RAISE YOUR VOICE. CHANGE LIVES.

VoicesforHealthyKids.org
A collaboration between the American Heart Association and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation working to engage, organize and mobilize people to make each day healthier for all children.
MESSAGING RESOURCES

Voices for Healthy Kids is pleased to share newly developed messaging resources for advocates and campaign managers. Since the inception of Voices for Healthy Kids, we have conducted national, state, and local public opinion research projects on many of our issue areas and we have been able to share what we have learned through presentations and webinars. We are pleased to provide these messaging one-pagers based on our research findings that can be widely distributed, offering:

https://voicesforhealthykids.org/messaging/
Message Research Projects

1. Active places
2. Healthy food access
3. Healthy drinks
4. Preemption
5. School foods
6. Marketing to kids in schools and restaurants
7. Early care and education
8. Physical education in schools
9. Procurement
10. Water access
11. Equity in public policy
12. Head Start
13. Preemption (two)
Messaging Guides

- Tips
- Key messages
- What to say/what not to say
Messaging Guides

- Effective Healthy Weight Messaging
- Bike and Pedestrian Appropriations Messaging
- Child Care Messaging
- Complete Streets Messaging
- Head Start and Early Head Start Messaging - NEW! Added January 2019!
- Healthy Drinks Messaging
- Healthy Food Access Messaging
- Junk Food Marketing Messaging
- Healthy Food in Public Places Messaging
- Junk Food Marketing Messaging
- Out-of-School Time Messaging
- Physical Education Messaging
- Preemption Messaging
- Restaurant Kid's Meals
- Safe Routes Messaging
- School Snacks Messaging
- SNAP Incentives Messaging
- Water Access and Safety Messaging
- Water in Schools Messaging
Healthy Weight Guide
Tips for Effective Messaging

• Connect with supporters
• Use the right messenger
• Avoid discussions about tradeoffs
• Emphasize choice
• Use the right words
• Focus on what the issue is
• Stress consumer education as ONE piece of the puzzle
• Alleviate skepticism and build trust
## Healthy Weight Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use This Language</th>
<th>Instead of This Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Describe the environment that makes it difficult to eat healthy and be active</td>
<td>× Describing personal behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Clear facts about the magnitude of the problem</td>
<td>× “Bombard” “Avalanche” or other words that trigger trauma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Invokes a sense of cooperation and partnership</td>
<td>× Imagery that invokes wars, battles, and game playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ People living in the United States</td>
<td>× Americans, citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Underserved</td>
<td>× Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Helping children grow up at a healthy weight</td>
<td>× Preventing childhood obesity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Focus on the positive outcomes of the change you want to see</td>
<td>× Focus on directly challenging the opposition arguments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Eating healthy and being physically active helps prevent diabetes and heart disease.</td>
<td>× Eating healthy and being physically active helps prevent childhood obesity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Clear examples of what comprises neighborhood (school, church, family)</td>
<td>× General “community” which means something different to each person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Standards, choices, and options</td>
<td>× Restrictions, mandates, bans, and regulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Focus on what stands to be gained</td>
<td>× Focus on what is at risk for being lost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ People/kids being physically active, active play</td>
<td>× Exercise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Preemption

Support the repeal of, and oppose the introduction of, preemptive public policies which limit the ability of communities to regulate, tax or otherwise enact legislation stronger than state law regarding issues related to public policy priorities of Voices for Healthy Kids.
National Poll Key Findings:

People trust their local governments much more than state or federal levels.

People believe that government is most effective and efficient at the local level.

Local communities should be able to pass their own laws...especially if I agree with the law.

Views on the concept of preemption are similar across conservatives, liberals and moderates; Views on the topics that get preempted are where there’s a difference.
73.2% agreed with this pro-local control message

From education policy to property or land-use zoning to environmental protections, local communities are more in tune with the needs of people who live there than state politicians. Government is most effective and efficient at the local level.
Preemption: State Interference in Local Government

Tips for Effective Preemption Messaging (as funding streams allow)

- Stress the importance, value, effectiveness, and accountability of local government. People have a significantly higher opinion of local government compared to state or federal government; they trust local government the most to pass laws that address their community's needs.

