

# CDC's Communication Principles

Accessible version: <https://www.cdc.gov/about/organization/communication-principles.html>

- CDC embraces intellectual honesty and transparency in its release of information to fully empower public decision making.
- CDC accepts scientific debate and respects the peer-review process.
- CDC's communication is empathetic, respectful, non-judgmental, and never arrogant toward others.
- CDC considers diverse cultural and societal values and beliefs when developing messages.
- CDC does not use trickery or deceptive communication techniques to advance public health recommendations or its reputation.
- CDC is accountable for its actions, good or bad, and recommendations, popular or not.
- CDC's good reputation is not sacrificed for the sake of any past, current, or future employee or partner.
- CDC respects the right of its detractors to voice their opposition and does not impute the source's motives but does vigorously correct errors and challenge misjudgments.
- CDC embraces the idea that plain language works best to eliminate ambiguity in its research results and health recommendations for the public.
- CDC admits its mistakes, past and present, and takes responsibility for correcting them.
- CDC does not withhold information only to avoid embarrassment.
- CDC communication is science-based, timely, accurate, respectful, credible, and consistent (STARCC)

*For more information, please call Office of the Associate Director for Communication, Division of News and Electronic Media, 404 639-3286*



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention