Corporation for Supportive Housing

Final Presentation
May 30, 2024

Agenda

I. Project Objectives and Deliverables

II. Deliverable 1: Communications Strategy

III. Deliverable 2: Best Practices to combat NIMBY

IV. Deliverable 3: RFP Request for Proposals

V. Discussion

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Supportive Housing North Star

We seek to create conditions in communities that enable all residents–especially those with low incomes and those facing complex challenges–to live with stability, autonomy and dignity.

We are focused on identifying key messaging issues that encourage communities throughout Pennsylvania to support the supportive housing policies needed for members of their communities.

Our Objectives and Deliverables

Objectives

1. High level strategic guidance on marketing and communications to help educate the general public.

1. Social media-friendly messaging toolkit for housing developers, nonprofits, and local champions of supportive housing throughout Pennsylvania, in order to garner increased support of "Yes In My Backyard" for supportive housing.

Deliverables

1. Recommendations for key marketing messages and strategies.

2. Summary of Best Practices to combat NIMBY and support YIMBY.

3. RFP for Corporation for Supportive Housing's to use to engage an advertising firm or other consultants.

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Understanding the Core Challenges

What are we up against? Misinformation & Bias.

- The public often views homeless individuals as "criminal drug addicts" and fails to see them as people deserving of help

- Public misconceptions and failures in implementation undermine support

- Nonprofit marketing often emphasizes the benefits of housing for homeless individuals without addressing community benefits, creating public resistance

- Success stories often fail to resonate because they do not reflect the ongoing struggles and complexities of homelessness

- Arguments about cost savings through Supportive Housing are often dismissed by the public, who prefer immediate, albeit more expensive, solutions like increased policing

- The public feels alienated by messaging that seems out of touch with their own experiences and perceptions.

The Availability Heuristic

What we hear from our friends and the news.

What actually happens in the world
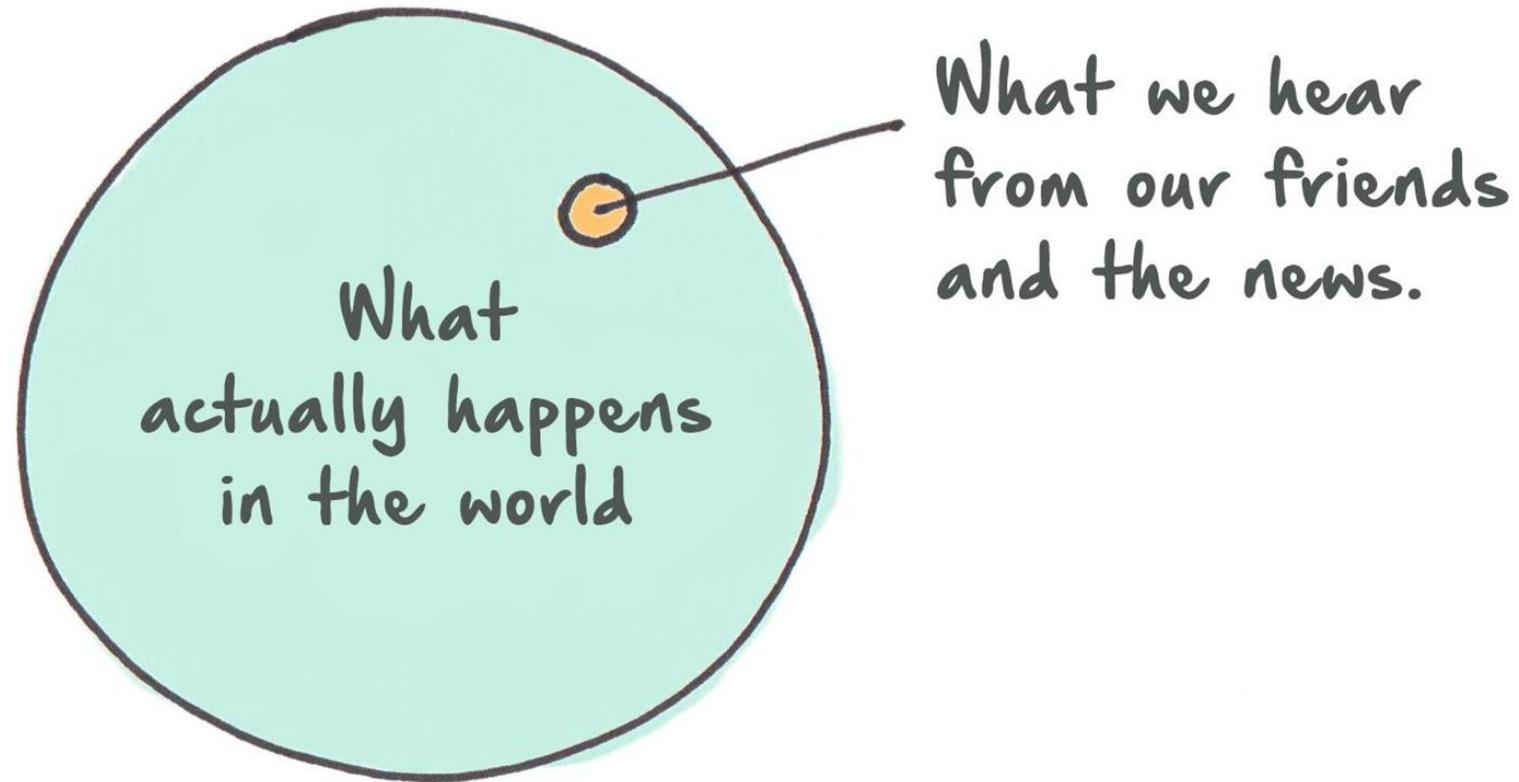
Changing Perspective is Key

