SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVISM

A TOOLKIT TAPPING IN TO ONLINE YOUTH CULTURE

Break the Cycle
Because Everyone Deserves a Healthy Relationship

CALCASA
CALIFORNIA COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT

BACKGROUND

In October 2017, the hashtag, #MeToo brought international attention to sexual violence. While the concept of MeToo had been developed ten years earlier by Tarana Burke, social media was the mechanism for its rapid exposure to a large audience.

Sexual violence can be prevented. And social media is one important tool to use in preventing sexual violence, this toolkit is designed as a resource, for organizations, service providers, professionals, and individuals who work with adolescents and young adults around sexual violence prevention. There are many nuances when it comes to social media and prevention, this toolkit will provide a guide for reaching the youth audience, generally those between the ages of (12 - 24). In order to create an authentic toolkit, CALCASA partnered with Break the Cycle to develop content that is driven by the expertise of their youth leaders across the country.

THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA

WHAT IS IT?

Social media is a means for communicating information, instantly and publicly. It is news, images, facts, and stats in real time. Social media is about promotion, and building a network or community, and following. You can use social media to elicit support in your community, generate feedback on current events, or to build your online identity - to increase visibility for the great work you do in person. With the rise of technology, we've seen an overwhelming amount of social media tools and platforms — which are available for us to use, generally as free apps on our mobile device or through websites.

HOW IS IT USED?

A key way to use social media beyond creating daily content, is to build a specific social media campaign. Social media campaigns, are used to drive attention to a specific cause or call for action. You may want to create a social media campaign around an awareness month, like Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April or raise awareness on help resources or new products created by your organization. The best campaigns are those that include strong messaging, a call to action, and content that is authentic and relatable to the audience.

Launching a social media campaign, requires careful planning, innovation, commitment and consistency. Engaging your audience through social media, is a great way to inspire action and connection. Before you dive in to developing your social media campaign, take a look at the following sections to better understand how to create the most impact with your audience.

PLANNING AND PREPARING FOR A SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

A social media campaign is a coordinated effort to create action or change using one or more social media platforms. Campaigns are different from typical social media efforts because of their increased focus, targeting and coordination.

Social media platforms, are just that—the platform for your message. Each one brings its own style, graphics, and design—but the purpose is the same; getting your message out, and having someone engage with that message.

HOW TO DETERMINE WHETHER TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA?

Many of us are using social media or understand that it's important, but have you ever stopped to think about "why" you should use social media? The top reasons why people use social media in our field include:

REACH YOUTH WHERE THEY ARE

We know young people spend a lot of time online and it may be a good idea to run a social media campaign targeted towards youth.

INCREASE ONLINE PRESENCE

Nowadays having social media access or visibility adds to your authenticity as an organization. If you are on social media it shows that your work is current and a viable resource.

EXPAND REACH

Social media can help broaden your network, especially if you are including location into your posts. It allows users to share your work instantly potentially bringing in new people.

Social media does not automatically bring people to in person events. Social media does build their interest and allows your event to become visible, it does not guarantee that people will show up. Using social media only to engage your audience to in person events is not successful unless you have spent the time to engage, build their interest, and have done some in person canvassing or conversations where you have promoted your event through flyers at physical spaces with details on what will be available at the event.

WHAT IS YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE?

Select the category that best represents your role or status with social media. Respond to each bullet point and take notes. These answers will help you work through planning which platform(s) you will use for your campaign.

ACTIVE ON SOCIAL

How many social media accounts do you have?
_____

What is the purpose of each of your social media accounts?
(i.e. Facebook for sharing organizational news, and Instagram for sharing live videos, Twitter for sharing statistics and events)
_____

Have you generated a specific theme, look, or feel "aesthetic" for your social media accounts?
(i.e. color scheme to match an awareness month, theme around an action "We stand with..." "Voices against..." Infographics, photos of people, cartoons, shapes, stories or statistics?)
_____

Have you considered accessibility?
(i.e. image color that is easily legible. Avoid bright colors like yellow, red, neon green and avoid using small font size. If there is sound in your posts, consider adding descriptive posts in the comments; "audio of two people talking" and explaining visual in texts; "image of a young girl with an ice cream cone, with text that reads it's really hot today", language - consider posting images with multiple languages or translating content in the comment section of the post.)
_____

Who is posting and managing content on your sites?_____
_____

How do you incorporate and manage apps and posting from mobile devices, or shared accounts across your organization? _____
_____
_____

How do you monitor social media direct messages and comments?
_____
_____
_____

How do you respond to social media direct messages, comments of people looking for help services, posting content that goes against your mission, or posting content to annoy or incite anger or chaos with your posts – these people are also known as Trolls.
_____
_____
_____

NOT ACTIVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Do you have an idea of how many social media accounts you'd like to manage or promote your campaign on? *(pro tip: if you are not active on social media, it's best to start small, make some observations on what's most used with your audience and start there.)*

_____
_____
_____

Make sure your handle (name on the account) reflects your organizations name or purpose.
@ _____

How many social media accounts do you want to have?

