



How to Get PSAs Placed Working with Your Local Media

The Ad Council engages leaders at national media companies to secure donated media on behalf of all Ad Council campaigns and public service advertising (PSAs). The PSAs will also be distributed to the Ad Council's network of over 1,850 broadcast TV stations and 9,500 radio stations across the country. This multilayered media outreach strategy maximizes national and local support to deliver premier media placements for public service advertising (PSAs).

Gatekeepers at media outlets and stations receive many PSAs in a typical month and have indicated that they place a priority on PSAs that benefit their local community. Having the Ad Council logo propels our spots to the top of the list due to their quality and the importance of the messages we brand.

Local media outlets provide a great deal of donated time and space on behalf of Ad Council public service advertising campaigns. But since the demand for advertising is high, the media cannot donate as much time and space to public service advertising. That is why grassroots involvement in campaign outreach can have a critical impact.

As community members, you have a unique opportunity to reach out to media gatekeepers in your community, supplementing our efforts, to convince outlets that these messages are important to their audiences.

What Can You Do?

You can play a role in raising awareness about the Start With Hope campaign not only by sharing the PSAs with your friends and colleagues through social media, but also by contacting your local media directors and encouraging them to run these PSAs. Local media directors listen to their residents and grassroots organizations, and they are more likely to run PSAs that address issues that matter most to their local communities. Make it known that highlighting paths to substance use recovery is an important message for their local community and help us get the message on the air.

Take the following steps:

1. Appeal directly to media gatekeepers at stations and media outlets
 - a. Meet to personally develop a relationship, or leverage an existing relationship you may have
 - b. Maintain contact with them to reinforce the importance of the issue
2. Demonstrate the issue's importance to the local community
 - a. Share statistics that have local relevance
 - b. Talk about events taking place in your area or your local organization
3. If applicable, offer your expertise as a resource to the media

MEDIA TIPS: News and Talk radio stations are typically most supportive of PSAs. They may also be willing to have someone from your organization on the air for an interview, particularly if the issue is topical and in the news.



- a. Be available for interviews
 - b. Offer local statistics and research, or info for their news station web page
4. Point out the benefits of the PSA to the media outlet
- a. The PSA issue complements the station’s programming or news angle
 - b. It improves the image of the media in the community
 - c. It provides high quality advertising for otherwise empty space or time

Develop a List of Targets

Concentrate on the local TV stations that you watch, the radio that you listen to, the newspaper that you read, the people who send you a cable bill, etc. These companies make up the media in your community.

Initial Contact with the PSA Director

The first time you contact (by phone, e-mail or letter) the media in your community, try to set up a meeting. You’ll find that contacts at media outlets are generally people concerned with the community and may make time to see you. Most media outlets are familiar with the Ad Council and know that the Ad Council represents “issue-experts.” They trust that Ad Council PSAs are generally of high quality.

In communications, you should also acknowledge that media outlets have likely already received the PSAs and heard in communications. You should also acknowledge that media outlets have likely already received the PSAs and heard directly from the Ad Council about the campaign.

For TV and radio stations, media outlets will have received PSAs directly to their station traffic queue through Extreme Reach. Familiarize yourself with the PSAs that are available on Paths to Recovery Toolkit.

In the initial phone call, introduce yourself and explain that you would like to meet to discuss your local organization’s role in the community and the Start With Hope campaign. Be prepared to suggest a date and time and several alternatives.

Media Type	Description	Who to Contact
Television Broadcast affiliates Independent stations	These stations produce their own local news and also sell advertising to local businesses. Many of these stations are affiliates of a broadcast network like ABC, CBS, NBC, or FOX. For instance, in Atlanta the ABC affiliate is WSB-TV. Be sure to contact the staff at your equivalent of WSB-TV and not at the national ABC television network.	Public Affairs Director Community Affairs Director General Manager
Cable Cable systems	Call the company listed on your cable bill, and try to contact all the cable systems in your area. Cable stations often have more time available to broadcast PSAs.	Advertising Director Marketing Director General Manger

Radio	Contact the radio stations that reach your target audience. Radio stations are formatted for very specific audiences.	Public Affairs Director Community Affairs Director General Manager
Newspapers	Newspapers are the most difficult medium in which to place PSAs, because they can print only the number of pages needed to fit the articles and paid advertisements for that day. Try to persuade local papers to use these ads in a meaningful and timely way. Consider reaching out to neighborhood publications, especially if you are living in a large metropolitan area to see if there's an interest in running campaign PSAs.	Director of Advertising Editor-in-Chief

Introduce Yourself

- Once you locate the right person, contact them with basic information on the campaign.
- Tell them why you are writing or calling (I want to meet with you, I want you to run these PSAs)
- Let them know that they should have already received the PSAs through AdCouncil.org and "Extreme Reach"
- Give them two or three vital statistics pertinent to your community
- Inform them of any recent news stories that focus on substance use disorder and recovery
- Briefly explain the goal and strategy of the campaign and how it will benefit their viewers, listeners or readers (refer to media outreach language)
- Personalize the issue for the contacts at stations and media outlets (frame the issue around a local event or the media outlet's programming)
- Outline next steps (set a meeting date, send the PSA)
- Provide your contact information

Prepare a Campaign Packet to Bring to Your Meeting.

The packet can include:

- Letter to the contact at the media outlet
- Start With Hope fact sheet
- Local stats and facts on substance use disorder and recovery.
 - The CDC has a helpful hub where you can find information on [substance use disorders](#) and available data.
- Previous prominent news clips on substance use and recovery

Many of these resources are available for download through the [Start With Hope Toolkit](#) or [AdCouncil.org](#).

The Meeting

When you meet with the media, you need to know what you are asking them to do, and what you are trying to accomplish. Do your research – you want to find out what social issues are important to the company you are visiting, how they support those issues, and events that they sponsor. This may uncover an opportunity for you to partner on an event or respond to an incident in your community.

Sample Questions:

- Does your station/newspaper/magazine have a specific policy regarding public service advertising?



- Are you focusing on any particular public service or community initiatives?
- Are there opportunities to partner with you on upcoming events?
- How can we be a resource to your station? Do they have sponsors who also care about health issues?

Be Prepared – Possible Responses to the Campaign

We produce our own station campaigns.

Let's work together. We can support and enhance your public service initiatives by providing up-to-date information and research as well as local resources (i.e., 1-800-number, websites, etc.). We can be a resource for you.

We have a policy against supporting any PSAs

Try to find out why. This policy may be based on a misconception. Mention that this is an Ad Council campaign. Some stations will air PSAs from the Ad Council because of the production quality and the rigorous vetting process.

This is not an important issue to our community.

Discuss the issue on a local level. Share statistics and results that you have seen in the community since the onset of the campaign. Has substance use disorder and recovery been in the news lately?

Follow Up

After your meeting or phone call, follow up. Send a thank you note to your contact and provide any follow up materials that you promised. Questions? For more information, please contact the Ad Council media team here: <https://www.AdCouncil.org/contact-us>

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