



March of Dimes Community Advocate Council *Influencer Outreach Toolkit*

OVERVIEW

March of Dimes Community Advocates are celebrities and influencers with a connection to your local market who are using their platforms to advocate for research, programs, and education so that every baby can have the best possible start.

The program is an opportunity for the local markets to formally engage with the celebrities and influencers who already shine a spotlight on your critical work as a way to help amplify your work together. While March of Dimes is providing this framework, this is your program to own and leverage to help increase the visibility of your work.

The following toolkit is meant to help you formalize these relationships. It includes outreach language, engagement opportunities, our roles, and the criteria you should consider as you determine if an influencer is a right fit for the program.

For questions about this program, please reach out to Danielle Procopio, March of Dimes Assoc. Director of Volunteer Marketing at dprocopio@marchofdimes.org or 571-257-3086. Additional resources include Megan Walker, March of Dimes' Chief Volunteer Officer & Vice President of Community Engagement and Mobilization, at mwalker@marchofdimes.org and Sarah Smith, March of Dimes' Assoc. Director of Strategic Partnerships and Media Relations, at ssmith@marchofdimes.org.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- The vision for the Community Advocate Council is that it's a framework that you can own to help drive your market goals throughout the year. Below is the breakdown of the roles and responsibilities between the local market and national office:

Local Market

- Identify the local celebrities and influencers who you would like to invite, sharing those names with Danielle Procopio and Sarah Smith for visibility.
- Conduct initial outreach to invite influencers to become a Community Advocate.
- Own the day-to-day communication with your advocates.
- Identify and execute on engagement opportunities.
- Flag for the national office if one of your engagement opportunities may require national support, or garner national attention. On a case by case basis, we may be able to provide you with additional support.
- Keep influencers updated on your local opportunities and activities.
- Draft public statements like talking points, suggested social media content, and quotes when specialized/localized messaging is needed for an engagement.
- Train advocates more thoroughly on the organization and issues, if they are interested.

National Office

- Will provide first-round suggestions for potential influencers to engage.
- Will review all influencers you would like to invite before invitations are sent to ensure there aren't any known conflicts or issues.
- Will provide messaging, talking points, suggested social media content, and assets for major March of Dimes reports, campaigns, and other activations.
- When available, will provide additional toolkits, templates, and messaging that you can send to your influencers to help spotlight our work, both locally and nationally.

ENGAGEMENT MENU

Community Advocates are donating their time and March of Dimes does not require any formal obligations for them to join the organization in this capacity. Generally, our recommendation is that you ask for a minimum one-year commitment. That original ask should seek their permission to:

- To use their name, image, and bio on materials, as appropriate and with their permission.
- Support your efforts on social media with a minimum of two posts a year.
- Join March of Dimes at a virtual or in-person event, as their schedule allows.

Additionally and depending on their interests, you could also engage advocates through:

- **Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU) visits**
- **Support videos:** Record a video sharing words of encouragement or sharing about their journey to motherhood.
- **Local media:** Occasionally participate in local media interviews if/when appropriate.
- **Advocacy Days:** Help advocate for stronger laws and more resources by virtually meeting with policy makers at the local or state level.
- **Participate in virtual fundraising events for their city:** Support March of Dimes by participating in webinars or social media live events that discuss all things maternal and childhood health-related.

INFLUENCER CHECKLIST

While you will be managing these relationships, we want to be sure that you are equipped with the how-to's in terms of determining who makes sense to reach out to, as well as best practices for communication. As always, we're here to answer any questions, but want to make sure we provide some additional guidelines to help keep the process running smoothly.

Overall, it's important to note that adding an influencer as a Community Advocate will require extra staff capacity to engage them effectively on a regular basis. That's why it's important to balance this engagement with the potential advocacy, fundraising, or visibility they can bring to the organization.