_____

What will be the purpose of each of your social media accounts? *(i.e. Facebook for sharing organizational news, and Instagram for sharing live videos, Twitter for sharing statistics and events)*

_____
_____
_____

Consider a specific theme, look, or feel "aesthetic" for your social media accounts. Figure out your 'voice' *(i.e. color scheme to match an awareness month, theme around an action "We stand with..." "Voices against..." Infographics, photos of people, cartoons, shapes, stories or statistics?)*

_____
_____
_____

Have you considered accessibility? *(i.e. image color that is easily legible. Avoid bright colors like yellow, red, neon green and avoid using small font size. If there is sound in your posts, consider adding descriptive posts in the comments; "audio of two people talking" and explaining visual in texts; "image of a young girl with an ice cream cone, with text that reads it's really hot today", language - consider posting images with multiple languages or translating content in the comment section of the post.)* _____
_____

Who will be posting and managing content on your sites?

_____

     How will you incorporate and manage apps and posting from mobile devices, or shared accounts? _____
_____
_____

REFLECTION

Ask yourself the following questions around the purpose of your efforts to determine if using social media is the best tool for you.

Do I want to engage my audience through visuals, interactive content, and resources they can easily share?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

If yes—social media is a great tool to use. Instagram is a preferred platform for sharing visuals. Facebook and Twitter are great for sharing links to resources and multiple documents.

Do I want to provide education and prevention tools to a specific audience?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

If yes – social media can be a tool to use, however your content will need to be brief and you'll have to consider how to achieve a major component of education and prevention online – which is direct conversations and opportunities for shared learning. You can do this on Twitter or through Live video options on Facebook and Instagram by asking questions to the audience for a forum like discussion.

Do I want to promote a community event or awareness effort?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

If yes – social media can help you market your event. Facebook has an event feature that's great for gathering RSVP's and increasing attendance for your event. You can also share your event link on Twitter.

Do I want to increase exposure to the services or programs my organization offers?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

If yes – social media can help you expand your in person network online. Be sure to use geo tag features where you tag your location and hashtags with the city or community you're in to increase public exposure. Facebook and Instagram are great for hashtags, and geo tagging.

If you have determined that social media would be a good tool for you to use to engage your audience in different ways, you should then consider if your audience consumes social media for these purposes. We provide a reflection of social media platforms from a young person's perspective later in this guide to help you in this process. Generally, most students and young people 18 -24 use Instagram, Snapchat, and Twittter more than Facebook and almost all youth 13 – 18 don't even have a Facebook account. Twitter remains a consistently used platform across age groups for instant news and updates, according to youth surveyed by Break the Cycle.

DEVELOPING YOUR CAMPAIGN GOAL

Social media is your tool, but your content is where the impact lies. Content especially around sexual violence prevention, should provide information, and connect to resources. Your content is the bridge of information for someone who may have experienced abuse, and may be reflecting on a post you generated or someone who may have just realized that what they experienced was actually abuse—because of the facts you've shared. Both of these instances can be emotionally triggering but there is a moment of reflection and response—the response is what you want your campaign to focus on.

REFLECTION

What do you want the reader to feel, do, or take away from your campaign message? *(i.e. empowered, hopeful, sense of resiliency or understanding how to support)*

How are you matching your campaign's message to your community's needs? *(i.e. are you speaking about something relevant? Has a recent case opened up relating to sexual assault that you want to speak on?)*

Consider the following questions pulled from resources from the Berkeley Media Studies Group, to begin building your message[1]:

1. What is the change you want to see? With who? How?

2. Who has the power to make that change?

3. Who can you mobilize to exert pressure and communicate for your cause?

These questions will determine not only what actions you take, but also how you communicate about them.

Remember—social media is your tool and a tool that is not being used, has no purpose. Consider your purpose and overall values for creating a social media campaign, take in the importance of inspiring action but note that in order to truly determine if you have reached your goals for your campaign—you will need to create measurable outcomes.

