



**NIH**  
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HEALing Communities Study

Play 6:

# How to Create Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Video and Audio Materials

# Get Started

## » WHAT?

This playbook outlines best practices for **creating do-it-yourself (DIY) video and audio materials** that your coalition can share through various channels, such as social media platforms, websites, email lists, media and partner outreach, community presentations, and radio or TV public service announcements (PSAs).

## » WHO?

With this playbook, you will be able to use skills within your coalition and community to create informative and engaging video and audio materials that can complement existing HEALing Communities Study (HCS) campaign materials. Video and audio materials can feature people with lived experience, community members, and healthcare providers as storytellers who can highlight key perspectives.

## » WHY?

Videos provide an opportunity to share memorable, credible, and impactful stories with viewers. They can help viewers find meaning and emotional connections by identifying with people like themselves. Video content can also serve as a powerful means to grab your priority group's attention. For example, a recent Facebook study found that videos capture more attention than still images 75% of the time.<sup>1</sup>

## » WHEN?

How often your coalition shares video and audio materials will depend on the dissemination channels you select. On social media, the quality of the content is more important than the quantity (i.e., posting 3 times a day).<sup>2,3</sup> You might also use videos for in-person or virtual presentations to groups in your community, or place short (10–30 second) audio or video clips on TV and radio.

## » HOW?

The process of conceptualizing, developing, and producing video materials may seem daunting, especially if you have never done it before. You may feel excited about creating your own artistic masterpiece. Whether you are feeling anxiety or joy, these tips are intended to make the production process as simple and enjoyable as possible—and to include any critical steps in the process.

### Follow these four steps:

1. Plan
2. Record
3. Edit
4. Disseminate

## STEP 1: PLAN

### DEVELOPING A CREATIVE BRIEF

Start with a short (1-page) creative brief outlining your strategy and vision for the video to ensure that everyone on your team is on the same page. Here is a list of questions your team should answer in the creative brief before starting production:

- **Goal:** What is the purpose of this video?
- **Audience:** Who is the video trying to reach?
- **Tone:** What style of video will you create? How will it look and feel?
- **Key message:** What is the single most persuasive idea the video can convey?
- **Call to action:** What should the audience do as a result of watching the video?
- **Dissemination channels:** How will the video be shared?

### CREATING A VIDEO SCRIPT

Before you start recording, create a script that outlines the premise of the video. Below is a list of ideas for video and audio PSAs to get you started.

#### IDEAS FOR VIDEO AND AUDIO PSAS

1. Have a local emergency room (ER) doctor talk about the number of opioid overdoses they see daily or weekly.
2. Ask a local ER clinician to talk about how they can transition people to medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) treatment once they are treated for overdose.
3. Talk to emergency medical technicians about signs and symptoms of overdose and how naloxone saves lives.
4. Have an expert from a local university talk about how the data show that MOUD is the most effective path to recovery.
5. Talk to a family whose loved one was saved by naloxone or MOUD.
6. Do a video demonstration of how naloxone should be used. (Make sure it follows the steps on the HCS fact sheet.)
7. Have a coalition member talk about how to get a ride to treatment.
8. Talk to a local pharmacist about why methadone and buprenorphine work.
9. Ask a local medical examiner to discuss contaminated street opioids and how quickly they can kill.
10. Have an HCS researcher discuss the study's goals and how the interventions are working in a local community.
11. Have a local addiction specialist talk about telemedicine opportunities.
12. Have an expert from a local rehab center talk about the courage it takes to come forward and ask for help. One angle might be a rehab counselor who is in recovery.
13. Talk to addiction specialists about how important it is to stay in treatment as long as is necessary and how there is no formula that fits all people.
14. Have people in long-term recovery talk about how stigma affected them.
15. Ask an ER clinician to discuss strategies that can lessen stigma in the healthcare community.
16. Ask coalition members for ideas on what is important in their communities and who would be a good spokesperson. For example, is there a housing program they could discuss or a local hotline they could call?

**TIP:** In general, the actor(s) should put the script into their own words because it will sound more natural and relatable to the viewer.

