your story”
- **ABSTRACT** (montage of sounds and image or metaphor) – example: “use your voice,” “why didn’t you see me?”
- **INSTRUCTION** (teaches the audience) – example: here’s how you recycle.

# PSA PLANNING WORKSHEET

**Who is the target audience of your PSA?** (Be specific: Philadelphia Latinos, middle-school girls, single fathers, sexually active college freshmen..)

**What is the goal you want to achieve with the PSA?**  
(raise awareness, encourage a certain behavior, discourage a behavior, etc.)

**What should the *specific message* of your PSA be? Think of a slogan or a title to go with your PSA.**  
(ex. "If you have asthma, don't smoke.")

**How can you use image, words & sound to communicate your message?**

- present a powerful statistic using words, images or a diagram
- illustrate an example of behavior through a story or pictures
- call your viewer to action with words like: "CALL", "VISIT" "GO TO..." etc.
- use a montage\* of emotional and compelling images and words
- ask a question that will relate to your audience fears, needs or issues

**\*MONTAGE** - is a technique in film editing in which a series of short shots are edited into a sequence to condense space, time, and information. It is usually used to suggest the passage of time – such as a sports training montage (see: Rocky) or a love relationship montage. A montage is a good technique to use in PSAs to tell several stories or examples in a short amount of time.

**BRAINSTORM** 6 different ways your message can be communicated and draw/write them in the boxes below. What would you see on the screen? **BE CREATIVE BUT INTENTIONAL!**

<p><b>What's Your HOOK? GRAB the VIEWER with something SHOCKING, FUNNY, POWERFUL or EMOTIONAL. What will make them keep watching and thinking about your message even after the PSA is over?</b></p>	<p><b>How will you RELATE to the audience? Your target audience needs to know you are talking to THEM, usually by being DIRECTLY represented in your PSA.</b></p>	<p><b>TELL A STORY/ Give a Memorable Example. Show something specific or believable that exemplifies your problem/message.</b></p>

<p><b>GET TO THE POINT. Show OR Tell what's causing the problem. A PSA is not a place to be abstract, artistic or vague. What is the enemy?</b></p>	<p><b>Emphasize the SCALE/IMPACT. Include a powerful statistic or image that shows the damage done or impending due to this issue.</b></p>	<p><b>CALL TO ACTION! Engage your viewers in being part of the solution by asking them to DO something small: change behavior, visit a website to learn more or donate.</b></p>

## STORYBOARDING YOUR FINAL PSA!

A storyboard is different than a brainstorm. A storyboard visually tells the story of a film panel by panel, kind of like a comic book. The storyboard should convey some information that will help you in the production process like: what characters are in the frame, what are they saying to each other if anything, how far away is the camera and at which angle, is the camera moving, do you hear music or sound effects? Use the lines below the frames to provide these details.

**HOW TO MAKE A STORYBOARD:** Most commonly, storyboards are drawn in pen or pencil. If you don't like to draw you can also take photos, cut out pictures from magazines, or use a computer to make your storyboards. Keep in mind that your drawings don't have to be fancy! In fact, you want to spend just a few minutes drawing each frame. Use basic shapes, stick figures, and simple backgrounds.

**STORYBOARDING TERMS.** Use these abbreviations to provide information about your planned shots and transitions.

- **CU OR CLOSE UP:** A close distance of the camera, usually showing only the subject or the head of a person in the frame.
- **DISSOLVE:** A transition between two shots, where one shot fades away and simultaneously another shot fades in.
- **FADE -** A transition from a shot to black where the image gradually becomes darker is a Fade Out; or from black where the image gradually becomes brighter is a Fade In.
- **HIGH ANGLE:** A camera angle which looks down on its subject making it look small, weak or unimportant.
- **JUMP CUT:** A rapid, jerky transition from one frame to the next, either disrupting the flow of time or movement within a scene or making an abrupt transition from one scene to another.
- **EYE LEVEL:** A camera angle which is even with the subject; it may be used as a neutral shot.
- **LS or LONG SHOT:** A long range of distance between the camera and the subject, often providing a broader range of the setting.
- **LOW ANGLE:** A camera angle which looks up at its subject; it makes the subject seem important and powerful.
- **PAN:** A steady, sweeping movement from one point in a scene to another.
- **POV (point of view shot):** A shot which is understood to be seen from the point of view of a character within the scene.
- **REACTION SHOT- 1.:** A shot of someone looking off screen. 2.: A reaction shot can also be a shot of someone in a conversation where they are not given a line of dialogue but are just listening to the other person speak.
- **TILT:** Using a camera on a tripod, the camera moves up or down to follow the action.
- **ZOOM:** Use of the camera lens to move closely towards the subject.
- **VO:** Voice Over. The Narration you hear over the image on the screen.
- **FX:** Indicate the EFFECTS you want to appear in the frame or hear in the soundtrack.

#### AN EXAMPLE: OF A PSA STORYBOARD:



SEE THE ACTUAL PSA: [http://www.nccwd.com/Brushing\\_Teeth\\_PSA.html](http://www.nccwd.com/Brushing_Teeth_PSA.html)