After you determine what the goal and outcome of your campaign is, you can develop the message you want to deliver.

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1   Berkeley Media Studies Group (2018), Where we're going and where we've been: Making the case for preventing sexual violence. Washington DC and Berkeley, CA: RALIANCE and Berkeley Media Studies Group. http://www.raliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/BMSG_MessagingGuide_FINAL508-1.pdf

DEVELOPING YOUR CAMPAIGN MESSAGE

As you build your message, determine whether or not your message has the following key components for effectively communicating about sexual violence prevention, RALIANCE and The Berkeley Media Studies Group has developed these message components as seen in their publication of "Where we're going and where we've been: Making the case for preventing sexual violence."[2]

1. Evoke shared values with your audience. What are the values you want them to know you're carrying throughout your campaign, these should match up with their ideals as well.
   a. Commitment to ending sexual violence
   b. Creating stronger healthier communities
   c. Helping a friend in need
2. Acknowledge negative feelings, like discomfort, fear, or lingering doubts
   a. With youth especially it's important to acknowledge that "talking about sex" with adults can be awkward.
   b. Recognize the power it takes someone to speak up and share.
   c. Address overarching community concerns when it comes to sexual violence for example, try not to emphasize a "one size fits all" approach for finding help like go to law enforcement, when this may be an option your community has doubts or fears about. Take time to explain the benefit but not push it as a must.
3. Describe a journey toward change, its starting point and pivotal moments
   a. Give your audience a strong story of advocacy or surviving sexual violence.
   b. Provide an image of resiliency, noting struggles but emphasizing "making it through."
4. State the problem precisely
   a. Center your messaging on one key action to ending sexual violence like communicating about boundaries and respect or challenging social norms.
5. Show success
   a. Share how change is possible through prevention.
   b. Young people joining in on campus events, hosting activities - resulting in decreased reports on campus.
6. Name concrete solution
   a. Narrow down your messaging to a very detailed and realistic way of providing change. For youth this may be more workshops addressing consent, a specific poster campaign on campus, or increase of in person support through counseling for victims.

Every social media message does not need to include all of these elements, but through a comprehenisve campaign, you should address as many of these elements as possible.

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2   Berkeley Media Studies Group (2018)

DETERMINING THE ACTION YOU WANT TO BE TAKEN

This is the big indicator for success and impact. What did your audience feel or take away from the campaign? How did they react to your content? Did it inspire them to volunteer? Host an event? Or more?

Your audience will likely have many different responses to your campaign. With youth, the highest indicator of their reaction (good or bad) will come from how they engage with your campaign online and with their peers in their network. This is why it's so important to have content that is relatable and shareable. Content that they feel comfortable starting the conversation with a peer or posting on their social media.

Consider the following social media actions to determine what you want to be taken from your campaign:

1. **Like, follow** — this is your audience's way of instantly engaging with your posts.

2. **Comment or Tags** — another way for direct engagement and bringing in more people to your campaign, read more info on tags in the section below.

3. **Retweet, Share** — encourage your audience to share your message with their audience.

4. **Reply or Direct Message (DM)** — this is a way for your audience to contact you directly. You can ask for people to reply to your post for an event RSVP or to join or volunteer.

5. **Hashtags** — encourage your audience to use a specific hashtag for your campaign, so this increases visibility across the internet. Awareness months usually have a preset hashtag #teenDVmonth (February Teen Dating Violence Awareness month) #SAAM (April Sexual Assault Awareness month) #DVAM (October Domestic Violence awareness month) read more on hashtags in the next section of this guide.

6. **Sign petition** — this is a great way to connect your audience to a bigger movement. Include a petition link in your Facebook or Twitter posts.

7. **Donate** — this feature is already built into the Facebook platform — with a donate button to use to add to your posts. Determine if it makes sense to ask for donations depending on your campaign message. End of the year giving campaigns are a great way to use this feature on social media.

8. **Attend event (virtual or in person)** — Facebook has an event invite feature that's great for creating a seperate space for your event info and to directly add people to join in. The individualized page also makes connecting with your audience after the event easier, since you can create content on that page specifically for them.

9. **Adding to a Profile Image** — many campaigns will create an overlay image to be placed on a profile image. These are known as twibbon or filters. Each platform will have instructions on how to create one. It's a great way to increase campaign and brand visibility and fairly easy to create online but a designer can also help you through the process.

Whatever actions you determine you want your audience to take, be sure your messaging includes the "ask" or gives directions on what to do or how to stay involved.