- **Choose benefits-based messaging over values-based messaging**
  - Nonprofit marketing often emphasizes the benefits of housing for homeless individuals without addressing community benefits, creating public resistance.
  - Shift the narrative to **show how Supportive Housing benefits the community and reduces visible homelessness**, rather than solely focusing on the empathetic angle.
  - Develop marketing campaigns that **highlight how Supportive Housing improves community safety, reduces costs, and enhances the quality of life for all residents**.
  - Emphasizing the effectiveness of combining housing with treatment can address public concerns about addiction and crime among homeless populations.

> If your issue is you don't want to see people shooting drugs you need to support housing to get them inside. Treatment works when it's attached to housing.

Changing Perspective is Key

- **The public feels alienated by messaging that seems out of touch with their own experiences and perceptions**
  - Engage with the community through authentic, transparent communication that acknowledges their concerns and demonstrates real-life benefits and success stories in a relatable way.

  - Avoiding overly optimistic or simplistic messages about ending homelessness and instead focusing on the complexities and ongoing challenges can build credibility.

  - Target the "moveable middle"–the indifferent segment of the public–with education campaigns about the realities of homelessness and the effectiveness of supportive housing.

73%

BELIEVE HOMELESSNESS INCREASED IN THEIR COMMUNITY THIS YEAR

67%

SAY THE PANDEMIC HAS MADE THE NEED TO HOUSE HOMELESS PEOPLE MORE URGENT

Changing Perspective is Key

- **Reframe economic arguments to highlight the inefficiencies and high costs of current approaches, and compare these with the long-term savings and benefits of Supportive Housing**

- Success stories often fail to resonate because they do not reflect the ongoing struggles and complexities of homelessness.

  - Share more authentic and nuanced stories, including ongoing challenges, to build trust and demonstrate realistic outcomes. For example, acknowledging that some individuals may continue to struggle with issues like addiction even after being housed.

The current messaging is 'Homelessness is getting worse. This is just a drop in the bucket but we have solved homelessness for 40 people. So we have to do more of this. We need your help.'

Changing Perspective is Key

- **Restructure and rethink what community conversations around housing development should look like.**

  - **Inclusive Public Engagement:** Redesign public participation processes to be more inclusive and representative, such as holding meetings at various times, offering childcare, and actively reaching out to communities that are most impacted.

  - **Promote Proximity:** Encourage opportunities for the public to interact with and understand the lives of people experiencing homelessness to build empathy and reduce stigma.