Once you have determined the premise of your video and developed your creative brief, you're ready to write the script. More experienced videographers may also want to create a [storyboard](#) to illustrate the visuals that will accompany the script. Write the script as if you were talking to a friend or relative. Scripts should follow best practices:

- **Start with a bold statement or question** to capture your viewer's attention right away. Facebook found that many people decide whether to continue watching a video in the first 3 seconds.<sup>4</sup> With this limited amount of time, it is important that you use language and imagery to attract and maintain their attention.
- **Finish your video with a call to action.** This a specific action that a viewer can perform (e.g., *Visit this website, Ask your healthcare provider for treatment, etc.*)
- **Use language that promotes collective action** (e.g., us, we, our) and unity, as appropriate.

Read the script aloud to yourself and others. Listen for what content does not enhance the call to action or would not appeal to your priority viewers. You can use a timer to make sure the script matches the desired video length.

### Example of a Video Script:

Let me tell you how I got my life back. My name is Jenny, and I was born and raised in Boyd County. I am a mother. I am a teacher. I was addicted to opioids. I have been taking medication for this problem for 5 years. Medication helps treat opioid addiction and helps saves lives. It's saved my life. I finally decided to ask for help and learned there are tools that can help stop the addiction cycle. To learn more about these medications to treat opioid use, please visit [www.healingcommunities.org](http://www.healingcommunities.org). Let's support each other and heal Boyd County together.

## WRITE AN AUDIO SCRIPT FOR RADIO PSA SPOTS

If your coalition is interested in doing a radio PSA, you may consider writing an additional script that is tailored for radio broadcasting. PSAs are brief, noncommercial announcements that benefit the target audience, and the broadcast time is donated by the organization that airs it.<sup>5</sup> Create scripts for both 30-second (65–90 words) and a 60-second (150–180 words) versions of your public service announcement.

## SCOUTING FOR SPOKESPERSONS

Video spokespersons are all around you! You, a co-worker, or person involved in your community's activities may all be candidates. Examples of potential spokespersons include

### Example of a 30-second Radio PSA Script:

Hi, I'm Daniel from Lucas County, Ohio. No matter who we are or where we come from, we all know at least one person who is affected by opioid use disorder. The myth that addiction is a lack of willpower keeps people from getting treatment with medications that can help improve their lives. Learn what you can do to end stigma around medications for opioid use disorder in Lucas County at [HealTogetherOH.org/Lucas](http://HealTogetherOH.org/Lucas).

- Healthcare providers who have experience treating people with MOUD,
- Coalition members who offer programs and services to prevent opioid overdoses, and
- People and organizations in your community who support people with opioid use disorder (e.g., loved ones, recovery communities, treatment navigators, providers, employers, and faith-based leaders).

Ask your spokesperson to sign the media release form in **Appendix B**. As you go over the items in the form, be sure to explain the following:

- How you will choose final video candidates (e.g., demographic diversity, experience with particular forms of treatment, length of recovery).

**TIP:** To assess how articulate potential spokespersons are, schedule a **phone screening**. A phone screening involves a coalition member calling the candidate and asking them a question pertaining to the video topic. As the candidate responds, you should consider the following questions:

- Are they staying on topic?
- Do they say “um” or “uh” often?
- Does the tone of the voice sound clear and pleasant?
- Do they sound knowledgeable about the topic?
- Are they a good communicator?

If you are interested in hearing from people with opioid use disorder, be sure that they talk over their plan to share their story with their provider, counselor, or other treatment and recovery staff.

- Your expectations for the chosen video spokespersons (e.g., record one or multiple videos, whether they will have the opportunity to review prior to finalizing the video, whether they should be available for interviews with reporters, ability to promote video through their own communication channels).
- How their participation in the video will be used.

See **Appendix C** for additional considerations for publishing testimonials about opioid use disorder treatment and recovery.

## PLANNING YOUR BUDGET

Recording videos for social media can be done for free or at low cost. If someone in your coalition has access to a smartphone or computer, you are in great shape to record a stellar video. You might even have members in your coalition who have video, public relations, or media experience who can help guide this production process. **Appendix A** outlines other equipment and software and any associated fees that your coalition might consider budgeting for during the production process.