Examples:

- **Comment** on this post with #healthyrelationships if you'll be joining us at the event on Friday
- Give this post a **like** if you agree
- **Tag** a friend and share this message with them
- Send us a **message** for more info
- Add a **heart** emoji and **tag** a friend

LEVERAGING YOUTH VOICES

In order to develop campagains directed towards youth you must work with youth and have input from youth. There are many ways to connect with youth in-person or online.

Engage youth early

- Too often, we engage youth after we've developed a theme and plan of action. In most instances, this is because we have to, or we are so limited with staff and capacity we just need to get it done quickly. Not including the youth voice in social media advocacy can actually be more work and time consuming. Include youth early and often. Youth is usually defined as anyone under 18, however in child development and violence prevention spaces, the terms youth or young people can refer to those up to the age of 24. Think middle school, high school, and college aged youth.

- Important reminder, you want to reach youth at all levels, not just those who are connected to organizations, or attending academic institutes. Reach out to your community of youth, whoever that may be – in school, connected to orgs or not. The strength comes from engaging youth within your community that speak to and represent the culture that is unique to your specific demographic.

Create clear, concrete, and concise opportunities

- It's important to value youth leadership, but this does not mean that you are not taking an active role in working with youth to develop their leadership skills. For example; you can provide guidance on task management, timeline development, and setting realistic goals. Bring in context and content they can work off of or generate ideas from - just be careful you're not making decisions for them, or pushing them away from their own ideas to fit the ways you'd like it to be done.

Be an ally

- When working with youth, it requires us to check our adultism and step back to truly become allies. We may carry our own assumptions of the ways youth organize or get work done - be sure to table the negative and bring in your best positive outlook. Authenticity is key, they will thrive off of this. Try to listen, hear multiple voices then respond with questions or additions that will build on their efforts. If more context or redirection needs to be given, go back to your established shared goals and visioning you did in earlier steps of the theme and planning as a foundation.

Multiple paths can reach the same goal

- When training adults and youth, some of the most common themes that are expressed include "vulnerability" and "taking risks." Working in partnership requires flexibility and understanding, this is true - but sometimes as adults - we may feel we know the best way to reach the goal. Although we may have some experience to support our feeling, it doesn't mean that trying out something new, or taking a different path, won't get you to the same goal. Plan some time and space for redirection and multiple options in your social media efforts. Try new approaches, take risks, and revisit things that need to be revisited.

Check in, so they don't check out

- Keep your communication consistent and realistic. Be sure to know the best methods or tools for engaging youth. Work with the youth in your planning groups to understand when to have an in person meetings and how to plan out those meetings for productivity – idea generation sessions tend to work well in person. Use video calls or quick chat messages via mobile apps like "group me" a group chat platform for follow up and instant feedback. As you're working together to support their leadership in assisting with the campaign, build in check in time to be sure they are understanding the process and also to give them the space to bring up concerns or questions, they needed more time to reflect on. Be sure this time works with their schedule and you are flexible to meet their needs around when, how, and what you meet about.

SELECTING A PLATFORM FOR YOUR CAMPAIGN

There are multiple social media platforms with the same purpose of getting communication out, however different platforms have different factors that may fit your campaign in better ways.

Mainstream platforms are known as those that are commonly used; now in 2019 Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube are the most common online platforms. User demographics also differ based on individual platforms. Users can be divided by categories of age, gender, interests and activity, but in our work "the user" is usually divided by age.

Sample platform selection based on age:

FACEBOOK	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	SNAPCHAT
Adults	Youth and Adults	Youth	Youth
	16– 24	15 – 24	13 – 18

Let's dig deeper on the tool for promoting a message through social media platforms. Since content, be it texts or images, will be the driving force for reaching your audience, you need to think critically about putting the message out where it will be visible to your target demographic.

REFLECTION

What social media platforms are you using or do you plan to use?

Do they match up with your intended audience? *(examples - are you focusing on age, accessibility, preferences for how content is shown, text vs. images)*

How are you using or do you intend to use these platforms?

Will they each carry the same content? Or will you separate content or theme by platform?

Selecting a platform for your message is just as important as determining what your message is. There are different ways you can select a platform for your campaign, the most important thing to consider, is to select a campaign where you can reach your target audience effectively. What does that mean? You have to do some basic research to determine what platforms are best intended for what audience, and what platform can best support your content in your campaign.

Most people have done zero research and follow the trends, which generally works out for some time, the issue - trends change, new platforms arise, and user functionality changes very often. Determine what platforms or platform you want to use for your social media advocacy and the method in which you want to use them. We've included a sample outline below, tips from a youth advocate, and links for further research below.