75% SUPPORT EXPANDING PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

82% SUPPORT EXPANDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

"**Those three months without a home set me back three years.** It took me three years to recover. Meanwhile, I even have a college education. I graduated from Hofstra with a degree in accounting and a minor in English. I was working at the time. I had transportation, but it was just an argument at home, and I had to leave. That can set somebody back for a long time."

Communication Strategies

4. Engage with Media and Community Groups
- Including social media presence, blogs, podcasts, press releases, op-eds, editorial board meetings
- One-on-one and group meetings with stakeholders
- *"I think you've got to do social media. You've got to do TV …Why not Billboards that show someone in a wheelchair or show obviously someone with a disability saying, this is your brother. This is your daughter. This is your uncle and they deserve, a decent place to live and a good house and not a nursing home."*

3. Choose Words Wisely
- Use wording to evoke positive response: e.g., wording that personalizes the issue ("Housing is a human need"); emphasize collective "solving" of (vs. "ending") the problem to encourage collective response
- Identify long standing, rather than individual causes of homelessness (income inequality (vs. personal poverty)
- One interviewee stated that messaging should focus on how housing that is being proposed will *help*

Communication Feedback Loop
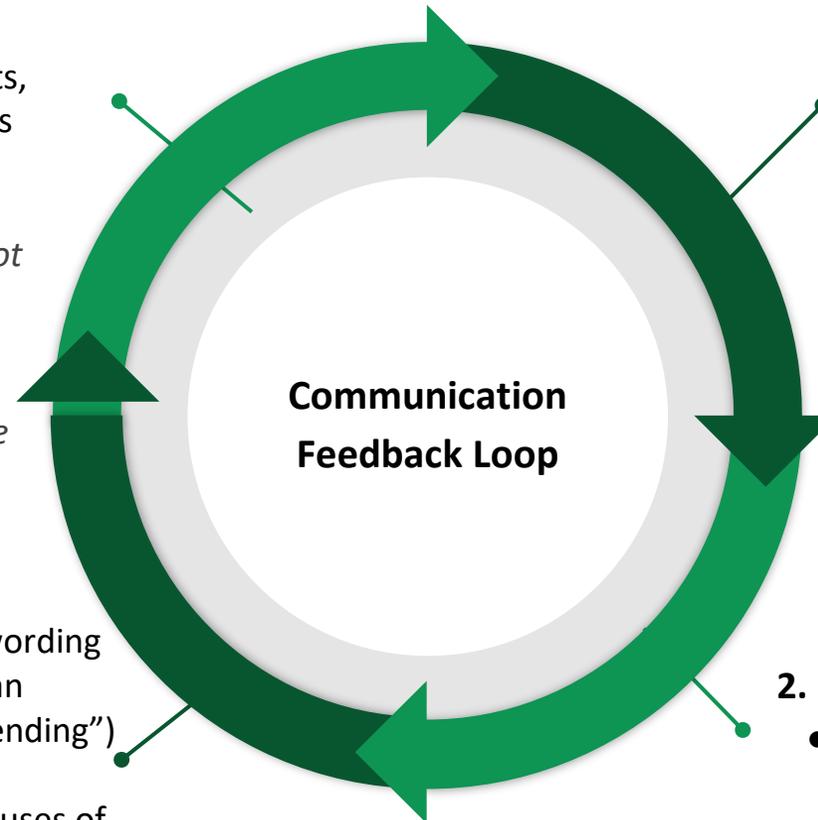
1. Framing is Critical
- Shift the narrative from fault-based scenarios of homelessness
- Aim to change mindsets about who becomes homeless and why.
- Employ various formats (personal stories, statistics) to target various audiences.

2. Mind Your Messaging Format
- Keep messages short and concise; lead with positive information you want the public to retain:
  - Ex. "We all have a role to play in providing homes for everyone."

