

# CDC National Infant Immunization Week Media Toolkit



## National Infant Immunization Week Media Relations Tool Kit

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## **About the Campaign**

Each year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recognizes National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW), an annual observance to highlight the importance of protecting infants from vaccine-preventable diseases and celebrate the achievements of immunization programs and their partners in promoting healthy communities. In 2019, we are celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NIIW.

### **About this Toolkit**

The purpose of the *NIIW Media Relations Toolkit* is to provide information, strategies, and resources to help guide public health planners, communicators, educators, and other health professionals as they engage media and encourage infant immunization.

Although the kit includes information specific to NIIW, it can be used throughout the entire year.

## **Using the Toolkit for Infant Vaccination Promotion**

To achieve the goals of this campaign, CDC relies heavily on its partner organizations to promote its messages and encourage parents and caregivers to have their children vaccinated. One way partners can help support this effort is by working with their local media to educate parents and caregivers about the importance of vaccination in protecting their children against vaccine-preventable diseases. CDC encourages partners to reach out to local media with powerful information and “pitch” them to cover the issue through social and digital media platforms, newspapers, television and radio programs, websites, magazines, and other outlets.

This toolkit is intended to help CDC partners expand and enhance their abilities to educate their audiences on this issue through media outreach. Designed as a resource for media novices and experts alike, this toolkit offers a variety of proven resources, models, and templates to help you work with your local media.

Outlined within this document are six critical steps to help you develop a media strategy and prepare to engage the media in your community:

1. Define goals and audience
2. Develop key messages
3. Develop press materials
4. Prepare for media outreach
5. Train spokespeople
6. Engage the media

## **Define Goals and Audience**

Before preparing materials and reaching out to the media, it is essential to define what you want to get out of media engagement. Ask yourself, “What is our end goal?” When you decide what your goals are, you can better define your messages, figure out who your audience is, and determine what media is best to target.

Your goal could be as simple as getting more media attention or targeting specific populations or outlets, but try to make it measurable so that you can quantify your efforts and show impact.

Before reaching out to the media, it is important to articulate who your audiences are and what you want them to know or do. This also helps everyone in your organization speak with one voice about your programs. In every

awareness campaign, key messages are developed in the initial stages to ensure consistency and accuracy of communications throughout campaign activities.

### **Develop Key Messages**

Each year, CDC develops key messages for NIIW. To ensure consistency across all sectors, we encourage CDC partners to draw from CDC's key messages to inform their materials (i.e., press releases, public service announcements, speeches, articles, locally produced PSAs, interviews with reporters, etc.).

*For more information on CDC's key messages, please see the [NIIW website](#).*

### **Develop Press Materials**

Press materials provide reporters additional information about your work and your cause, and it helps them to write their articles or produce their segments. Some common and effective press materials include:

- Press Releases
- Public Service Announcements (PSAs)
- Radio Live-Reads
- Letters to the Editor or Op-eds
- Matte Articles
- Media Advisories

#### **Press Release**

A press release is a short (usually one to two page) description of your news or event and is designed to provide the media with high-level information—the who, what, where, when, why, and how. Every news story must contain these elements, so it's crucial for your press release to contain these elements as well.

A press release should also include the following key information:

- Your contact information
- A captivating headline
- Essential information about your issue or event (i.e., who, what, where, when, why, and how)
- A quote from someone in your organization (typically from a senior member of your organization or other trusted spokesperson)
- Resources from local partners (this isn't a necessity, but having information on where to get vaccinated, etc. can be helpful for reporters)

To access CDC press materials, please visit [www.cdc.gov/media](http://www.cdc.gov/media). You can click "Get Updates" to receive automatic email notifications.

*For more information on writing press releases, see [Appendix A](#).*

#### **Radio Live-Reads**

Radio live reads are another way to share information about NIIW with the community. These short scripts can be shared with local DJs to read on air and can be customized to include information about local events or address local issues.

#### **Letters to the Editor or Op-Eds**

Letters to the editor are letters that can be written by any reader of a publication in response to an issue that has been covered in the publication or is of interest to its readers. Letters to the editor provide a wide public forum that

can be used to promote your message, both before and after your event. Newspapers are most likely to publish a letter to the editor if it addresses an article that has been recently published in the paper. When creating your letter, make sure to note the article you are referring to in your letter.

