

# Toolkit

## BUILDING COMMUNITY AWARENESS

### Awareness-building techniques

1. Presentations and speaking engagements (in person or online)
2. Press releases and press conferences (press kits)
3. Print materials: Pamphlets and signage
4. Social media
5. Podcasts
6. Videos



# Awareness-building 101

It's better to convince 5 people than to be forgotten by 100.

## Choosing your audience

You can't reach everyone all at once. If you want to educate your target audience or get them to change their behaviour, you need to be realistic. Choose one or more target audiences for your project. Look into groups who don't know about the issue, who are making negative contributions, or who would be open to changing their behaviours.

*For example, if you want to reduce plastic straw use to help clean the oceans, you could target restaurant owners, because they buy and distribute plastic straws in their restaurants.*

## Understanding your audience

You need to understand your target audience and adapt your approach to their preferences, values, lifestyle, and more. Even if you're tackling the same issue, you would use entirely different methods to reach an older audience and a group of young students. Be sure to use language and examples your demographic can relate to.

## Getting your message across

Establish your main message and stay on point. Don't go into too much detail or give complicated explanations. If you want your audience to retain the information, you have to communicate clearly and concisely. Focus on one issue, one cause and one overall effect.

*For example, your message about plastic waste could be: "Let's find an alternative to single-use plastic items because 8 million tons of plastic waste end up in the ocean every year." [1]*

## Creating an emotional response

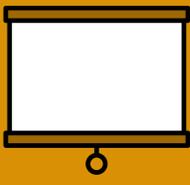
To convince your audience that your issue is important, connect with their values.

*For example, if you're targeting an older audience, talk about how the issue will impact their children and grandchildren.*

## Storytelling

When you tell a story, you're personalizing your message with lived experiences. This will help your audience visualize and become empathetic to your issue. They're more likely to identify with your story and feel like they're a part of it.

[1] CBC. 2018. Source: Government of Canada. Online.  
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/plastics-diving-underwater-waste-1.4827933>



# Presentations and speaking engagements

By giving presentations or talks about your issue, you can reach a large group of people at once. You can give a presentation at your school, or in a café, community center or retirement home. You can also give talks online. It can be as long or as short as you want.

When you give a presentation, you can:

- Interact with the public
- Choose the format according to your comfort level (audience size, duration, etc.)
- Practise public speaking
- Invite guest speakers

How to set up a speaking engagement:

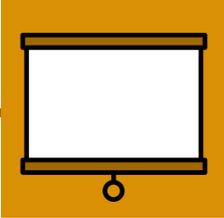
1. Determine your goal and target audience.
2. Find a time and place for your presentation that will attract your target audience.
3. Promote your event.
4. Write down your presentation or talking points.
5. Create visual aids.
6. Practise in front of a small group of people.

Public speaking tips:

- Your presentation needs to be exciting. You want to capture your audience's attention! Get audience members to participate, ask questions, move around and more.
- Use interesting visual aids.
- Watch TED talks and YouTube videos to get inspired by seasoned public speakers.

How to create visual aids with an impact:

- Keep written content short and use a large font.
- Use images, infographics, drawings, and videos that are relevant to your presentation.
- Use humour to get your audience's attention, but don't get carried away.



### Online presentation tips:

- Use the right platform for your presentation. For example:
  - Zoom offers a range of features, including the option to record your presentation.
  - GoToWebinar is a popular choice, but you can't interact with viewers.
  - Facebook and Instagram Live let you interact with your viewers, and can help you reach a younger audience.
- Watch tutorials about using the platform.
- Test the platform before your presentation.
- If you want, you can post the presentation on a website or social media platform (IGTV, YouTube, etc.) for playback.

### Presentation/graphic design tools:

- [Canva](#)
- [Prezi](#)
- [Powtoon](#)
- PowerPoint
- [Mentimeter](#)

### Here's an example:

- [School strike for climate - save the world by changing the rules | Greta Thunberg | TEDxStockholm](#)

### Measuring your impact:

- Quantitative indicators: count the number of attendees or viewers.
- Qualitative indicators: ask your audience to fill out a survey (online or on paper) or chat with audience members after the presentation.



# Press releases

Press releases are communication tools sent to journalists. They are short documents, often describing an organization's event or initiatives. Press releases aren't the same thing as press kits, which are more thorough, and give journalists a bigger picture of a business or organization.

With press releases and press conferences, you can:

- Build your communications, media and journalism skills
- Get experience dealing with the media if a journalist contacts you for an interview or to write an article
- Instantly share the document online through distribution lists
- Include links to increase visibility

How to write a press release:

1. Determine your subject and goal.
2. Find an angle that will interest journalists.
3. Come up with catchy and compelling headings.
4. Work short sentences, key words, quotes and numbers into your press release to emphasize the importance of your issue.
5. Target the right media outlets to make sure your press release gets through to journalists.

Press release distribution tips:

- You can send your press release directly to journalists with a premade distribution list platform. Just follow the formatting instructions for the list.
  - Check out <https://www.prdistribution.com/>
- You can send your press release to a targeted media contact list that you create in advance.
  - Insert the body of the press release directly in your email. This way, journalists can read it more easily, and they can copy and paste any information they want.
  - Don't send your press release as an attachment.
  - Make your subject line stand out with a good hook, and don't write "Press Release." Journalists get a lot of emails. You have to get their attention if you don't want your email to end up in the trash bin.

Formatting tools:

Press releases can be distributed directly through online platforms. If you go this route, you won't need to format or design your press release, just fill out a form.



### Template:

If you want to send your press release to a list or contact, create a basic Word document with your logo in the heading (if you have one) and a short description of your project, also known as a boilerplate, at the end of your document. For the body of your press release, use bold headings and short paragraphs. The important thing is the content, not the format. Journalists need to be able to see the essential information quickly if they want to copy and paste it into an article.

