



Here's Where You Start

Why don't teens wear seat belts? Is it uncool? Is it peer pressure? Create a world-changing public service announcement (PSA) and help save lives. It's easy! Just check out these planning tips to help you stay on track.

Scene Description: *Teenage girl pulls out of a parking spot on a city street while dialing a cell phone with one hand*
Honking horns, engine, cell phone dial tone, car radio playing
"Tom? Why didn't you call me last night?"

1. WHAT'S THE STORY?

Every PSA tells a specific and emotional story. Write down the story that you want to tell. It can be a poem, short story, comic strip...whatever! Just get it down on paper.

2. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Make a list of all the ways to grab a teen's attention. What do teens care about? What's stopping them from wearing seat belts now? What might convince them to change?

3. WRITE A CATCHY SLOGAN

The most memorable slogans are short and descriptive, and capture the entire message of your campaign in just a few words. Brainstorm a few, then pick your favorite.

4. CREATE DRAMATIC VISUAL IMPACT

The images in your PSA should be as memorable and dramatic as your slogan. Brainstorm ways to tell your story visually. Then sketch your ideas or look at examples in magazines, in newspapers, or on TV for inspiration. Remember that movies, songs, commercials, etc. are copyrighted and should not be incorporated into your original video.

5. SEARCH FOR SOUND AND MUSIC

Music can have a powerful and emotional effect. Choose thirty seconds of a song that will emotionally communicate your message.

6. WRITE A 30-SECOND SCRIPT

Write a script and read it aloud. Does it sound natural? Everything you say should be essential to your main message. Thirty seconds go by very quickly, so make them count!

7. DRAW A STORYBOARD

Put your slogan, images, sound, and script together with a storyboard that outlines how each shot in your commercial will look. A 30-second advertisement should have six storyboard frames. Make sure to include a scene description that explains the context of the ad, music and sound effects, and dialogue.

8. ROUND UP YOUR GEAR

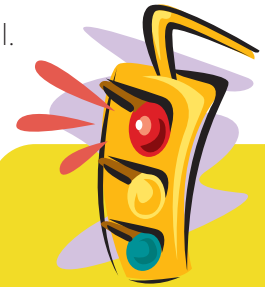
You'll need a video camera, video/DVD, and microphone. (You can also use other multimedia resources.)

9. PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

Practice your shots before you turn on the camera. You'll save everyone time and frustration if your shoot is planned in advance.

10. EDIT

Unless you shoot your scenes in the exact order that you need them, you'll need to do some editing. For some help, ask your teacher for a list of local editing resources.



Someone is killed in a car crash every thirteen minutes.

Source: NHTSA (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration)

For examples of powerful PSAs, visit:
www.adcouncil.org

Enter for a Chance to Win:

Mail your entry form, six-frame storyboard, and a video/DVD of your completed public service announcement to:

Fasten Your Seat Belt...
Go Far! Contest,
Scholastic/SMP,
P.O. Box 713, New York,
NY 10013-0711

DEADLINE: All entries must be postmarked by **May 3, 2005.**