



Tips for Using Social Media for Advocacy

You don't need to be a social media whiz to use it effectively for advocacy. If you spend time on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, you can use those platforms to advocate for issues you care about. Start small, test things out, spend time looking at what other advocates do that you think are effective. And remember that the most important content you have to share is your personal story!

Getting started:

1. Pick a channel where you are most comfortable (Facebook Twitter, or Instagram) and focus there – don't try to be everywhere and don't feel you need to learn a new social media platform to be successful. Start where you already spend time and start using that platform to launch advocacy messages.
2. Aim to integrate these three elements into your advocacy posts:
 - Personal
 - Visual
 - Conversational
3. Use shared hashtags in your posts that other advocates and advocacy organizations that you are following are using in their posts.
4. "Boost" the content of advocacy organizations you support, i.e. like, share and retweet the posts of others rather than only create your own content. This saves you time and energy, significantly amplifies the reach of these other organizations, and helps you build your list of followers.
5. Follow the accounts of your lawmakers and members of the media and "talk to them" by posting on their Facebook pages and tweeting at them. Particularly on Twitter, you can engage in "conversations" by tweeting directly at lawmakers and reporters, and it is not uncommon for them to tweet back in response.

Facebook best practices:

- Do not post too often or your friends will hide you – generally more than once or twice a day is too much
- Work to create "share-worthy" content, i.e. posts that others will like and share – this will ensure that others will see your posts. Posts that are likely to be shared are often those that include:
 - Personal stories
 - Important facts/data
 - Inspirational quotes
 - Great visuals
 - Breaking news



Twitter best practices:

- There is almost no such thing as posting too often as long as your content is relevant
- Sharing the content of others is essential for list-building
- Visuals are essential to stand out – pictures, videos, memes
- Engage in conversation – tweet directly at reporters, advocates, and decision-makers
- Always use hashtags
- Although you can exceed 140 characters now, less is still more – keep it short!

**Tips for Success:**

- Post often on different days of the week at different times of day
- Interact – make it conversational (not a monologue)
- Follow those you wish to have follow you – lawmakers, relevant health and news reporters/outlets and bloggers, other organizations
- Follow relevant health organizations and other campaigns, especially those with big lists and access to your key decision-maker(s)
- Follow news, read blogs, and pay attention to what decision makers, the media and organizations are saying
- Search common hashtags and key phrases often
- Share the content of others
- Track your results often – see what plays well

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