- Avoid using the word “preemption” when talking to media or the public. Most people are not familiar with it. Instead focus on the harm to local governments losing their ability to enact laws that protect the health of children, families, and communities.

- Educate your audience about how preemption is becoming an increasingly common state legislative tactic. Once people learn about these types of laws, they become deeply concerned about the consequences.

- Explain the consequences of preemption laws. Try to be as specific as possible about the negative impact on people's daily lives.

- Explain that corporate special interests are pushing preemption to protect their bottom lines at the expense of local communities. People believe state lawmakers are more likely to be influenced by industry than local governments.
Tipping the Scale: A focus on health equity
Health Equity

https://voicesforhealthykids.org/healthequity/
Values-based Messages to Call for Health Equity in Public Policy

Anchored in the shared values of human potential and community, this conversation becomes aspirational and unifying, and creates common ground.

**Leading up to the work in this guide**

Advocates build a diverse coalition and collaborate with the community to define the issue and policy solution. Decision-makers agree to advance the policy.

**THE FOCUS OF THIS GUIDE**

Decision-makers are open to the need to include policy language prioritizing implementation first where the need is greatest.

Decision-makers commit to including prioritizing language in policy.

**Following the work in this guide**

Decision-makers:
- develop and support
- enact and fund
- implement and enforce policies that include prioritizing health-equity language.

**ULTIMATE GOAL**

Every policy includes language prioritizing implementation first where the need is greatest.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MESSAGE POINT</th>
<th>WHY THIS WORKS WITH DECISION-MAKERS (BASED ON RESEARCH)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. We want policies to be effective—meaning the policy has the intended impact and resources are not wasted.</td>
<td>Highlights effectiveness outcome; is positive and solution-focused.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. We want everyone to benefit from the changes policies create. But we need to start with the communities that have the greatest health and/or economic need, then expand.</td>
<td>Highlights targeted universalism approach.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. That means looking at the places where there is the greatest gap in opportunities for people to be healthy, and focusing changes there first so people are able to reach their full potential. We can determine where that is based on clear criteria, and any community could be eligible.</td>
<td>Aligns with human potential value. Essential to emphasize that defining “greatest need” is not limited to a certain group or type of community. Rather, any community could be eligible. (This word eligible was a key term in talking with decision-makers and likely voters.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. We can help communities work together and be stronger by expanding opportunities to be healthy. When people make decisions about their health—or the health of their children—the choices they make depend on the options they have available.</td>
<td>Aligns with community value. Acknowledges personal/parental responsibility (essential, especially for conservatives), while also pointing to the environmental conditions needed to make acting on that responsibility possible. Helps decision makers envision the situation and the proposed solution.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• For example (insert a locally relevant example for your policy and geographic area(s) that describes the challenges, the policy solution and evidence that it brings the intended result; see below for an example.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Let’s make sure this policy is effective. We’re asking you to include specific language in this policy to define where it should be implemented or funded first to meet the greatest health and/or economic need, then expanded to other communities.</td>
<td>Reinforces effectiveness and targeted universalism approach. Makes a specific request for policy language.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• We’ve been working with our community to explore the problem and design a solution the community wants.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We’re asking for (offer specifics about how to prioritize implementation in your local area(s)).</td>
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In order to raise healthy kids and create a culture of health throughout all communities, we must ensure that the places where our children live, learn and play make the healthy choice the easy choice.

All kids deserve the chance to grow up healthy, no matter who they are or where they live. This movement of leaders and supporters is increasing access to healthy foods and safe places to be active. Now you can help drive changes in communities across our nation by being one of the Voices for Healthy Kids.

WE’RE CALLING FOR CHANGE. WILL YOU ADD YOUR VOICE?

Learn more and download free resources at VoicesforHealthyKids.org

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