## WORKING WITH VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS

If you do not have access to a phone or computer in your coalition, you may consider accessing recording and editing equipment and volunteers within your local community. Some of these places may offer volunteers, recording spaces, and recording and editing equipment to rent or purchase at a reduced fee:

- Community theatres
- High schools
- Radio stations
- Community colleges
- Religious settings
- Local county, city, or town health organizations that have websites

If your coalition does not have access to a media expert or volunteers in your local community, you can still produce videos by outsourcing production work to freelancers. Some great resources to find freelance multimedia professionals include the following:

- [Upwork.com](https://www.upwork.com)
- [Fiverr.com](https://www.fiverr.com)
- [Guru.com](https://www.guru.com)

## STEP 2: RECORD

Once you have written the final draft of your script and identified your spokesperson, it is time to prepare for recording.

- **Location. Location. Location.** Location is key in setting the stage for your videos. To ensure that your video setting contributes to the video experience, consider the following tips:
  - » **Less Is More:** Choose simple and believable settings and backgrounds, as if the person is at home or their relevant workplace. Make sure the background is not too busy or cluttered; it can distract the viewer from the main message of your video. Remove distracting lamps, small objects, knick knacks, or pictures.
  - » Be sure to look through the lens to get a feel for what the viewer will see. Beware of plants, pictures, or lamps that stick up behind someone's head.
  - » Avoid a completely blank backdrop, which can make an interview looked staged. If the person is coming into an office setting to do the video, rearrange office furniture to look warm and welcoming and remove distractions.
- **Illuminate the Subject:** Lighting is key in making sure that everything you want seen is visible. Make sure the light source is in front of them, not behind, to avoid a dark, silhouette effect. You want the face to be clearly seen but not too bright. In general, natural lighting through a window or open door is great for making your subject visible in a video recording, and it is free. If you record outside, place your subject in the shade, not in bright sunlight. Again, check the view through your lens to be sure the subject is seen in flattering light.
- **The Setting Is a Character:** The recording location should tell a story and contribute to the overall campaign theme or call to action. For example, if your spokesperson wants to talk about how families can support MOUD treatment, your coalition may choose to record

their testimonial in a home setting. Or, if the person wants to talk about being back at work and wants the video to be done at the workplace, be sure to get permission from the employer and follow all recommendations for the background and lighting.

- **Visuals Are Enhanced by Audio:** In addition to ensuring that your visual settings are engaging and informative, it is also important that your video subjects can be easily heard and understood. In general, it is important to record in quiet settings that are not within or around loud distracting noises (e.g., highways, people talking, airplanes flying overhead).<sup>6</sup> If shooting outdoors, take a moment to evaluate any background noise. It can be hard to find an outdoor location that is truly quiet. If using a mobile phone, consider putting it in airplane mode during filming to avoid interruptions. **Appendix A** includes an outline of recommended recording and audio equipment.

Once a location has been secured, you are ready to film. A cell phone with a camera may be all you need to record a video. Consider the following best practices as you record your videos:

- **Practice Makes Perfect:** Prior to recording, make sure you do a few practice recordings. These practice sessions help the spokesperson rehearse what they will say and to correct any distracting mannerisms, such as touching their face and hair or looking away from the camera as they are talking. Another common mistake is sitting in a chair with a moveable back and rocking back and forth. These practice recordings also let the camera person determine optimal background, lighting, and distance from the spokesperson.
- **When in Doubt, Bust the Shot:** When recording people you do not have to record a person's entire body. In fact, it may be more impactful to focus on the person's face to capture their facial emotions and connect with viewers. Your coalition may consider recording people using a bust shot. **Bust shots** show



a figure in the camera frame from slightly above the top of their head to the tops of their shoulders. No matter how you choose to record your spokesperson, if you plan to edit the video, make sure the recordings are consistent. For example, if you record one take using a bust shot, record all video takes for that person using bust shots so the editing process is more consistent and seamless.

- Record Footage in the Right Format:** Use a tripod or a stack of books to stabilize the camera for crisp, professional shots. Check your video settings to see if there's an option to record in high definition (HD). Think about whether you want the video orientation to be horizontal (landscape) or vertical (portrait). Horizontal videos are typically better for YouTube and TV PSAs, whereas vertical or square videos are optimal for social media

posts and stories. If posting on multiple channels, you may want to shoot in different ways or get a shot that can easily be cropped later during editing process (free editing tools like [Animoto](#) can be used to crop horizontal videos in square or vertical formats for social media).