Op-ed is the abbreviation for “opposite the editorial” because these opinionated pieces are usually placed on the page opposite the editorial page. While an editorial is written by the news organization that expresses the opinion of the editor, editorial board, or publisher, an op-ed represents the opinion of an individual contributor, such as an “expert,” public official, or anyone who represents an organization.

For both letters to the editor and op-eds, contact your local newspapers to find out about any word count limits or deadlines. Both letters to the editor and op-eds should be written and submitted in a timely manner, with guidelines strictly adhered to or else you run the risk of your message not being considered for inclusion. All letters must be signed and include an address.

### **Matte Articles**

Matte articles, also known as drop-in or ready-to-publish articles, repro-proofs, or camera-ready news, are an effective, cost-efficient way to spread information on childhood immunization and share your success stories. A matte article is a type of news article that is written for direct insertion in community and weekly newspapers or online. Similar to a feature story, your matte article should focus on “soft” news and have a longer shelf life than more time sensitive news releases.

Tips for creating effective matte articles:

- Limit articles to one page
- Offer solutions and/or calls to action
- Include a photo or graphic
- Localize the story with quotes or statistics (you may include contact information for organizations as well)
- Learn what format your publication prefers before submission

For sample matte articles, visit [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/partners/childhood/matte-articles-features.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/partners/childhood/matte-articles-features.html).

### **Events Calendar**

Many newspapers and radio and TV stations have community calendars or bulletin boards that feature listings of local events. By assembling a local calendar of vaccination events and activities, you can provide a service to the media and save them the time of collecting the information. Be sure to include NIIV on your calendar.

### **News Conference or Special Events**

When planning an event, such as a press conference to recognize an immunization champion, send a media advisory to local media before the event and again the day of the event to entice press attendance and coverage. Also, consider including an RSVP on the media advisory so that you know who will be attending. As a reminder and to confirm attendance, call reporters and news desks the morning of the event.

If press representatives have confirmed their attendance, set up a media hospitality area where reporters can sign in and gather media materials, such as a fact sheet or bio of the special guest speaker(s). Make sure you know when and where your spokespeople will be available.

Please see [Appendix D](#) for a checklist for conducting a news conference and [Appendix B](#) for information on writing a media advisory.

## **Prepare for Media Outreach**

Now that you have developed your press materials, it is time to identify which media contacts should receive them. This can be done in three simple, yet important, steps:

- Compile media lists
- Establish and maintain relationships
- Provide trained spokespeople

### **Compile Media Lists**

Media lists help you organize local editors', reporters', and producers' names, outlets, and contact information. Your media lists should also have information on topics covered, submission deadlines, conversation notes, and best way to contact (some reporters may prefer talking on the phone while others may prefer an email). In addition, they should include a variety of media outlets including ethnic media. Reach out to reporters, producers, writers, etc. in the following categories:

- Health
- Medical
- Public or community affairs
- Others: bloggers interested in health issues or local issues can help promote your event

Developing media lists may require research if it's not something your organization already has. Check the websites of your local news outlets for their staff list or call local newsrooms. Also, keep track of journalists that have contacted your organization in the past or track the media that covers health-related stories. There are also news sources that offer (for a fee) access to databases of specific media contacts.

Remember to look beyond traditional news media in your area. Examples of non-traditional media outlets include:

- Local parenting magazines
- Medical center or clinic newsletters
- Supermarket or pharmacy news handouts
- Faith-based organization publications
- Community circulars/newsletters
- Public health journals
- Business journals
- PTA/PTO newsletters or school newspapers
- Bilingual publications

### **Establish and Maintain Relationships**

Once you have your media lists, reach out to the reporter (this may be by a phone call, a get-to-know-you meeting, or via email) to present your organization as a resource on infant immunization. Remember to have your media materials available to send as follow-up information.

Maintaining relationships with the media should be a priority. Note: If there is no time to build a relationship and you need to get your information out quickly, please see [Engage the Media](#).

The following are a few tips on maintaining good relationships with the media:

- Be responsive and provide follow-up information as quickly as possible.
- Be mindful of reporters' deadlines. Don't call or email when reporters are rushed.
- Know your reporter's "beat" or area of coverage and send only relevant news.
- Offer background information when a related news story breaks. Also, have a list of outside experts to refer a reporter to in case your organization cannot comment on a subject, or if a reporter is looking for a person who had the disease or has experience with it.
- When your story is covered, follow up and thank the reporter.