Emerging Communications Strategies

Key factors in crafting effective narrative and talking points

Emphasize root causes of homelessness
- Focus on the lived experience of people experiencing housing instability – move away from stereotypes, they are 'real people' like everyone else
  - *One interviewee believed that once he was able to create a personal connection…he was better able to move the conversations to specifics (e.g., "What can we do to help Darryl?", "How will this help Darryl?"…).*

Create unity of purpose – shared goals to solve the problem
  - *"When you have Supportive Housing, it means you're keeping a community intact. You're keeping families, family networks and friend networks intact. You're keeping people off the street. You're keeping them out of nursing home environments - places that are way more expensive, than Supportive Housing."*

Focus on solutions – homeless housing plus supportive services yield quality communities

**Emphasize the role individuals can play** in solving homelessness in **their** towns

Supportive Housing Supports Your Neighbors

People experiencing homelessness/ chronic homelessness

People with chronic mental health challenges and/ or substance use disorders

Families involved in child welfare

People impacted by the carceral system

People who need frequent emergency services

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Older Adults

Transition age youth (TAY)

Veterans

People with chronic health conditions

Survivors of Domestic Violence

Emerging Communications Strategies

Key factors to consider in crafting effective narrative/talking points in an overall communications strategy:
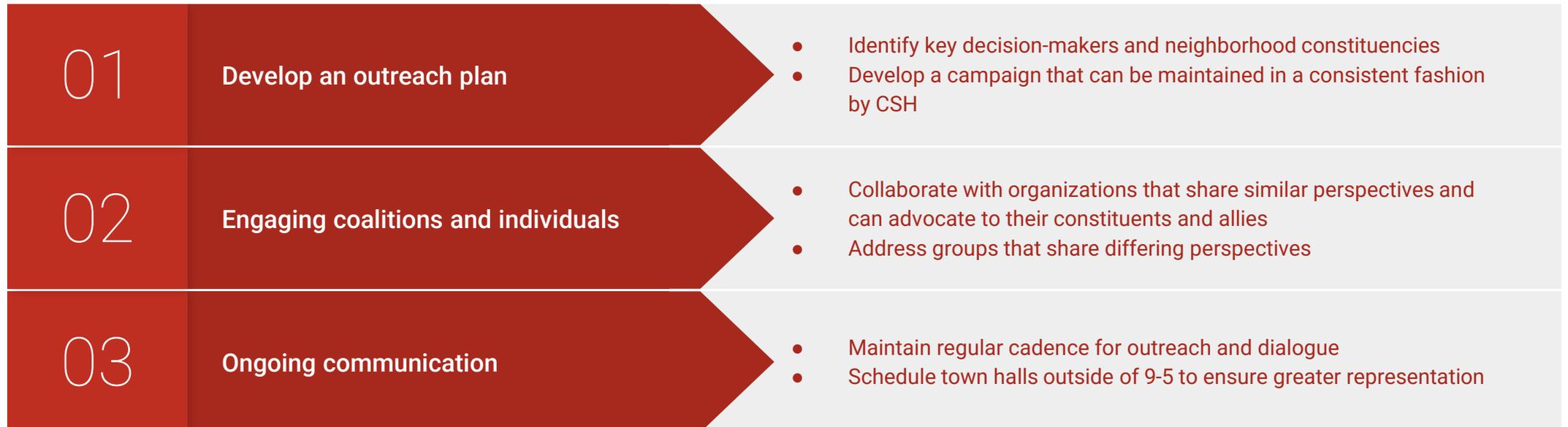
- Connect housing to other issues (jobs, education, healthcare)
- Acknowledge the role of historic injustices
  - "Single family homeowners that are disproportionately white" are the ones who are able to show up to public meetings discussing subjects like supportive housing, one interviewee claims
- Counter false narratives (fault-based, personal responsibility, false data)
  - *"We had to actually sit with PHFA staff seven years ago and describe what intellectual disability is and what autism is and why it doesn't mean someone who's violent."*
- Counter old narratives (e.g. avoid referring to "supportive" or "affordable" housing, instead call it "homes for everyone")
- Provide a clear call to action
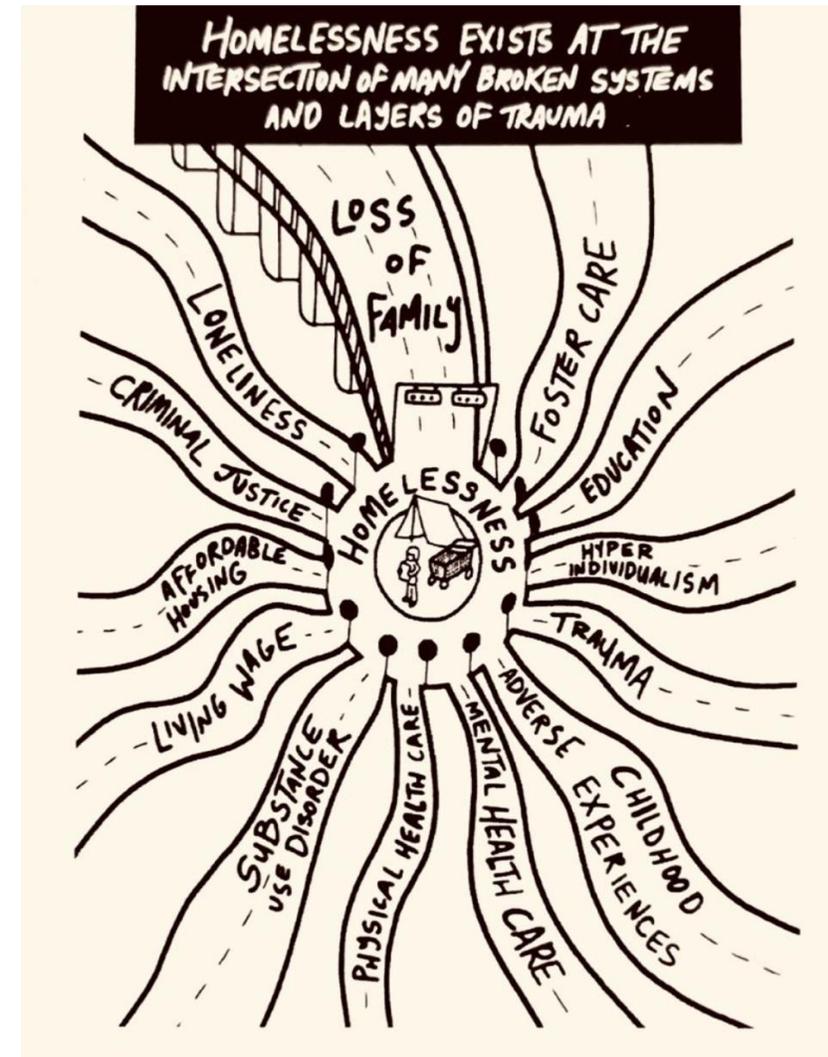
Best Practices for Combatting NIMBYism