Sample platform planning outline:

Facebook for event posting
- Links to invite people to join online or physical events

Instagram for videos, photos, gifs, memes
- Before the event for promotion
- During and after for documentation

YouTube for sharing resources, promotion or documenting events
- Before the event or campaign for promotion
- During for interactive content
- After to highlight impact or sharing content

Twitter for statistics and news
- Sharing data and links to resources

PRO TIP | "Tweak Your Speak"

A **MEME** is a photo usually of a cartoon, pop culture reference or viral photo that has a caption on it in bold white text. They are intended to be funny, and add some text to images.

A **GIF** is an animated photo, mostly used with pop culture references to bring life or emotion to a post.

REFLECTIONS ON MAINSTREAM PLATFORM USAGE FROM A YOUNG PERSON'S POINT OF VIEW

Here's their honest reflection on "trending" social media platforms.

I want to preface this with a couple notes. For one, I am talking about the most popular social media platforms overall. I include release dates for each media platform, to make note of how old they are. You would be surprised how long some of these have been around.

	DESCRIPTION	BENEFITS	DRAWBACKS
YouTube Released 2005	• Website used to share content through video sharing. • Relevant to all ages. (According to the internet, younger viewers spend the most time on the site, but has the ability to reach every age range with its variety in content.)	• All ages • Easily shareable content • Can build a community just on the site • Some of the biggest influencers within our media, happen to be YouTubers	• Requires more time to formulate good content • High traffic website; videos can be easily overlooked if not shared • YouTube offers just that: videos
Facebook Released 2004	• Followed the flood of popularity of 'social media', after Myspace and YouTube. • Recently, the age of most people on Facebook has changed. Shifting from the social media for teens, to a popular photo sharing site for parents and grandparents.	• Target older audiences, using social media • Can very easily reach millions of people, if those people see ads or follow your page • Very easy for individuals to contact and connect, both personally & publicly through their accounts	• A slowly dying social media platform, according to most younger users • Many under 25 have completely abandoned, if not deleted their account
Instagram Released 2010	• Social media owned by Facebook, therefore following the previously mentioned websites • Intended to be a platform mainly for photo-sharing; had a focus towards creating more artistic and creative accounts • Like YouTube, not necessarily built for younger ages, but overall mostly used by teens/young adults • Most advertising seems directed towards brands/businesses	• Includes direct message, and temporary 'stories' • Easy to share content • Easy to share/reshare content from followers, requested through private messages • Easy to spread a valuable message, without it becoming overwhelming or repetitive to followers • Options to link to a website, other followers and influencers, as well as using hashtags. (Although hashtags are on nearly every platform, they seem the most useful on Instagram)	• Have to create constant content to keep up with the platforms traffic • This is a visual focused platform some might find it difficult to create or find a visual representation of the message they would like to share

	DESCRIPTION	BENEFITS	DRAWBACKS
Twitter Released 2006	• Started off slow, but later became the "originator" of the infamous hashtag • Today, twitter is famous for being the site you can share just about anything that is on your mind (not as popular for sharing photos/videos) • Teen and young adult oriented	• Includes direct messaging • Doesn't require creating visual content, regularly • Easy to make posts daily, if not multiple times daily • Easy to shares ideas and quotes that can catch a followers attention	• Tends to stay unfiltered, not the most 'brand friendly' for some companies (this seems to more recently be the impact on twitter) • Low interactions on posts (unless that post is impactful in an unusual way or includes trends, a celebrity, anything that really grabs attention). • Tweets can get easily lost, interaction has to be immediate to get a post to be noticed and gain likes. • Tweets are much less share-able than, say, an Instagram photo.
Snapchat Released 2011	• Giving the ability to keep personal, individual conversations through temporary photos and videos. (that expire after a certain period of time) • The platform that made "stories" popular, which makes it possible to share multiple mini videos at a time, and have them be public to followers/anyone for 24 hours.	• Easy to share a lot of content, without over-whelming a feed like on most platforms • Posts are temporary, and won't crowd your page • You can save any post you make • Easy to post about something live • Easiest direct messaging through photos, videos and written text chat	• Snapchat accounts are more private than Instagram or Facebook, thus necessary to post about the account on other platforms. • Temporary posts, means 'followers' can't go back and find something you posted last week. • Little feedback, with no way of 'liking' a post to show interaction from followers. • This platform doesn't use hasthags making it more difficult to reach a broader audience.