## **Train Spokespeople**

### **Identifying a Spokesperson**

For many of the materials and activities mentioned throughout this toolkit, you will need to identify a spokesperson who will serve as the voice to deliver the messages. A spokesperson should have a healthy balance of an engaging personality and technical expertise. In addition to being an expert on the topic, your spokesperson should be upbeat and conversational.

Local health departments will likely have a cadre of experts that can serve as spokespeople or advisors. Find your local health department by using this tool: <http://www.naccho.org/resources/lhd-directory>.

### **Preparing a Spokesperson**

Regardless of who serves as your media spokesperson or if they have done this before, he or she should be prepared. Prior to an interview or press event, prepare your spokesperson by practicing questions and answers, reviewing key messages, and giving him or her background information on the journalists conducting the interview. You can also create a list of potential questions that you expect to be asked, along with sample responses. For example, a common question may include debunking common “misconceptions” about childhood immunizations.

Preparing for interviews or speaking engagements should include:

- Reviewing key messages
- Practicing any prepared remarks
- Practicing questions and answers, including potential tough questions and answers
- Reviewing background information on the journalist, outlet, or audience
- Practice staying on message (it’s important not to allow the conversation to go down paths that are not pertinent to your goals or message—no matter how persistent the questioner might be in pursuing a line of inquiry.)

*For more guidance on preparing your spokespeople, see [Appendix E](#) for tips on writing speeches and presentations and [Appendix F](#) for tips on public speaking.*

## **Engage the Media**

### **Sparking media interest in CDC’s National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW).**

CDC’s NIIW plays an important role in increasing public awareness about vaccine-preventable diseases and the importance of infant immunization. NIIW is intended to raise awareness about the importance of infant immunization and encourage following the recommended childhood immunization schedule. CDC recommends that partners use this designated week to promote vaccination among parents and caregivers, as well as health care professionals, through their various communications channels.

There are several ways to engage the media to cover your issue. Depending on the type of media, you can pitch (request) articles, PSAs, calendar items on NIIW, letters to the editor, or op-eds, articles. You can also pitch digital outlets to post childhood vaccination information on blogs, websites, and online news sources. Your pitch can focus on a vaccination drive, health fair, or other community event.

While public health professionals may view infant immunization as a compelling story to tell, it may be challenging to generate media interest in the absence of a disease outbreak. Think creatively about how you could pitch NIIW to your local media. Making NIIW locally relevant may help to generate interest. For example, you could tie NIIW into the following:

- State immunization statistics, as reported in the National Immunization Survey or by your state health department
- Local outbreaks or cases of vaccine-preventable diseases
- Stories of local families who have been impacted by vaccine-preventable diseases
- Stories of local children who are immunocompromised and depend on others to vaccinate in order to stay healthy

Timing is important. When sending out information prior to your event, do not send it too early, or it may be discarded or “filed.” On the other hand, do not send information so late that it becomes “old news.” Consider whether the publication is issued daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly. For daily papers, sending information 4-5 days prior is a good rule of thumb. For weekly publications, send information 8-10 days in advance. Contact monthly or quarterly publications to find out about their deadlines.

### **Be Respectful and Prepared**

Be cognizant of the fact that reporters get numerous phone calls, emails, and requests every day, all of which compete for their time and coverage. Don’t take it personally if you do not hear back in a timely manner.

Helpful tips when engaging media:

- Your pitch can focus on events, new data, or a compelling personal story.
- Provide accurate information in a timely manner to the right reporters; know their topic areas.
- Don’t offer a spokesperson unless you have one ready and prepared.
- Be prepared with information about the issue and/or event(s).
- Be persistent, but if a reporter says “no,” be respectful and move on.
- Be creative.
- Thank reporters when they cover your story.

If you develop a strong relationship with a reporter, you will become a resource on this topic and possibly other vaccine-preventable disease issues when that reporter does a story in the future.

### **Conclusion**

Now that you have the tools, you can begin to develop your own media outreach plans in support of CDC’s NIIW. The templates and ideas presented here are designed to be customized for your organization’s use. Use these media components wisely so that they will represent your organization, promote the goals of this campaign in a compelling way, and build visibility for your organization’s activities.