Framing the Delivery

- To deliver the best message, a successful outreach strategy must have a core structure.
- External interviews conducted by PennPAC confirm that CSH is already engaging in best practices in strategy and execution.
- Consistency and continued effort will be keys to long-term success to combat NIMBY.

| 01	Develop an outreach plan	- Identify key decision-makers and neighborhood constituencies - Develop a campaign that can be maintained in a consistent fashion by CSH
02	Engaging coalitions and individuals	- Collaborate with organizations that share similar perspectives and can advocate to their constituents and allies - Address groups that share differing perspectives
03	Ongoing communication	- Maintain regular cadence for outreach and dialogue - Schedule town halls outside of 9-5 to ensure greater representation

Components of an Effective Narrative

- Address the biases of individuals / organizations
- Re-contextualize / re-frame concerns in ways that show understanding and willingness to listen
- Discuss the effects on property values (keep gentrification in mind)
- Use data strategically as a component of your narrative
- Make meaningful connections to those who need supportive housing, and to those who oppose
- Provide explanations when results aren't perceived as "instant" or immediate
- Images / videos / pictures / memes as important as words / narrative / stories. The best messaging syncs both words and images.
- A picture is worth a thousand words

Property Value Concerns

- "My home is the primary source of my household wealth … I want to protect that wealth in any way I can"

