



TELEVISION

The Road Map Project, a cradle-to-college-and-career initiative in South Seattle and South King County, Washington, has successfully coordinated public access PSAs with mayors and a library director as part of the Let's Read summer reading campaign. Kristin Johnson, communications manager for the project's backbone group, explains the process:

- **Do some research:** Many communities have a public access station available to individuals and organizations. In some cities, the county or school district may also have designated channels. Poke around online or place some calls to partners of the channel to find out more information: Where does the channel's content come from? Who runs it? Do it accept PSAs? Do it have studio facilities? Often a facility will serve as a hub for several public access stations in a region. This facility has a studio and editing equipment. This can be far cheaper than approaching a TV news station.
- **Identify the talent:** Decide who you want to speak for your spot. It can be the mayor, superintendent or a local celebrity. Work with them or their assistants to schedule studio time. Think about where to shoot the PSA. It can be outside the studio, though the studio may charge you more.
- **Prepare your script:** Television scripts are very different from other forms of communications. After you write the script, seek feedback from people in the office. Read the script aloud many times to make sure it's conversational, understandable and engaging. Send the script to the speaker at least a week in advance of the shoot, so he or she could look it over. It's important that your "star" be comfortable with the script, even if he/she is reading from a teleprompter.
- **Think of visuals:** Most television PSAs include some type of graphic, whether it's someone's name and title or a logo. You'll probably need to supply this to the studio ahead of your shoot. A designer (or someone with a design program) can help you make sure these images meet the specifications provided by the studio.
- **Share the results:** It took about a week for each of the PSAs to be edited and distributed to the appropriate public access channel in the region. After the video is ready, make sure to post them on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Share the finished product with everyone involved in the effort so they can post to city or school websites.

Aim big! A PSA is a positive way for elected officials, community leaders, teachers and others to step into the public eye. Don't shy away from asking people to participate/support your efforts.