Be sure to record your NIIW media activities/events on CDC’s NIIW webpage:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niiw/activities/activity-form.html>.

To ask questions or to speak with a media expert at CDC’s National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases, email [media@cdc.gov](mailto:media@cdc.gov) or call (404) 639-3286 and reference this toolkit.

Additional resources for your use are listed in [Appendix G](#).

# **National Infant Immunization Week**

## **Media Relations Toolkit**

### **Appendices**

#### Appendices

- A. [Press Release Template](#)
- B. [Media Advisory Template](#)
- C. [Public Service Announcement Tip Sheet](#)
- D. [Checklist for Conducting a News Conference](#)
- E. [Speechwriting Tip Sheet](#)
- F. [Public Speaking Tip Sheet](#)
- G. [Additional Resources](#)

## Appendix A: Press Release Template

Use the template below to draft your own press release, which should answer “who,” “what,” “where,” “when,” “why,” and “how” of the event or activity. It also should include a quote from the appropriate person in your organization. The following sample press release includes further explanation of each section.

You can send your release out under embargo (i.e., reporters cannot publish stories about release until a specified time in the future) or for immediate release (i.e., not embargoed).

### Press Release

Embargoed Until/For Immediate Release  
[DATE] at 1 p.m. ET

Contact: Organization Name  
Phone number  
Email address

#### [Name of Your Organization] Holds [Type of Event] as Part of the 25<sup>th</sup> National Infant Immunization Week

[CITY, State]—Today, [Name of Your Organization] is hosting a [Type of Event], which is expected to involve more than [Minimum Number of Expected Participants] from [Name(s) of Area(s)]. Some of the activities planned for today include [Local Activities].

[Include Other Pertinent Information Regarding Your Event Here.]

“National Infant Immunization Week provides a valuable opportunity for our community to tell people how important it is for children to be vaccinated,” said [Name and Title of Spokesperson]. “Childhood vaccinations are one of the best ways for parents to protect their children against vaccine-preventable diseases.”

For more information about National Infant Immunization Week or childhood vaccinations visit [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents) and [Insert Organization website, If Applicable].

## Appendix B: Media Advisory Template

Use the template below to create your media advisory. The advisory should answer “who,” “what,” “where,” “when,” “why,” and “how” of the event or activity. It also should include contact information for your organization. A media advisory should be sent out before an event and again the day of the event.

### Media Advisory

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CONTACT: Tom Jones ←  
Organization Name  
Phone: (XXX) XXX-XXXX  
Email: XXXXX@XXXXX.COM

**Contact Information** – Make sure to include your media or PR person’s information include name, organization, phone number and email.

**[NAME OF YOUR DEPARTMENT] Holds [EVENT] as Part of the 25<sup>th</sup> National Infant Immunization Week**

**[CITY, State]**—[NAME OF YOUR DEPARTMENT] is hosting a [EVENT], to honor (INSERT NAME) with [INSERT ORGANIZATION] for being a CDC Childhood Immunization Champion.

**WHO:** [LIST ANY VIPS AND OTHER ATTENDEES OF NOTE WHO MAY BE OF INTEREST TO THE PRESS. INCLUDE TITLES WHENEVER POSSIBLE.]

**WHAT:** [PROVIDE ADDITIONAL DETAILS ABOUT THE EVENT (I.E., WHAT ACTIVITIES ARE SCHEDULED, ETC.)]

**WHERE:** [ADDRESS OF THE EVENT LOCATION]

**WHEN:** [DATE AND TIME OF THE EVENT]

**WHY:** The CDC Childhood Immunization Champion Award, given jointly by the [Association of Immunization Managers \(AIM\)](#) and CDC, honors individuals who are doing an exemplary job or going above and beyond to promote childhood immunizations in their communities.

**CONTACT:** [NAME, PHONE NUMBER(S), AND EMAIL ADDRESS OF CONTACT]

For more information about infant immunization and vaccine preventable diseases, visit [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents) and [INSERT DEPARTMENT/ORGANIZATION WEBSITE, IF APPLICABLE].

###

## **Appendix C: Public Service Announcement Tip Sheet**

Public service announcements (PSAs) offer you the opportunity to promote infant immunization and NIIW activities and program to the general public for free.

