



Effective Organizational Communication During the COVID-19 Crisis

TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2020

12:30-2:00 PM, ET

- I: Welcome and Overview of Agenda
- II: Communications in Context of COVID-19
- III: America Forward Comms Look Ahead
- VII: Questions & Answers
- VIII: Closing & Next Steps

Presenters

- **Nithya Joseph, America Forward**
- **Alex Goldstein, 90 West**
- **Harry Shipps, 90 West**
- **Sam Hiersteiner, New Profit**



ADVOCACY INSTITUTE

Equipping social entrepreneurs to become better, bolder advocates.

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[Crisis] Persuasion Trio

MESSAGE

AUDIENCE

VEHICLE

COVID-19 Anticipated Narrative Phases

Big picture: The Only Story in Town

Phase 1: Immediate crisis response

Phase 2: Are things getting better or worse?

Phase 3: Assessing impact & damage

Phase 4: Lessons learned for the day after

Stakeholder communication and advocacy

Thought leadership opportunities for America Forward and Coalition organizations

Pillars of Crisis Communications

- Trust and credibility are precious: hard to build but easy to lose. Starts with accuracy and voice.
- Consistency in timing and context across channels.
- Over-communicating is GOOD in a crisis. Don't go dark.

Pillars of Crisis Communications (cont.)

- Comms should start centrally organized with authorized voices and protocols for sign off and release.
- When things go wrong, take responsibility!
- Create channels for feedback and concern.

Pillars of Crisis Communications (cont.)

- Be wary of comms that could be construed as opportunistic or exploitative.
- Start scenario planning NOW. Protocols and collateral for best and worst case.
- Be aware of reporter constraints and only approach with relevant angles.

Communications Content in Context of COVID-19

Urgent content that serves immediate public health needs relative to COVID-19

Evergreen content that serves the public good relative to COVID-19

Content that connects the issues your org is focused on to COVID-19

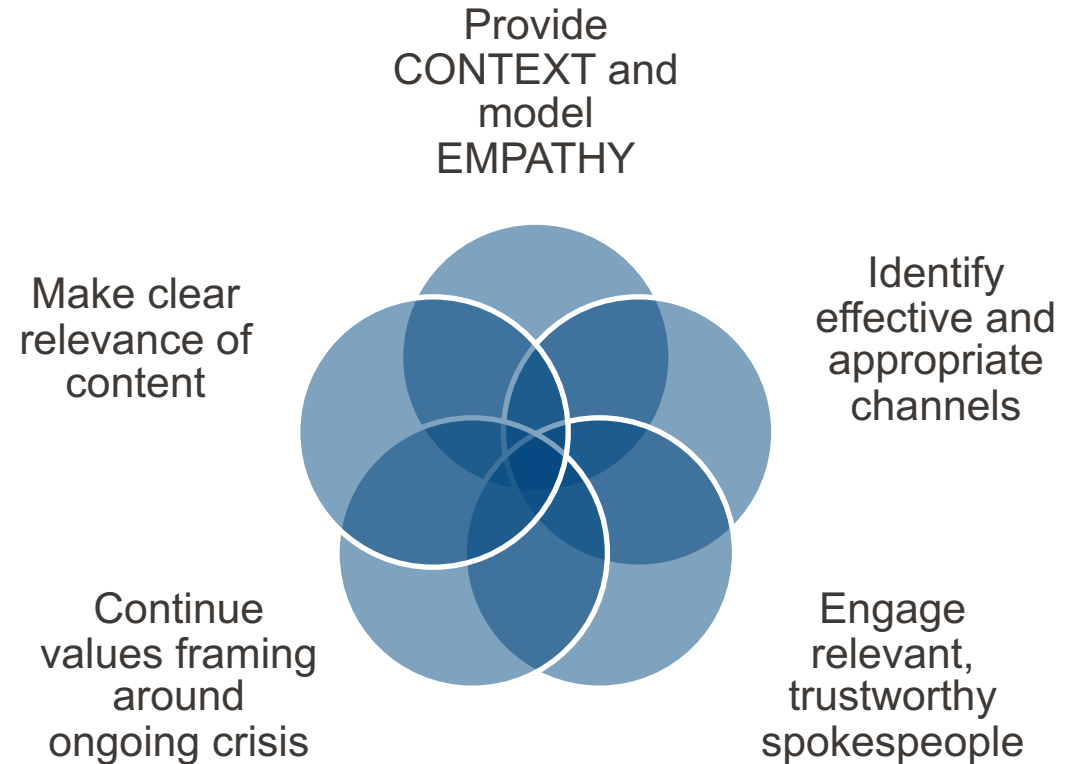
Content about the issues your org is focused on, unrelated to COVID-19