In this figure, the dotted line represents what we estimate would have happened to the prices of nearby properties had there been no new supportive housing development; the solid purple line represents the results of our analysis, which show steady growth in the value of nearby properties.
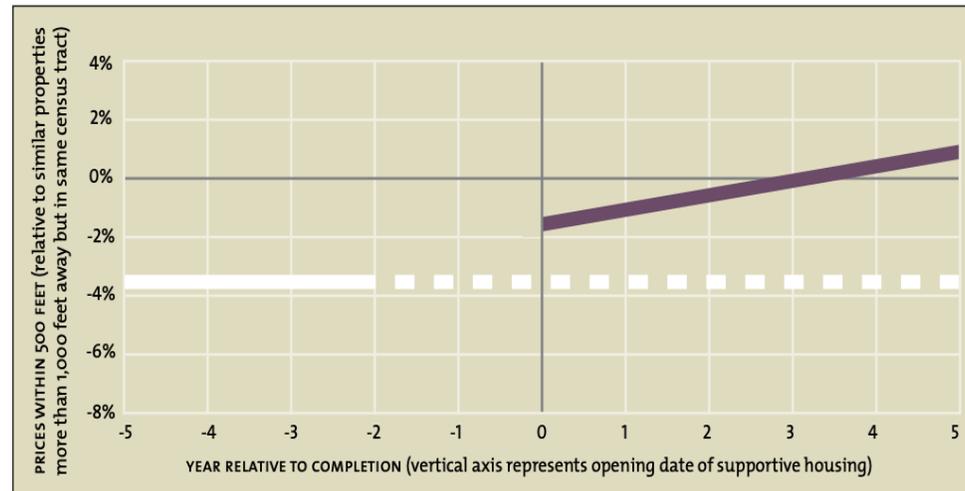
Been, V., Ellen, I. G., Gedal, M., Voicu, I., & Armstrong, A. (2007). The impact of supportive housing on surrounding neighborhoods.

See Project Resource List for Citation

- "You think that building more housing is going to help and in fact, it's going to exacerbate problems that we've had before, … I understand those concerns because there can be localized price effects of building more housing … and can produce displacement"
- One interviewee believes that property values go up regardless of these new developments

Incorporating Data

- Lead with emotionally resonant story-telling, and leveraging data as backup for potential rebuttals.
- Although NIMBYism is not geographically constrained, emphasize local aspects to foster greater community support and engagement.
- Data is a key part of the narrative but should not be the primary focus of messaging.
- One interviewee argues that references to data (e.g., cost savings or other calculable public benefits) will "get you in the door" but do not (generally) move the needle to stimulate action.
- Another interviewee believes that there is a group of people for whom data is a primary influence factor.
- However most people care more about their own personal interactions.
- A separate interviewee suggests that while data may be effective, personal stories tend to "soften up" members of the legislature more.

Words and Phrases

Request for Proposal

Request for Proposal

SCOPE OF WORK

A "Social Media Toolkit" to address negative perception of homelessness,
and to increase awareness of proven strategies to solve homelessness.

MULTI-MEDIA "TOOL KIT" FOR DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- Create, plan, and execute paid social and digital marketing campaigns
- Recommend campaign and ad spend based on real-time performance
- Create, plan, and execute influencer marketing campaigns
- Ability to report on paid social media performance
- Ability to message test and conduct focus group research

Sample Toolkit

Key Talking Points

Join the Movement

Contact Your Representatives
   Email Your Representatives
   Call Your Representatives

Join the Social Media Campaign

Tell Your Story

Share the Movement
   Email Your Network
   Text Your Network
   Tell Your Network on Social Media

Our Coalition Partners

Find Your Representatives
   State Senate
   State Assembly

Additional Resources
   Supportive Housing Resources
   Communication Tools
   Policy Resources

Frequently Asked Questions
   Joining the Movement
   Contacting Your Representative
   Joining the Social Media Campaign
   Telling Your Story
   Sharing the Movement
   Coalition Partners

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Request for Proposal

SCOPE OF WORK 2

GENERAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

- Create, plan, and execute integrated advertising campaigns designed to reach diverse demographics, based on Applicant's own market and competitive insights and analytics
- Create, plan and execute television and other video/content marketing campaigns
- Ability to report on campaign performance and analysis
- Ability to message test and conduct focus group research

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SCOPE OF WORK 3

MAINSTREAM MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

- Create strategy to leverage print and broadcast media outlets via e.g., op-eds and press releases, using positive story content
- Negotiate buys with agreed-upon omni-channel media, including securing value-added opportunities whenever possible, within the CSH budget
- Work within CSH delineated specifications and requirements

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Questions and Discussion

Thank you!