**TIPS FOR ADAPTING VIDEOS FOR RADIO PSAs:**

- Record Multiple Lengths.** Record both a 30- and 60-second version. Use a timer to be sure the audio is within your intended time limits.
- Save Audio Files Separately from Video.** Save the audio file as either a .wav or .mp3 file. Some radio stations may request and use your coalition's audio recording whereas others will use one of their on-air personalities to read the script.

**STEP 3: EDIT**

Videos not used as a TV PSA can be edited to any time length. However, to ensure your campaign messaging captures attention and keeps it, it is important that your videos are not too long. As a best practice, video recordings for social media or other websites should range between 30 seconds and 2 minutes. See **Appendix A** for a list of DIY video and audio editing platforms.

One video recording might be edited for use on multiple platforms. For example, a 2-minute video for a website can also be edited as a 1-minute video on Facebook and a 30-second video on Instagram, if the shorter content is still clear and understandable.

**Video Length:** The average length of videos varies by platform.<sup>7</sup> The average video lengths for different platforms are shown below.

If your coalition chooses to work with an outside vendor for video production, know that the most expensive part of the process is video editing. Here are some important considerations:

- Communicate clear guidelines on what the video should look like, your desired video length, and your budget.
- Maintain clear and timely communication with the editor.

PLATFORM	TIME LENGTH
Instagram	30 seconds
Twitter	45 seconds
Facebook	1 minute
YouTube/Community Presentation	2 minutes
TV/Radio PSA	30 seconds or 1 minute



**TIP:** To educate your viewers about the credibility of the speaker, display the speaker's name and title on the lower third of the screen, much like you see on TV news shows.

For example, if the speaker is an emergency medical services (EMS) professional, you may have them wear their uniform in the video and display their name and EMS title in the lower third of the video.

- Plan ahead to avoid excessive changes. A “paper edit” of what parts of the video will appear as the final “script” can help get to a final edit without as much back-and-forth.
- Document deadlines and expectations.
- Keep videos as brief as possible.

Consider the following instructions to help create a good working relationship with your video editor:

- Share your creative brief with the editor so that they understand the specific goal or call to action of your video, the intended audience, and where the video will be posted.

- Have your digital materials compiled and organized via a cloud storage or shared drive account (for example, Google Docs).
  - » Digital materials include logos, video recording files, and image files (.jpg).
- If you want any variations of the videos (i.e., 30 seconds, 1 minute) let the editor know sooner rather than later.

## EDITING VIDEOS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

Use the following tips to edit videos for social media:

- **Create square or vertical videos.** Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram all recommend using square videos (1:1 ratio) for newsfeed posts and vertical videos (9:16 ratio) for stories. This is because most people view video content from their mobile phones, and square and vertical videos take up more space on mobile screens. Free social media video editing tools such as [Animoto](#) can be used to automatically crop videos in the correct dimensions for social media.
- **Add captions to your videos.** Approximately 85% of Facebook users watch videos with the sound turned off,<sup>8</sup> so not having captions is a missed opportunity to get your message across. [Animoto](#) can also be used to overlay text onto your videos.

## STEP 4: DISSEMINATE

### PITCHING YOUR PSAs TO RADIO AND TV STATIONS

Once you have completed planning, recording, and editing, consider these tips:

- Compile a list of local radio/TV stations in your area via web search or through word of mouth.
- Contact these stations by phone or email to determine if they air PSAs. Speak with or address your email to the Community or Public Affairs Director, if they have one.
- Use a strong subject line: Don't be afraid to say “Help Us Stop Opioid Overdoses in [HCS County/Community].”

**TIP: Add a call to action.** Make sure you have a call to action in your video that tells people how they can seek help for a loved one or get involved after watching the video. For example, if your call to action is visiting the website for more information, make sure to include the URL in your video.