Here's a checklist you can follow as you are determining potential advocates and how to engage them:

1. Curating a Target Influencer List

- a. Vetting Process – Can you answer “yes” to following:
 - i. Has the influencer supported March of Dimes in any way before? Including through March of Dimes’ mission or areas of focus (For example, a NICU family).
 - ii. Does the influencer have a tie-in with the organization? Who is in their network – do they have family or friends that have supported previously or have a strong connection to the mission?
 - iii. Does the influencer have 20k+ followers on social media?
 - iv. Are their upcoming projects, public statements/media coverage either neutral to supportive of March of Dimes mission?
 - v. Can you confirm they haven’t spoken out negatively on any related topics or have been “controversial,” (using your best judgement)?
- b. If you answered “no” to questions ii-v:
 - i. Hold off on reaching out the influencer at this time. You might want to keep them on your radar and continue to monitor for possible engagement in the future. (If you answered “no” to the first question, but yes to all others, you should proceed with outreach.)

2. Outreach and Confirming Influencers

- a. Influencer Outreach Email
 - i. Introduce March of Dimes
 1. For new influencers who have not yet supported the organization
 2. This should be a concise paragraph highlighting your work
 - ii. Personalize The Ask
 1. How are they tied to the organization?
 2. Why should they pay attention to this ask specifically?
 - iii. Make It Digestible
 1. Give the right amount of detail without overwhelming the reader, the shorter the better when at all possible
 - iv. The Offer
 1. Outline everything you are asking for in one email, you should never need to go back with additional asks within a short timeframe
 - a. Press
 - b. Social media posts
 - c. Attendance of an event/time commitment
 - d. Deadline (if possible)
 2. What you are able to offer in exchange (when applicable)
 - a. Honorarium (only if this applies)
 - b. Travel/hotel accommodations/car service
 - c. Hair/makeup services

3. Outreach Timeline

- a. Outreach
 - i. Typically 4-6 weeks in advance of an event depending on circumstances (this has, of course, shifted a bit due to COVID-19 and since everything is virtual. A shorter lead time shouldn’t be an issue)
- b. Confirmation
 - i. Consider how much lead time you may need to coordinate any logistics

1. Recommend at least 2 weeks in advance
 - 2.
4. **Social Media Monitoring**
- a. Drafting Influencer Social Copy
 - i. Make it easy to post
 1. Outline when influencers should post
 2. Make sure copy is simple & to the point
 3. Include attachments to social graphics or a link to download them
 4. Check to make sure it fits within any character limits
 - ii. Always include a hashtag to make tracking posts possible
 - b. Confirmed Influencer Posts
 - i. Respond to influencer posts from your MOD account when they tag or mention us whenever you can
 - ii. Tracking
 1. Search your hashtag on Twitter & Instagram under “top posts” to find influencer posts
 2. Follow all of the influencers you have outreached to on their social media channels
5. **Leverage Media**
- a. For influencers interested in doing local press
 - i. Opinion Pieces
 1. Provide topics of interest, tentpole moments and campaigns for influencers to pin op-ed content around
 - ii. Joint Press Interviews
 1. Pair March of Dimes spokespeople with influencers for broadcast, online, and print interviews around larger campaigns and tentpole moments
 2. Arrange deskside meetings with publications
 - iii. Campaign Partnerships
 1. Give influencers a heads up on upcoming campaigns for them to exclusively partner on and lead, then flag collaborations for entertainment and lifestyle press contacts and media outlets
6. **Post-Engagement Follow Up**
- a. Follow up with a “thank you” and update post-campaign
 - b. Mention other ways they can support throughout the year:
 - i. Support on social media
 - ii. Attend virtual events
 - iii. Talk about March of Dimes with their network
 - iv. Invite friends and colleagues to learn more about us

OUTREACH TEMPLATE

The following is a template email you can use to make your invitation to the Community Advocates program. We encourage you to personalize this where you can.

Dear [Influencer],



We were so honored to have you participate in March of Dimes' [prior work with MOD to personalize ask], and are pleased to invite you to join our March of Dimes [Market Name] Community Advocates Council.

As you know, March of Dimes leads the fight for healthy moms and strong babies. The United States is in the midst of a maternal and child health crisis and in 2021 we are still among the most dangerous developed nations for a woman to give birth. About every 12 hours a woman dies from pregnancy-related causes and two babies die every hour, which is unacceptable for a country with our vast resources. March of Dimes support research, lead programs and provide education and advocacy so we can reverse these trends and ensure that every mom and baby can have the best possible start.