Advancing Key Comms Priorities

Clear, consistent, credible response to public health or economic crisis

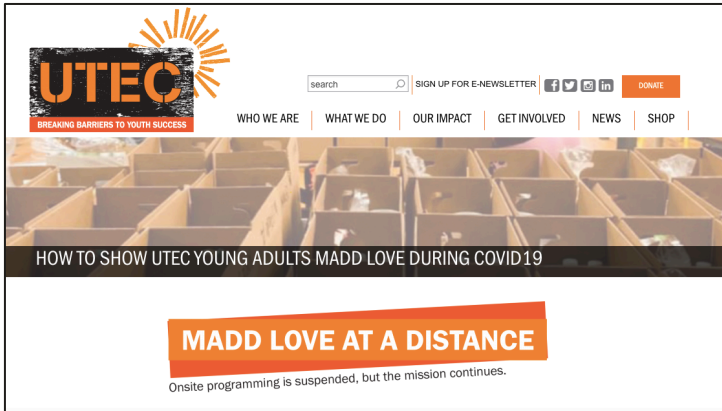


Advancing key organizational messages, programming, and policy



Examples of Best Practices

UTEC



PROGRAM IMPLICATIONS

Young Adult Wages: UTEC is committed to continuing to pay young adults' stipends throughout the duration of suspended programming, along with adjusting and amplifying our supports.

Regular Food Delivery: Boxes of groceries, prepared meals, cleaning supplies, and materials for YA children (diapers, wipes and activity packets) are delivered multiple times a week.

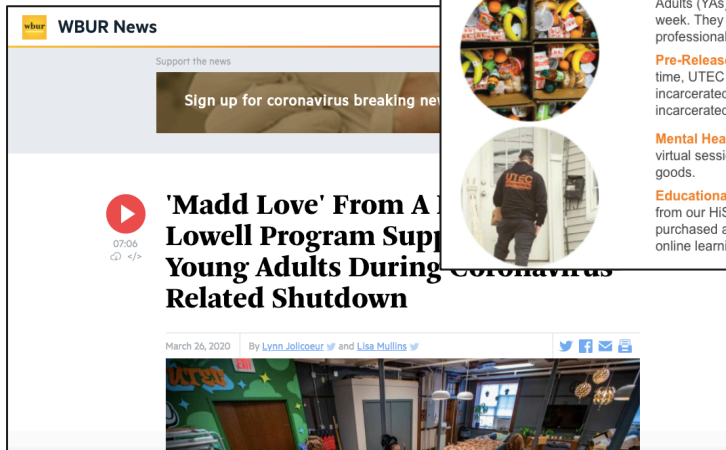
Targeted Gang Outreach and Crisis Intervention: Streetworkers have been instrumental to gathering and distributing these materials and are using the opportunity to provide material goods during a time of need as an avenue to connecting with gang members in the communities we serve. Streetworkers are also still providing critical gang intervention services for any conflicts on the streets.

Transitional Coaching (TC) Support: TCs are continuing to contact and support all Young Adults (YAs) daily and have the goal of a virtual face-to-face contact no less than two times a week. They ensure YAs have the resources they need to work towards their personal and professional goals during this time, including parenting tools.

Pre-Release Services in Correctional Facilities: Because jails are not allowing visitors at this time, UTEC is working to enable Streetworkers and TCs to maintain regular contact with incarcerated YAs and their families via calls and letters. We are also supporting families of incarcerated YAs with material deliveries.

Mental Health Services: Our Mental Health Counselor is available daily to all YAs (and staff) for virtual sessions via video chat and has been on the streets helping to deliver boxes of material goods.