### **Motivating Public Service Directors and Producers**

Most TV/radio stations have public service directors who decide which PSAs will air. Public service directors are busy people who receive many PSAs every day. They are most likely to use PSAs that they believe are of local interest to their communities, and they often favor issues and causes related to health. Because infant immunization is an important issue that affects many families in your community, public service directors will likely find NIIW or infant immunization PSAs highly appealing.

The following tips will help you get your PSAs placed on radio stations.

### **Know Who Is in Charge**

Radio station public service directors may have various titles, including community affairs director, advertising manager, or general manager. Call the station and ask whom you should contact about placing your PSAs.

### **Write a Letter/Email of Introduction**

Once you have determined whom to contact, send a letter/email of introduction that includes the following information:

- Who you are and what your organization has to offer (this serves as a reminder so that if the station needs something about your subjects, they can remember you)
- The burden of vaccine preventable diseases and the importance of infant immunization
- Your success stories and how they have made an impact on your community
- Your plans for supporting infant immunization in general and/or NIIW
- A call-to-action—ask the radio station to support your activities by running PSAs. You might also see if they would want to interview one of your experts during a news program.

Remember to keep it local. The people in charge of PSA placement want to know how the issue affects their community.

### **Meet Face to Face**

Follow up your letter/email by scheduling meetings with the public service directors at the radio stations where you want your PSAs to air. These meetings put a face on the issue and provide an opportunity for you to educate public service directors about issues related to infant immunization. It generally takes a few weeks for radio stations to put PSAs on the air, so you should schedule your meetings well in advance of your events or NIIW. Then, ask the radio station to run your PSAs before the event.

### **Say Thank You**

Follow up your visits and meetings with thank you notes. Acknowledge radio stations once they use the PSAs. Send thank you notes and let them know how thankful you are that they were able to help raise awareness about the importance of infant immunization. If they are willing, you could mention or tag the outlet on your social media channels.

### **Approach Radio Stations That Use PSAs**

Not all radio stations use PSAs. Do your homework, listen to the radio stations in your community and approach those stations that already air PSAs. If you live in a large metropolitan area, it might be challenging to get your PSAs placed on the most popular radio stations. Ask if there are other ways to get your infant immunization promotion message out to the community. Remember to think of minority and low-band radio stations as well.

### **Seek a Media Partnership**

Often the media, including TV and radio stations, newspapers, and magazines, will sponsor community events. When they do, they actively promote the event by giving PSAs premium placement and even producing PSAs. If a media outlet does agree to a sponsorship, they usually ask that the organization co-brand the event. There is one downside to a media-sponsored event—competing media will not use your PSAs. This downside could be far outweighed by the benefits of gaining premium PSA placement and visibility with the media outlet with which you form the partnership. Weigh your options and assess whether a media partnership makes sense for your event or organization.

### **Reaching Diverse Audiences with PSAs**

Media serving diverse communities offer an outstanding opportunity for PSA placement, especially if you offer in-language PSAs. The key to placement in ethnic and specialized media is to make all communications meet the needs of that outlet's target audiences.

Ensure that you share any immunization data related to your audience and include any research conducted among diverse subgroups that is relevant to their listening audience. For example, if the listening audience is primarily Puerto Rican, convey research findings and include that this was tested among Puerto Ricans.

If you are focusing on Hispanic radio stations, for example, make sure you provide both Spanish and English versions of the PSAs—there has been a growing trend toward Spanish media using both languages. Independently owned Spanish language radio stations at the local level, for example, are more willing to play PSAs if they are culturally relevant. These stations have a vested interest in their communities.

Be sure any correspondence to the media outlet is in Spanish. Although public service directors at Spanish-language radio stations are likely fluent in both English and Spanish, they will appreciate the sincerity of your pitch if it is in Spanish, and the gesture will increase your opportunity for placement.

## Appendix D: Checklist for Conducting a News Conference

If properly used, a news conference can be a good way to provide media with information on Childhood Immunization Champion events, particularly during NIIW. Consider the following items when planning and executing your press conference:

### Plan Date, Time, and Location

- Date and time
  - Is it convenient for the people who will be speaking?
  - Is there another event going on that day that might conflict?
  - Make sure to schedule the news conference during the mid-morning or early afternoon (not at a time when a newscast would be happening)
- Have you given the media as much advance time as possible?
- Is your event in a location that is easily accessible to the media? (Make sure you scout out the location to see if it will suit your needs – enough space, adequate furniture, etc.)