FURTHER RESEARCH

Social media is ever changing, the moment the general user gets a handle on the ins and outs of using a platform – there's updates, new trends and sometimes new platforms. We've referenced the mainstream most commonly used sites, and for these, there are many companies and bloggers that spend a lot of time tracking these insights for us. It's best practice to do a quick search of current trends on platforms, best ways to get the most out of the platform, or ways to increase engagement with your followers on Google for example, to see if there are any new trends to consider. Some of our favorite sites to reference include:

- www.socialprchat.com
- www.androidtipster.com
- www.wired.com

No matter the platform you choose, be sure to have a common theme, look and feel to your posts. The "voice" of your text on posts should match the trends of your audience. This is true for images as well.

DETERMINING METRICS AND OUTCOMES

Setting goals for your campaign is important, connect these goals to determine whether or not your campaign inspired and mobilized your audience.

Your campaign metrics and outcomes could be set around the following;

Exposure	• Ex. 100 followers by the end of the campaign • Ex. 50 likes on weekly posts
Resource sharing	• Ex. 20 shares or forwarded content by user • Ex. 100 downloads of your resources
Services	• Ex. Increase in contacts for help services • Ex. Increase in contacts for community outreach or information

REFLECTION

If you already have experience running a social media campaign, ask yourself the following questions to determine and measure your outcomes.

How have you used social media in the past? *(I.e. to share updates on programs, to share org news, to invite community to events, post photos from events)*

Were previous methods successful? How do you know they were or were not successful? (*What tools for evaluation did you use, surveys, polls, feedback from participants, tracked likes and follows)*

What could be done better? *(stronger messaging, better timeline for posting content)*

What was your campaign "call to action" and how did you share this with your audience?

As your working out the message, measures, and outcomes for your campaign. You'll want to pay close attention to the methods of success and tips for effectively measuring your impact in the following section.

METHODS FOR SUCCESS

We've included a list of strategies you can use to set your campaign up for success. Consider these strategies, at all stages of your social media campaign, and be sure to revisit them when your message needs to shift based on the climate or audience interests.

SOCIAL LISTENING

What is it?

- It is the process of monitoring digital conversation to understand what young people are talking about, what's hot in pop culture, and how to adapt conversation for groups of young people.

The benefits of Social Listening:

- It informs our work with young people
- It provides authentic connection
- It ensures that your messaging is exciting, engaging, and culturally responsive.

How do you do it?

- Get on a social media app or a search engine like Google
- Search for topics that are trending in youth culture online. For example: relationships/sexual relationships, memes, gifs, artists, musicians, songs, movies, etc.
- Try searching trending hashtags such as: #relationshipgoals, #goalsaf, #love, #bae,
- Once you begin to find what's trending with youth, use those specific topics to adapt your conversations and messaging for young people.

KEEPING IT REAL!

In conversations with youth, we have come to find that the number one request they have of adults in both professional and personal interactions, is — be real! Now, with that knowledge at hand, it's the responsibility of adults and youth to work together to dissect the meaning of "real" is, as it connects to the mission and values within the youth and adult ally partnership. Below are a few real life example of methods to keep your social media campaign as authentic as possible for your audience.
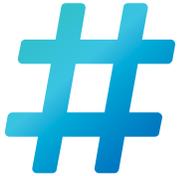
There's a hashtag (#) for that!
The power of the hashtag is immense. You can use it for tracking, to increase attention on your post, and above all to maintain relevance in your posts. Hashtags are used like verbs and nouns. The more people use them, the more viral they become which leads to an increase in exposure. To create a good hashtag, connect it to an action or feeling. Make sure it's not too long, and you can read it. You can also use a search engine to see if your ideas for hashtags already exist, are trending, or who they are being used by. For example #thisisagoodhashtag is a bit long but #goodhashtag is shorter and easier to read - which is key! For platforms like Instagram, you want to use hashtags that include location or key words — as these are more likely to appear in suggestions or trending posts. You also have a max of 30 hashtags per post on Instagram, so feel comfortable to use them to increase your chances of trending — but make sure they represent key words, locations, or actions to your campaign so they don't appear as random text.

