

Radio PSA Guidelines and Templates

Providing radio stations in your community with live-read scripts is a great way to raise public awareness of National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day and children's mental health in general. On the following page are example 60-, 30-, and 15-second PSA scripts for you to send to local radio stations.

Awareness Day Scripts

The following Awareness Day scripts are examples you can tailor to your program's activities. They are based on a fairly simple formula that will appeal to public service directors:

- Start by explaining the issue and how it affects your local community.
- Describe how your program addresses the issue.
- Promote the special activities taking place on Awareness Day, May 8.
- Repeat the date and location of the event. Because people are usually doing something else while they are listening to the radio (driving, for example), they might miss the information the first time. So it is always a good idea to repeat it if time permits, as it does in the 60-second version.
- Include the phone number for listeners who might not be able to attend the event but may want to contact your program later.

Depending on the type of activity you plan for your program, you might want to structure the PSA entirely differently. If you plan a fundraising walk for children with mental health needs, for example, you might want to open the PSA with that information. You might even ask the radio station to help you write the PSA. If you write your own, here are some points to keep in mind:

- Radio PSAs, like radio commercials, are available in blocks of time. The preferred lengths are 60 seconds, 30 seconds, 15 seconds, and 10 seconds.
- Radio announcers usually read at a rate of 2½ to 3 words per second. That means a 60-second PSA should contain 150–180 words, a 30-second PSA should contain 75–90 words, and a 15-second PSA should contain 38–45 words. To get a good idea of whether the PSA will fit into the allotted time, read it out loud at an even, deliberate pace, and time it with a stop watch or the second hand on your watch.
- Keep it simple. Avoid the temptation to include too much information. Because people typically retain only a portion of what they hear, it is a good idea to repeat important information, such as the date, type of activity, and location.

Example 60-Second National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day Script

You might know a young person with a serious mental health need—an honor roll student, a star athlete, or a talented artist—and not even know it. On May 8, you can learn about how these young people are thriving in **[NAME OF TOWN, CITY, OR STATE]**—and the systems and supports that help them. On May 8, **[NAME OF YOUR PROGRAM]** will sponsor National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day: Thriving in the Community. It will showcase the strengths of our young people in **[NAME OF TOWN, CITY, OR STATE]**, as well as the work of **[AWARENESS DAY PARTNERS]** who provide services and supports to these young people and their families. Join us at **[TIME]** on May 8, at **[LOCATION]**. Call **[TELEPHONE NUMBER]** or visit **[WEB SITE]**. A public service of this radio station.

Example 30-Second National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day Script

You may know young people with mental health needs and not realize it. In fact, some of **[TOWN'S, CITY'S, OR STATE'S]** most talented children and youth are supported by vital local programs. Join us on May 8 when **[NAME OF YOUR PROGRAM]** sponsors National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day: Thriving in the Community. Learn about programs that help young people with mental health needs thrive. Call **[TELEPHONE NUMBER]**. Visit **[WEB SITE]**. A public service of this radio station.

Example 15-Second National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day Script

On May 8, see how **[NAME OF YOUR PROGRAM]** helps young people with mental health needs. Join us for National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day at **[LOCATION]**. Call **[TELEPHONE NUMBER]** or visit **[WEB SITE]** for details. A public service of this radio station.