### Invite Media to Attend By Sending Out a Media Advisory

- Have you made sure the media advisory gives
  - the date, time, and location of the news conference,
  - the subject to be discussed,
  - names of the people who will be speaking or otherwise participating, and
  - names of contact people from whom they can RSVP, obtain advance (and follow-up) information
- Have you placed follow-up calls before the conference to remind reporters about the event?

### Prepare the Room

- Have you made sure your news conference site includes staging, chairs, a podium, and microphones, and checked to ensure all equipment is working properly?
- Do you need a mult box from an audio/visual company for broadcast reporters to plug into to obtain clear sound? Be aware that mult boxes may not be needed in areas with more advanced technology.
- Is your organization's name and/or logo visible (i.e. on the podium, on a banner behind the podium, etc.)?
- Do you have a backup plan?
- Is there an area for separate interviews after the press conference or somewhere b-roll can be shot?

### Provide Media Materials

- Have you prepared media kits including news releases, speaker names and bios, fact sheets, or other materials to be distributed on the day of the event?

### Be Prepared

- Have the main spokespeople rehearsed their prepared remarks/key messages developed for the event, and are they ready to answer questions? Do you have a backup spokesperson?
- Have you made sure your spokespeople know what the most important information is and how to stay focused, even if asked questions that concern other issues?
- Have you developed answers to potentially controversial questions that may be asked, such as concerns about the vaccine's effectiveness and safety or adequate supply issues?
- Have you discussed in advance which key points will be made by each spokesperson?
- Have you designated a moderator in advance of the news conference to keep the conference on schedule, established ground rules, and fielded reporters' questions?
- Have you set a clear end time for the news conference?
- Have you made a Spanish or other appropriate language spokesperson available at the news conference and have you referenced that in your media materials?
- Have you done a media scan the day of the news conference to see if there is anything in the news that might come up?

**Be Thorough**

- Have you made sure all questions are answered during the news conference? If a spokesperson does not know the answer to a question, make sure a member of the team finds the answer after the news conference and makes it available to the reporter as soon as possible. If possible, allow spokespeople to be available one-on-one with reporters following the conference to answer questions.
- Have you designated someone to ask questions during the news conference that reporters may not raise?

**Monitor Attendance and Follow Up**

- Have you asked reporters to sign in? This will provide a list of who attended and who did not attend.
- For key media personnel who were not able to attend, have you offered them a phone interview with the spokespersons or sent them a media kit

## Appendix E: Speechwriting Tip Sheet

If you are conducting National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) activities, there is a good chance that someone from your department will deliver your messages through a short speech or presentation. A detailed outline can provide the framework for an organized and compelling speech. The outline should include the topic, purpose, and audience, as well as three main ideas that support the topic and purpose.

A good length for the average speech is 10 to 15 minutes. If you need more time to make your point, do not be afraid to take it. Because your audience cannot go back and review confusing parts of your speech, it is important for you to deliver a clear, organized presentation and repeat your central points. Below is a general speech outline that you can tailor to the needs of your audience.

**I. Introduction**—Tell them what you’re going to tell them. This should take 1 to 3 minutes.

- A. Grab your audience’s attention
- B. State your topic and purpose
- C. Preview your speech

**II. Body**—Tell them. Illustrate the points that support your theme. This should take 7 to 10 minutes.

- A. State first main idea
- B. State second main idea
- C. State third main idea

**III. Conclusion**—Tell them what you told them. This should take 1 to 2 minutes.

- A. Restate your main ideas
- B. Add a memorable conclusion

After your first draft of the presentation, go back and revise, reword, and rearrange your ideas, as necessary. Refer back to your outline to make sure that items are parallel and logical. Make sure you have sufficient support for each of the statements you have included.

### Dos and Don’ts of Speechwriting

#### Do:

- Find out everything you can about the group you are speaking to, the venue, and the event.
- Ask how much time you have to give your speech.
- Ensure they have what you need for visual aids—overhead projector, LCD projector, etc.
- Prepare an outline of your speech before you start to write it.
- Deliver your speech to someone before the event to practice.
- Give facts and figures with references to back them up.
- Have a clear objective in giving the speech (what you want the audience to know and take away from the speech).
- Concentrate on your main message.
- Visualize yourself giving the speech.

