Suggested Social Media Messages

There’s one word to remember above all when you use social media to
communicate with any audience – engagement. Posting notices about
events, programs and other notices is fine – but if people start to think
of your Facebook page or Twitter account as just a bulletin board, you’ll
find that you quickly lose their interest. Don’t just tell people what
you’re doing: ask them what they are doing – or, whether they think
you should be doing something different from what you currently are.
You’ll find that asking questions and soliciting opinions will generate far
greater interest in your social media channels – and by extension, far
more attention to the issue you’re trying to call attention to – in this
case, childhood obesity.

Tips

Here are some tips to maximize exposure on your social media channels:

**Tip #1:** In addition to pushing out information about childhood obesity through your own social media channels, monitor what other people and organizations in your community are addressing the issue, and respond to their posts/comments/tweets.

**Tip #2:** Tag others in your posts if it makes sense. Those same people in #1 whose comments you respond to may be childhood obesity resources for your community.

**Tip #3:** Assign someone on staff to regularly monitor your social media channels – and to coordinate responses to comments. Nothing ruins your social media credibility more quickly than folks realizing that their comments, questions, and such simply float in the twittersphere, without response.

**Tip #4:** Talk to your young people, not simply about them. It may well be appropriate to address some of your social media messaging directly to the audience you’re trying to help - young people. Who knows better what will get kids eating healthier and being more active than kids themselves?
Sample Messages

The suggested social media messages below are by no means exhaustive – these are just some examples to get the creative juices flowing. We encourage you to adapt and change these messages to fit your specific community – or to come up with your own unique, creative message. If you do, by all means – please share your posts with us.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>MESSAGING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month</strong></td>
<td><strong>TWITTER:</strong> September is National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month. See how you can help kids eat better and be fit. [link] <strong>FACEBOOK:</strong> September is National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month. More than one in [NUMBER] kids aged [AGE1] to [AGE2] in [CITY] is overweight or obese. Everyone in our city has a role to play in reversing this alarming epidemic. Find out how you can help. [link]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **General Education** | • How much fruits and veggies do YOU need? It's different for everyone. Find the answer here: [link to http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov]  
• How many calories should you have per day? Depends on your age and gender. Find out here: [link to http://www.choosemyplate.gov/weight-management-calories/calories/empty-calories-amount.html]  
• Yard work, dancing and golf all burn the same amount of calories. Which one would you rather get active doing? [link to http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/physicalactivity_calories_used_table.html] |
| **Holiday-Themed** | • Halloween’s coming up. Anyone got any ideas for cool treats for the trick-or-treaters, OTHER than candy?  
• This Thanksgiving, how about mashed sweet potatoes without syrup, green beans minus the cream of mushroom and – gulp – skipping the pie? [Link to http://www.foodnetwork.com/menus/healthy-thanksgiving-menu/index.html or similar page]  
• Start a new tradition in your family – take a brisk walk after Christmas dinner. It burns more calories than a nap. |