Do you even emoji?
The more visual your post the better, this is true on so many platforms - with the exception of a news feed like Twitter. Audiences' love graphics and visuals, less words are better. Emojis are pictures, smiley faces, food, hearts etc. The way you use an emoji matters. Like words, emojis can mean different things. It's best to do your research, and ask a young person what certain emojis mean to them. For example, the winky face emoji, may seem like an enthusiastic or cute way to show agreement — but for many youth that is sign of flirting or hooking up.   You want to stick with using emojis for extracting emotions from your posts. Thumbs up, 100 (meaning so true) or a stamp of authenticity, and heart smiley faces - showing love. Feel free to add a few emojis in graphics, and text for your post but don't overdo it. One to three emojis will do, according to youth. Pro tip: using emojis in responding to comments is a good idea, it's a short visual way to show support, agreement or enthusiasm.

Is this real life?
Take note - text posts, info graphics, emojis are not enough. If platforms have a live video or video streaming option, use it. Your audience wants to know "what you're doing" the best way to capture this is by documenting events through video recording and live video options. It adds to the personal side of things, and gives your audience a voice and image to your content.
Videos should be short 30 seconds is a good goal, but they can be shorter and still make an impact. Use this video time to pop in say hi, shout out what you're doing and where. For longer video sessions, consider spotlighting these as multiple conversations, on a regular basis. Be cautious around not making the video too long. Remember social media is intended to provide messages and connection in a short amount of time, making your content too long — longer than a minute, will result in losing engagement.

Word limits—R U Serious?

Most platforms have a word limit. Consider the word count in your post, but pay close attention to words that can be shortened. For social media purposes using shorthand and abbreviations is preferred - but make sure you know what the abbreviations or acronyms mean- check out Break the Cycle's Tweak Your Speak guide for a quick glossary. Also consider using numbers instead of words when appropriate. For example: Make sure you are following our campaign is wordy - shorten it to - R U following our campaign?

Caption this

All the tips above will help you create a better caption for your graphic or image posts. It's important to put some words with your post. A good caption, evokes emotion, includes action if appropriate and relates to your audience. What do you want the audience to understand? Feel? Or take away from your post? Keep your captions short. This is also an opportunity to engage your audience by asking them to like, reply, or comment on the post to build dialogue and engagement.

Tags, on Tags, on Tags

Tagging an account on your social media post is important for a few reasons. The most obvious reason, is to label who is in a picture or event post. Other reasons include, giving credit to an artist and identifying an event space or location – geo tags. Tags are a great way to connect with people or share who you are connected with, but be sure not to tag too many accounts, as it will clutter your post. One to three tags is a good rule of thumb. Note there are different ways to tag someone on your content, depending on the platform. For Facebook and Instagram you can tag by typing the @ sign before the persons name or tapping the photo and selecting "tag people" before publishing your post. On Twitter, if you would like to reply or tag someone in your comment you do so by typing a period before the @ sign, .@ name. When using geo tags (tagging your location) be sure to tag the city of where you're hoping to reach the most people. Including your location adds your post to the cities story or section, so people can see, what's going on near them. Ask for permission before you tag people or upload pictures with people's faces.

Resource Sharing

Your campaign will likely have materials or resources you want your audience to go back to; handouts, hotlines, videos etc. These resources are not easily shared on social media in their entirety, so you'll want to direct your audience to a link or URL. On Twitter and Facebook, you can include the link in your post. If you do include in your post, be sure to make your URL shorter. You can do this easily by visiting a website that will turn your long link to a short link – like shorturl.com or bitly.com On Instagram you cannot share a link in your posts or comments. You will need to include a link in the bio/profile section of your page, and you can only include one link on your bio, and it should be a short one.

MEASURING REACH, EFFECTIVENESS AND SUCCESS

Live content and response

Now that you have your platforms and messaging ready to go, and you've done your reading and research on best practices, we can move on to what to expect when you're posting.

The real work comes when your post is live and available for the world to provide input. Literally, you will be getting notifications for all the engagement of your posts, some may require immediate attention, and others are just forms of instant tracking.

> **PRO TIP**
>
> Turn notifications on when you can actively engage, especially when you're using your own mobile device and turn them off when you cannot respond. Be sure to have a plan for addressing immediate or crisis help requests. You can set an auto reply for messages on Facebook.

MANAGING YOUR ENGAGEMENT

You need to consider how you will engage with your audience. Your message is enhanced when you have a strong presence with your users. Determine your engagement "how" before you make your post public. Take a look at the following methods below as examples.

Comments
Each platform has its designated comment feature. Most are public but others like Snapchat are only visible through direct messages. Comments allow the audience to engage with your post. You can use the comment feed to reply to posts and keep the dialogue going, but you also want to monitor the feed for any comments that do not fit the purpose of your campaign or message. As the creator of the post, you can mute, turn off, or delete any comments you feel are not contributing to the overall purpose of the post.