#### Don’t:

- Use humor unless you are positive about what the reaction will be.
- Assume the audience knows all of the background information about your topic.
- Use jargon or confusing phrases.
- Exaggerate, stretch the truth, or lie.
- Say more than you need to.
- Rely too much on visual aids to tell your message.
- Talk down to the audience.
- Use the same speech for every venue.

## Appendix F: Public Speaking Tip Sheet

The best speakers are those who are engaging. Before you choose your speakers, consider your audience. What messenger will they best respond to? Would it be physicians or nurses? Someone from the health department or a respected local community health worker? No matter whom you choose, the speaker needs to convey expertise, experience, interest, and commitment to the importance of infant immunization.

These tips can help you prepare your spokespeople to present a confident and compelling speech.

**Content.** Share information about yourself up front. This personalizes you to the audience and makes listeners feel that they can relate to you. This also is the opportunity to share your own experiences with infant immunization initiatives.

**Eye Contact.** The only way you will know if your audience is getting the message is through eye contact. Look for eyes and heads nodding with you.

**Facial Expressions.** Your facial expressions can tell the story of how much you care about the issues you are talking about. Allow your passion for the issue to show.

**Gestures.** Some of what people retain from speeches is through body language. Gestures reinforce and highlight your story and give you energy in your delivery. There is positive and negative body language. Don't hunch over, cross your arms or look away from the audience.

**Voice.** Try not to speak in a monotone. Avoid "language helpers" such as "ums," "ahs," and "you knows." Never try to camouflage a regional dialect. All you have to do is tell people where you are from and they will expect you to sound the way you do.

**Pauses/Silence.** There are four good times to pause: when you move from one subject to another, when you want the message to sink in, when you want or need to collect your thoughts, and when you receive laughter or applause.

**Avoid Distractions.** Do not fiddle with your hair, shuffle your feet, sway back and forth, jingle change in your pockets, play with your eyeglasses, or otherwise do something that will take away from what you are saying.

**Practice.** Practice, practice, practice. If possible, spend time alone just prior to your speech; take some deep breaths and think about your central theme.

**Being Nervous Is Normal.** Try and "reframe" your fear into excitement and enthusiasm. Remember that you are the expert and people have come to hear you talk about what you know.

**Is Your Presentation Culturally Competent?** When presenting to audiences from different cultural backgrounds, use the following tips from the [National Center for Cultural Competence at Georgetown University](#).

- Consult with people from the community about customs and taboos in speaking and presenting. Do not assume anything about practices and customs. Is it acceptable to look a person in the eye when they are speaking? Is it considered rude to shake hands before someone else introduces you?
- Consider asking someone from that community who can effectively deliver your message to co-present or conduct the entire presentation.
- Think about your message. Is it crafted in a way that is relevant (and not offensive or condescending) to your audience?
- Be open to suggestions, and be willing to adapt and modify your message and presentation style to your audience.

If you have to use an interpreter, keep these points in mind.

- Talk directly to the audience and not the interpreter. Give the presentation as if they speak your language, and try to connect with them.
- Do not use clichés or jargon that might confuse the interpreter or may not be translatable.
- Jokes are seldom funny when translated, and they may be culturally offensive.
- Give the interpreter as much information ahead of time as possible. If you have a copy of the speech, share it even if you know you won't follow it to the letter.
- Notice the pace and manner of the interpreter. Practice with the individual if possible. Try to adjust your speech to that pace.
- If you want to put in a few words or phrases in the audience's language, make sure you can pronounce them properly, that you are saying what you mean to say, and that the interpreter knows what you are trying to say beforehand.

## Appendix G: Additional Resources

- CDC's National Infant Immunization Week website: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niiw/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niiw/index.html)
- CDC vaccine website for parents: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents)
- CDC vaccine website for partners: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/partners](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/partners)
- Vaccine Coverage Estimates: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vaxview/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vaxview/index.html)
- Immunization Schedules for Infants and Children: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/easy-to-read/child.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/easy-to-read/child.html)
- CDC Public Health Image Library: [phil.cdc.gov/phil/quicksearch.asp](http://phil.cdc.gov/phil/quicksearch.asp)