Educational and Workforce Development Training: UTEC's Chromebooks have been taken from our HiSet classroom and distributed to YAs's homes. Additional Chromebooks have been purchased and will be set up and are being distributed to YAs so that they can work on HiSet, online learning opportunities and workforce certifications.



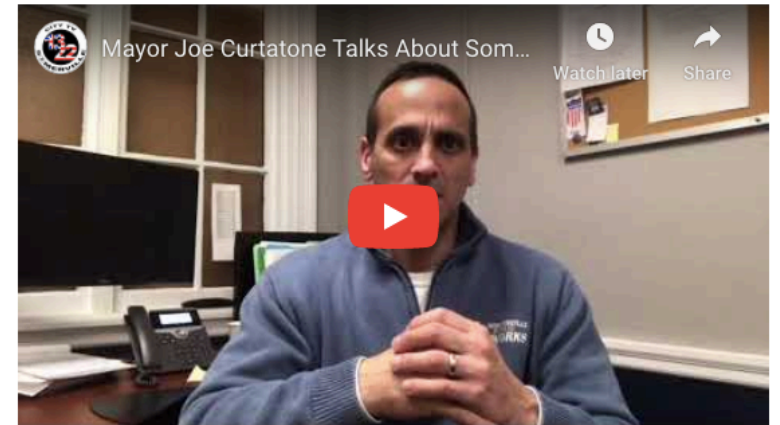
Somerville Public Schools

UPDATES FROM SOMERVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SPS students and families in need can pick up breakfast and lunch meals Mondays through Fridays, 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. at the East Somerville Community School, Winter Hill Community Innovation School, West Somerville Neighborhood School, and the Healey School. No ID required, and one person can pick up for multiple members of the family. If you are showing symptoms of illness, please make alternate arrangements for pickup of your meal.

Visit www.somerville.k12.ma.us/home-learning for a list of high quality, age-appropriate, accessible grade-level resources to provide continuity of learning and help students stay engaged and connected during this extended school closure.

- April 3, 2020: District Update - Additional resources [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Portuguese](#)
- April 2, 2020: Letter from Special Education Department [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Portuguese](#), [Haitian Creole](#)
- April 2, 2020: Special Education FAQ from Department of Elementary and Secondary Education [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Portuguese](#), [Haitian Creole](#)
- April 1, 2020: District Update - SPS Remote Learning Plan, Q3 grading [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Portuguese](#)
- March 30, 2020: District Update - DESE Guidance, AP Exams, Instrument Rentals [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Portuguese](#)
- March 30, 2020: Letter to Families about Remote Learning, from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) [English](#), [Spanish](#)
- March 27, 2020: District Update - What to expect next week, and highlights of efforts in our district and community [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Portuguese](#)
- March 25, 2020: District Update - Gov. Baker Extends School Closure Period through early May [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Portuguese](#), [Haitian Creole](#)
- March 23, 2020: District Update - Additional Home Learning Resources and Reminders [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Portuguese](#)
- March 22, 2020: District Update - Reminder about Resources and Services as we enter 2nd week of extended school closure [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Portuguese](#)
- March 20, 2020: District Update - Reminder about Resources for Families and Staff [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Portuguese](#)



Video: Mayor Joe Curtatone Talks About Somerville's First Coronavirus Death

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America Forward Comms Look-Ahead

- America Forward will be a hub for information on social media, please engage with us
- Critical policy issues must be raised by all of us, to keep our sector's voice in the center and hold policymakers accountable (connect w/ your comms teams)
- Send us notes directly at america_forward@newprofit.org if you have work/resources/other info that can provide value through social media to our coalition and the sector
- Today at 2pm ET: Chronicle of Philanthropy Webinar on Nonprofits and COVID Relief Legislation (incl. SBA Loan Programs) w/ Lee Foley, America Forward, Sr. Advisor

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Engagement & Outreach

- Weekly federal updates from America Forward on federal legislative activity and support in light of COVID-19
- America Forward Coalition Facebook Group:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/AmericaForwardCoalition>
- Additional America Forward Webinars, Office Hours and Newsletters
- **Next Advocacy Institute webinar: April 29, 2-3 pm EST, Advocacy in Times of Crisis**
- Amplifying your projects, solutions, and ideas with one another, our network, and candidates & policymakers





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