**Find naloxone near you.**  
[HealTogetherMA.org/Salem](https://HealTogetherMA.org/Salem)



- Use a strong opening line in your email: Be sure they know you are with a nonprofit, public health organization seeking their help.
- Draft your email explaining the positive impact your PSA could have on the community. When speaking with the station representative, be sure to compliment the station’s influence in the community and ask them for help.
- Underscore what’s in it for them: Let them know why this will be good for them. For example, say “We will thank the station in our e-blasts to out coalitions,” or “We will be sure our partners know we were helped by [Station].”
- Make the pitch local. Include some statistics on local overdose deaths or refer to the news of a recent overdose death in the community.
- In this email, be sure to include your:
  - » Name
  - » Organizational affiliation (i.e., HEALing Communities Study Communication Champion) and credentials (i.e., RN, Dr.)
- » Email and telephone contact information
- Mail or email the station your letter.<sup>9</sup>
  - » Emails with multiple attachments (like audio files) from unknown senders often get flagged by the email server as spam. To avoid your initial email being categorized as spam, the body of your initial email should include:
    - ▶ Your letter,
    - ▶ The main text of the PSA, and
    - ▶ A link to a Dropbox or shared drive folder where the stations can easily download the audio and script versions.
- A few days after mailing or emailing your letter or email, follow up with the station to ensure that they received the PSA and continue to encourage its airing.
- If the station airs your PSA, thank them via email, phone call, or letter. Keep the momentum going by creating social media posts thanking the radio station for airing the PSA.

### Sample pitch:

[First line optional] I am writing in response to your recent news story on (an overdose death/overdose stats, etc.)

*My name is Jane Smith, and I work with the [local coalition name] of the HEALing Communities Study—the largest implementation study ever supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to reduce opioid overdose deaths. Because [station] is a leader in this community, we are asking for your support in reaching out to the public so people affected by opioid misuse and addiction know how to find treatment. Your audience trusts you, and we need your help.*

*We have created a video/audio PSA that tells [HCS county/community] citizens how to [topic] and where to get help. This locally made video/audio product could also be used as part of a news story. The video/audio clip is attached, along with a transcript. It is a statement by [name] urging people to [action]. Could you please advise us on how we can get this information out to the people of [HCS county/community]?*

### SHARING YOUR VIDEOS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Videos have been called the “king of content” on social media platforms, like Facebook and Instagram.<sup>10</sup> For example, the average person is spending 100 minutes each day watching online video in 2021.<sup>11</sup> Here are a few tips for disseminating your videos on social media effectively.

- **Tease what the video is about in the post copy.** One advantage to sharing videos on social media is the opportunity to introduce your video with a line of text that gives people a compelling reason to watch and share the video. Try to summarize what is unique or interesting about the video in one sentence to entice people to start watching.

- **Choose a compelling thumbnail.** Capturing people’s attention within the first few seconds of a video is critical to get people to stop scrolling and start watching. The first thing people will see is the video thumbnail, so replacing the default thumbnail image with a more compelling custom image that you create and upload can help improve video engagement.
- **Upload videos natively.** Native videos are videos uploaded directly to a social media platform rather than linking to videos hosted elsewhere (e.g., uploading a video directly to Facebook rather than linking to a YouTube video from Facebook). Native videos get 478% more shares on Facebook than videos from other sources because they can be played from the newsfeed and users do not have to leave the platform.<sup>12</sup>
- **Use social media ads to generate more views.** Paying to run video ads on social media platforms can help you reach a larger audience and specify who you want to reach using location, demographics, interests, and other characteristics. You can also optimize your ad to get the most views at the lowest cost by setting “video views” as the goal. The following

webpages include more details about creating social media video ads on different platforms:

- » [Facebook video ads](#) (and [video ad specs](#))
- » [Instagram video ads](#) (and [video ad specs](#))
- » [Twitter video ads](#)
- » [YouTube video ads](#)

- **Review insights from video analytics to inform your strategy.** Social media platforms provide metrics like video views, average watch time, and video completion rate, which can help you understand where people drop off when watching your video and what types of videos resonate most with your audience.
- **Consider going “live” on Facebook and Instagram.** Many social media platforms have the option to broadcast live, which may make sense if you want to share a conversation with a spokesperson in real time to generate interest and engagement. Facebook and Instagram rank live videos more favorably in their algorithm, and people spend more than 3× longer watching a Facebook live video on average compared with a video that is no longer live.<sup>13</sup>

