

Using a Message Wheel to Keep Your Messaging on Track

A **message wheel** is simply a visual format for organizing the messages that are key to your issue. Your most important message – that one thing you always want to share – is placed in the middle of the wheel. Supporting statements – which would likely include the problem, solution, and one or two other key statements - are placed around the wheel like spokes. Points that explain or expound on your supporting statements are added under each heading.

You will want to use the central message every time you communicate about your issue, whether you are writing a letter to the editor or Op-Ed, speaking to a neighborhood group about your issue, answering questions about your cause, or being interviewed in the media. Sounds simple, right? When you are the one in control of the message, like writing a letter to the editor or preparing a presentation, it should be. You don't have to use every point every time. Just select the supporting messages that are most likely to resonate with your audience, add examples, stories and descriptive language to paint the picture for the audience. Make it your own!

However, in situations where you are responding to questions, such as during an interview, following a presentation, or when meeting with a decision maker about your issue, making sure you are coming back to your central message can become a little more tricky. This is when the visual layout of the message wheel can be an especially helpful tool for you and your spokespeople. **The message wheel helps show the connections between your supporting messages and your central message.** When you are asked a question, find that thread that can take you back to a point under a supporting statement and bridge to that. Once you have made it to your supporting statement, you can link back to your central message.

To use this tool most effectively, spend some time digging into it and thinking about examples from your school, your neighborhood, or your family that you could share to personalize your messages. When you are writing, use those examples to make your cause more relatable to others. When you are preparing for an interview, think about the arguments that those who disagree with your position might bring up and plan a response that can bring you back to your central message – and then practice your response.

By bringing the most important points for your issue into one place and using it, you'll be sure to keep your messaging on track.

Exercise Their Minds.™ Protect PE.



PROBLEM

For far too many students, quality PE programs don't exist.

- Without quality PE programs, our kids have limited amounts of physical activity during the day, and that can have lasting impacts on their mental and physical health.
- Lack of facilities, equipment and competing priorities have left many schools without the resources to provide PE programs to students.
- Physical inactivity contributes to heart disease and diabetes, chronic diseases that have a greater impact on communities of color and low-income communities.

PE is much more than physical activity.

- Physical education teaches lifelong healthy habits that will help children grow into healthier adults.
- PE improves kids' judgement, self confidence and self-esteem and reduces stress and anxiety.
- PE provides the activity kids need for positive impact on their physical, mental and emotional health.

ACADEMICS

Physical education (PE) improves the entire school day.

- Physical activity improves learning.
- Students who are healthy and physically active are more likely to perform better in all their classes.
- Active students focus and think better which leads to higher test scores.

Active Kids Learn Better.

Physical education addresses the needs of the whole child. When students get more time for PE, they do better physically, mentally and emotionally which is good for kids and good for schools.

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SOLUTION

Physical education is a critical component of the school day.

- Schools should include a minimum amount of daily physical activity as a part of their education programs.
- Schools need support for physical education programs, facilities and equipment so all kids can be active.
- Race and socio-economic status should not determine whether kids have access to PE. Every student deserves access to the benefits of physical education.

HEALTH