

Using Facebook as an Advocacy Tool

Facebook has 1.65 billion monthly users and is an excellent opportunity to motivate your own network to take action on public health issues. Here are some general tips for crafting effective Facebook posts and sample posts on APHA's 2016 PHACT campaign priorities that you can customize.

GENERAL FACEBOOK TIPS:

- Use photos and links in your posts as much as possible – this will capture people's attention more than plain bodies of text.
- If you plan to write your own post, remember that the content of the post is more important than achieving a certain post length. Some Facebook posts are one sentence long, while others are 3-4 sentences. Think about your Facebook network and what will work best for your unique set of followers.
- When crafting a post, you want to be sure to have an “ask” of those reading your post. Providing information is helpful, but try to leave people with something they can act on immediately. One of the best ways to do this is through an action alert to Congress. The sample posts below include action alerts as their “ask.”
- When posting a link such as a link to an action alert, you can take some easy steps to format your post in an attention-grabbing way that will encourage people to read it and take action:
 - Paste your link into your Facebook status box – hit space to see the preview.
 - Once the link has loaded, you can delete it and add the text you would like to include to direct your network to click the link you have provided.
- When mentioning another agency, organization or group in your post, you can “tag” them in your post so that your network can learn more about the organization you tagged. Doing this is easy:
 - Type “@” followed by the complete name of the organization you wish to tag.
 - Once you type “@” followed by the first few letters of the organization, a drop-down list will appear according to the Facebook pages that exist for the letters you have typed.
 - For example: “@Centers for Disease Control (CDC)”.
 - If the organization is highlighted in blue, you have been successful in tagging!

SAMPLE FACEBOOK POSTS:

Public Health Funding

Include this link in your post:

<https://secure3.convio.net/apha/site/Advocacy?cmd = display&page = UserAction&id = 1249>

Long post: Funding for the public health system is critical to Americans' health and results in millions of lives saved, especially through the work of the @Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the @Health Resources and Services Administration. The future of our nation's health depends on a strong and well-equipped public health infrastructure. Tell Congress to make our nation's health a priority!

Short post: Act now to make our nation's health a priority – tell your members of Congress to fund public health!

TELL CONGRESS:
"PRIORITIZE
PUBLIC HEALTH
FUNDING!"

Prevention and Public Health Fund

Include this link in your post:

<https://secure3.convio.net/apha/site/Advocacy?cmd = display&page = UserAction&id = 1095>

Long post: Since 2010, the Prevention and Public Health Fund has made national investments in health to improve quality of life and health outcomes. So far, the fund has invested in a wide range of evidence-based programs, including community and clinical prevention initiatives, public health research and tracking, immunizations and screenings. These programs have all been indispensable to creating healthier communities. However, the Prevention and Public Health Fund is constantly at risk for funding cuts. Tell your members of Congress to protect the fund!

Short post: The Prevention and Public Health Fund is at work in our states and our communities and must be protected. Tell your members of Congress now!

TELL CONGRESS:
"PROTECT THE
PREVENTION AND
PUBLIC HEALTH
FUND!"

Climate Change and Health

Include this link in your post:

<https://secure3.convio.net/apha/site/Advocacy?cmd = display&page = UserAction&id = 1065>

Long post: Climate change threatens human health and well-being in many ways, through increased extreme weather events, wildfire, decreased air quality, threats to mental health, increased risk of cancer and illnesses transmitted by food, water and disease from carriers such as mosquitoes and ticks. The sooner we take action to reduce heat-trapping carbon pollution that is contributing to climate change, the sooner we can improve our nation's health now and for future generations. Send this important message to your members of Congress today!

Short post: Climate change is an urgent public health issue. Tell your members of Congress to act now!

TELL CONGRESS:
"CLIMATE CHANGE
NEGATIVELY
IMPACTS HEALTH!"

Child Nutrition Reauthorization

Include this link in your post:

<https://secure3.convio.net/apha/site/Advocacy?cmd = display&page = UserAction&id = 1197>

Long post: Nutritious school meals are extremely important for empowering kids to learn, especially the most vulnerable. During the school day, as our kids learn the skills that lay the foundation for later learning and success, it is also important that they learn healthy eating behaviors. However, currently our child nutrition programs are up for reauthorization and the bill under consideration in the House would significantly weaken nutrition standards for school meals and reduce participation in the program. Tell your members of Congress to reject all efforts to weaken school meal standards!

Short post: Urge your members of Congress to protect child nutrition programs. Send them a message today!

**TELL CONGRESS:
“PROTECT CHILD
NUTRITION
PROGRAMS!”**

Gun Violence Prevention

Include this link in your post:

<https://secure3.convio.net/apha/site/Advocacy?cmd = display&page = UserAction&id = 1205>

Long post: Each year, 33,000 people in the United States die as a result of gun violence, and almost 85,000 more suffer non-fatal gun injuries. To enhance America’s public health response to this epidemic, we need better surveillance, more research and other common-sense measures to reduce gun violence. In order to prevent gun violence, it is critical that Congress take action. Tell your own members of Congress that gun violence is preventable through a comprehensive public health approach!

Short post: Action on gun violence prevention is long overdue. Send a message to your members of Congress today!

**TELL CONGRESS:
“ACT TO PREVENT
GUN VIOLENCE!”**



The American Public Health Association champions the health of all people and all communities. We strengthen the profession of public health, promote best practices and share the latest public health research and information. We are the only organization that influences federal policy, has a 140-plus year perspective and brings together members from all fields of public health. Learn more at www.apha.org.

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