### Here are some examples:

- Google image search for "[press release](#)"
- Concordia's Writing for media [guide](#)

### Measuring your impact:

You can measure the impact of your press release quantitatively, based on the number of articles written or interview requests received (for radio, newspaper or television). But you'll get a better idea of how effective your press release was if you follow up with journalists.



# Print materials: Pamphlets and signage

It's surprising, but print material is still relevant in the digital age. You can use pamphlets and signage to reach many people efficiently. It can also be educational because you can include a lot of information.

With pamphlets and flyers, you can:

- Reach a wide audience (especially those who don't use social media) at a reasonable price
- Send your materials by mail
- Target specific communities and neighbourhoods
- Hand out materials in high-traffic areas

By opting for permanent signage, you'll get:

- Long-term visibility
- Eye-catching publicity in strategic locations (high-traffic areas, major thoroughfares, bus stations, etc.).
- A better environmental footprint than pamphlets

Printing tips:

There are many online platforms for printing documents and visuals. If you can, print your documents at a local print shop to reduce your environmental impact. You can also print your materials on recycled or seed paper. [Vistaprint](#) is the most well-known option, but make sure you choose good-quality materials. You get what you pay for!

Graphic design:

- [Canva](#) : This platform has a comprehensive free version. It is an excellent resource that offers different sizes, designs and colour palettes. You can create graphics and visual aids for social media, banners, posters, presentations, videos and websites!
- [Freepik](#) : This platform is designed for Adobe software suite (for example, InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator). You can only open your downloads with an Adobe program, but you can always use it to get ideas!



Here are some examples:

- Take a look at Chantiers jeunesse pamphlets [ici](#).

Measuring your impact:

- Keep track of how many pamphlets you distribute
- Use a link or QR code that leads to a website or social media account, so you can see the number of online views
- With signs, you can estimate the number of people who pass by the sign over a certain period of time (one month or one year, for example)



# Social media

Social media is a quick and easy way to reach your audience. This includes sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, and others. Choose the network that has the best chance of reaching your target audience. You can also share posts from a WordPress blog on social media.

With social media, you can:

- Reach a wide audience at a low cost
- Give your project a personal touch

How to create social media communications:

1. Create an account.
2. Establish a brand identity.
3. Create visuals.
4. Get followers.

Social media tips:

- Create organic growth by encouraging friends and family to share your content, ask organizations to share your posts and get involved in community pages.
- Invest in paid advertising: use Boost and choose your target audience carefully.
- Wait until you've made several visual posts before increasing/boosting your reach. People will want to get to know you before they follow you.
- If you can, post pictures of people's faces. This increases engagement.

Graphic design:

- Use [Canva](#) to create visuals in different formats, for example, square for Instagram and vertical for Stories.

Here's an example:

- [Instagram - Chantiers jeunesse](#)

Measuring your impact:

- Keep track of the number of views, likes, comments and shares.



# Podcasts

Podcasts are digital audio content that can be listened to online. Some podcasts are also recorded in video format (see the next section).

With podcasts, you can:

- Reach a wide audience
- Take advantage of their growing popularity
- Use many free distribution platforms
- Engage listeners with an accessible and multifunctional format
- Film the episode to create multimedia content

How to create a podcast:

1. Decide what language it will be in, who will host, the topic, structure, guests and length.
2. Find recording equipment to use and decide if you want to buy, rent or borrow it.
3. Find a hosting site like SoundCloud, Podbean or Buzzsprout , which may offer free hosting for a maximum number of hours of content.
4. Choose a distribution platform like Spotify, iTunes or Google Podcast.
5. Promote your podcast to increase your listeners—talk about it to your network, on social media, etc.

Interview tips:

- Prepare! Read up on the person you'll be interviewing, write questions, think of possible answers and plan transitions between questions.
- Ask open-ended questions (not yes or no).

Hosting tips:

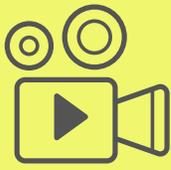
- Write a script in advance.
- Break down your topics or chapters into multiple episodes.
- Wrap up each episode by saying what you'll talk about next time. People will be more likely to listen again.
- Start each episode with a short recap of the last one.
- Tell stories and bring the characters to life.

Audio editing:

- [Audacity](#)

Here's an example:

- [Seat at the Table](#)



# Vidéo

If you want to make videos, you'll need quality equipment and time. But you can go in-depth and reach a large audience.

With videos, you can:

- Show instead of tell
- Get a wider reach on social media (Facebook, TikTok)
- Add closed captions or translated subtitles to reach people who speak other languages
- Promote your project by showing it in action

How to create a video:

1. Decide what language it will be in, who will host, the topic, structure, guests and length.
2. Find recording equipment to use and decide if you want to buy, rent or borrow it.
3. Find a hosting site like Youtube, Dailymotion or Vimeo, which may offer free hosting for a maximum number of hours of content.
4. Promote your podcast to increase your listeners—talk about it to your network, on social media, etc.

Video editing:

- Editing isn't always easy—keep things simple by avoiding too many camera changes.
- Do quality checks as you go. There's nothing worse than filming everything and then realizing the sound wasn't on. You don't want to start from scratch!
- Use a tripod if you're filming an interview.

Video editing tools:

- [Powtoon](#)
- Premiere: Adobe suite software (requires paid subscription)
- iMovie: iOS and macOS software
- [Canva](#) : This online platform is continually expanding—now you can create videos on the platform!

Here are some examples:

- See Social Entrepreneurship Project videos [here](#).
- See promotional videos for Chantiers jeunesse [here](#).