As an influential leader, we are thrilled to invite you to join the [Market Name] Community Advocates program, a network of individuals who are using their platforms to help drive real change in our region. There is no formal commitment or obligation around participation should you join, but we will work with you throughout the year to find opportunities that suit your goals around supporting the cause and organization, including but not limited to: PSA/campaign involvement, media interviews, participating in events, and advocacy work. We would also like to include your photo and bio on March of Dimes' website.

I have attached a description of the program to this email. Please let me know if you have any questions or feedback on the Community Advocates program. We would be honored to have you on board!

Best,

PRESS TEMPLATE

Should you want to announce to press that influencers have joined as a Community Advocate, we've included a template press release below as you create your draft. If you do announce to press, a few things to keep in mind are:

- **The influencer and/or their public relations team must provide their approval of the release text, in writing, before the release goes out.** When sending this through to them, it should be a final version of the release – and not a draft version that could continue to change. The approval process can take some time, so we recommend sending them the release at least 4-5 days before you intend to send it out to press. Lastly, if you would like the influencer quoted in the release, it can be helpful if you provide a draft quote for their approval.
- Prior to sending the press release, please send a final version to March of Dimes headquarters for our review. You can send it to Christine Sanchez at csanchez@marchofdimes.org.
- Please only include media outlets and media contacts local to your region when sending the press release, and avoid any national or entertainment reporters. If you receive interest from national or entertainment media contacts, please forward the requests through to Christine Sanchez.
- The below template is a guide, but tailor and localize it as much as possible. This guide is being provided to all March of Dimes markets, so each should have it's own unique feel.

PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE:



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[INFLUENCER NAME] JOINS MARCH OF DIMES [MARKET] AS A COMMUNITY ADVOCATE TO SPOTLIGHT ISSUES IMPACTING MOMS AND BABIES

[CITY], [ST], [Month Day, Year] – [March of Dimes](#), the leading nonprofit organization fighting for the health of all moms and babies, announced today that **[Influencer Name]** has joined the [Market Name’s] Community Advocate Council to help draw attention to the United States’ ongoing maternal and infant health crises. [Enter a sentence or two about the specific type of advocacy the influencer will be leading.]

[Provide a quick bio of the influencer, as well as a sentence or two about their personal connection to March of Dimes and your work. For example, they are a new parent, had a child in the NICU, etc. This language will need to be approved by the influencer.]

[DRAFT] *“[Draft a quote from the influencer that speaks to their connection to the organization and what they hope to accomplish through their MOD advocacy. This quote will need to be edited and receive final approval from the influencer],”* **said [Influencer Name], [brief title], and March of Dimes [Market] Community Advocate Council member.**

The March of Dimes Community Advocate Council is comprised of leaders from throughout the country who are using their platforms to advocate for research, programs, and education. By raising awareness about the issues impacting moms and babies, the advocates help drive attention to areas where it's needed. [Include any additional information specific to the MOD Market]

“[Draft a quote here from the most senior MOD staff member in the market that expresses your gratitude for the influencer, as well as the need for advocacy like theirs to help address a critical issue you want to highlight],” **said [Staff Name], [MOD Title].**

[Include any additional text about the MOD market, or background about any specific campaigns the influencer will be working on that can help provide the media with additional information].

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ABOUT MARCH OF DIMES

March of Dimes leads the fight for the health of all moms and babies. We support research, lead programs and provide education and advocacy so that every mom and baby can have the best possible start. Building on a successful 80-year legacy of impact and innovation, we’re there for every family—those who had first-hand hardships, those celebrating their health and those just trying to start their families. For more information go to [marchofdimes.org](#) or [nacersano.org](#), and visit [shareyourstory.org](#) for comfort and support. Find us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).



CONTACT

[Name], [MOD Title]

[Phone] | [Email]

QUESTIONS?

Reach out to Danielle Procopio at dprocopio@marchofdimes.org!