## APPENDIX A. RECORDING AND EDITING EQUIPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

EQUIPMENT NAME	ESTIMATED COST
<b>Budget-Friendly Audio-Visual Equipment</b>	
<a href="#">B&amp;H Photo Video</a>	Varies
<a href="#">Promaster</a>	Varies
<b>Video Editing Software</b>	
<a href="#">HitFilm Express</a>	Free
<a href="#">Shotcut</a>	Free
<a href="#">Movie Maker Online</a>	Free
<a href="#">Adobe Premiere Pro</a>	Free 7-day trial, \$20.99 monthly
<a href="#">Animoto</a>	Free
<b>Microphones*</b>	
<a href="#">CAD Audio USB U1 Dynamic Recording Microphone</a>	\$16.95
<a href="#">USB Dynamic Studio Microphone - Recording Set W Table Tripod Mic Stand &amp; 6.5' Cable Plug &amp; Play</a>	\$28.99
<a href="#">Blue Snowball iCE USB Mic</a>	\$49.99

Camera**	
<a href="#">EBODA Web Camera,PC Webcam with Microphone Full HD 1080P Web Camera</a>	\$20.69
<a href="#">Video Camera Camcorder with Full HD 1080P 30FPS 16X Digital Zoom Digital Camera Vlogging Camera for YouTube</a>	\$63.97
Audio Editing Software	
<a href="#">Audacity</a>	Free
<a href="#">Adobe Audition CC</a>	Free 7-day trial, \$20.99/monthly
Lighting	
<a href="#">LimoStudio, LMS103, Soft Lighting Umbrella Kit</a>	\$63.11
<a href="#">Lumecube</a>	Multiple options
Tripods	
<a href="#">Video Camera Tripod</a>	\$17.49
<a href="#">Cell Phone Tripod</a>	\$11.99

\*Dynamic microphones, not condensers, are recommended.

\*\*Cameras are suggested if no phones are available to use for recording. DSLR cameras also have the ability to take videos

## APPENDIX B.

### Video/Photograph/Audio Sample Consent Form

The [Research site] HEALing Communities Study (HCS) would like to use photographs, videotapes, or audio files representing your image, likeness, thoughts, or opinions for a media campaign on medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD). This will include sharing with partners for distribution in 64 study communities across four states (Kentucky, Massachusetts, New York, and Ohio) and other locations. Videos will be hosted on YouTube and removed upon completion of the study.

Please read the statements below carefully and decide how you would like your image, likeness, thoughts, or opinions to be used. All participants must be 18 years old or older. Please place an X beside Yes or No to mark your choice beside each statement.

#### Person(s) in photographs, videos, and audio files

I agree to allow HCS to use photographs, video, or audio files representing my image, likeness, thoughts, or opinions that I submit to them to be used by the study team and its project partners to promote the campaign in public service announcements, news releases, websites, social media platforms, printed materials, study reports, and exhibits. HCS is entitled to edit, copy, adapt, or translate the contribution and to authorize others to do so in connection with HCS projects. I understand that I will be able to review final edits.

**Yes, I understand and agree to the statement above.**

**No, I do not agree to the statement above.**

Given the nature of social media or other material capable of use or being transmitted and shared beyond particular areas, we cannot guarantee that posts shared by partners in HCS communities or other materials will not be seen or shared with persons outside of these communities. Although all materials will be removed from YouTube and study websites at the completion of the study, we cannot guarantee that partners will not share them after the study ends.

**Yes, I understand and agree to the statement above.**

**No, I do not agree to the statement above.**

I grant permission for my name to be published with my image, likeness, thoughts, and opinions in any associated campaign materials or publicity.

**Yes, I understand and agree to the statement above.**

**No, I do not agree to the statement above.**

I grant permission for my image, likeness, thoughts, and opinions to be used by HCS faculty and staff in academic presentations and publications about the study and its communication campaigns.

**Yes, I understand and agree to the statement above.**

**No, I do not agree to the statement above.**

**We will not use the video or images submitted, or any other information you provide, for any other purpose outside of HCS.**

Name (please print):

Contact email address or telephone number:

Signed:

Date:

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