DM - Direct Messaging
This is your audience's way of sending you a private message. Many people will do this to share a personal story, give you some more info, or connect with you for future opportunities. Be sure to have a plan for how you will handle DM requests or messages. It's also a good idea to have resources at hand in case someone reaches out with a help or crisis message. DM's should be monitored regularly and responded to. Consider having a canned or auto message as a reply, when possible—Facebook has this option available, explore how to do so in the settings of the app.

TRACKING INSIGHTS

Once your post, campaign is live you will want to get instant feedback. You can do this directly in a post or through the platforms tracking system. If you choose to do this directly in your post, you can ask a specific question and ask the audience to comment, then go back and count how many people commented to measure engagement. If you prefer not to do this manually, which does take a lot of effort - use the platforms way of tracking insights—or the impact of your content. You can usually track likes, follows, shares, and overall engagement directly on the platform, but you may want to use a third party website like Hootsuite, where you can post and track content in one place. Compare what you are able to track with your original goals and measures to determine the success and areas of improvement for your campaign.

MARKETING AND BUILDING ON YOUR SUCCESS

Your campaign has been fully thought out, posted, you engaged with a few people and received great feedback—now what?

Your campaign, normally has a start and end date, or timeline. But the work doesn't end when your post or campaign has gone live, there's a lot you can do to keep the success going.

After you have built momentum with your social media campaign you should plan how you will maintain engagement. Thank you posts can be made after participation, reflection posts on the impact your campaign had—with an info graphic for example showing your reach is a good visual to summarize the impact of your campaign. When you're thinking of maintaining momentum beyond your campaign, think about how you want the audience to build and sustain a relationship with your organization. Create posts that invite your target audience to reflect on the success of the campaign and offer a space for comments or suggestions, if possible. Then put those factors into action for the next round of social media awareness campaign efforts.

Your community has been strengthened through your social media impact, and they are eager to see what else you have to give. Engage your community with polls or questions. Instagram is a great tool for this. Ask your community in stories about what else they would like to see covered for example. Or revisit the "going live" feature and bring in a community member for a live discussion. Consider partnering with organizations to expand your reach.

It is important to understand what is happening in your platforms, who is visiting , how often and what is their level of engagement. The following FREE web analytics tools can help you get started:

- Google Analytics
- Bit.ly
- Facebook Insights/ Instagram Insights/ Twitter Analytics
- Open Web Analytics

For example, Break the Cycle hosts a weekly talk show on Snapchat and Instagram led by youth called "Taco Bout it Tuesday" which often features the great work young people and organizations are doing together to end a culture of abuse - but also has its own touch of answering questions that youth submit in real and honest ways.

No matter how you reflect on your campaign, be sure to share. Share the impact with the youth you worked with in the beginning to craft the original theme or intentions, share the progress with staff who may have been responsible for content creation, and share or thank your audience for participating.

Social media is a tool for communication and building relationships. Much like interpersonal relationships, if one side is quiet or only pushing their agenda, then there isn't a healthy balance. Find your healthy balance for your campaign and social media efforts by taking in tips that work for you, and are realistic to your teams' capacity and network.

ADDITIONAL LINKS AND RESOURCES

Break the Cycle Resources

- Tweak Your Speak Activity
  https://www.breakthecycle.org/sites/default/files/Tweak%20UR%20Speak%202018_0.pdf

Prevent Connect Resources

- Prevention Communication and Media Messaging
  http://www.preventconnect.org/2018/10/new-resources-on-prevention-communication-and-media-messaging/
- Where we're going and where we've been: Making the case for preventing sexual violence
  http://www.raliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/BMSG_MessagingGuide_FINAL508.pdf

Online Resources

- Media Audience Guide
  https://www.spredfast.com/social-media-tips/social-media-demographics-current 13
- The Best Times to Post on Social Media in 2018
  https://www.oberlo.com/blog/best-time-post-social-media 14
- Always Up-to-Date Guide to Social Media Image Sizes
  https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-image-sizes-guide/ 15

Youth-led Social Media & Awareness Campaigns

- Safe BAE
  https://www.safebae.org/
- Campaign: #QuitThisShit
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UbeoN5zlPGo
- Project Consent
  https://www.projectconsent.com/
- Instagram #Consentoween graphics
  https://www.instagram.com/p/BpmXixggH1Q/
- Campaign "Password Consent"
  https://www.projectconsent.com/passwordconsent/
- Not Always What You See Campaign poster and video
  https://www.breakthecycle.org/what-you-see