

# Working with the Media

*Crafting and delivering stories that will engage the audience*



Once Upon A Time...

# Participant Introductions

- o Who are you?
- o Where do you work?
- o What are you hoping to get from this presentation?
- o What is your biggest media challenge?



# Background: Why we started “doing media”

- o Examined how long it was taking research to get “out of the journals and into the public”
- o Noticed how the media would fill in the gaps on their own when we didn’t provide them with the information they wanted/needed

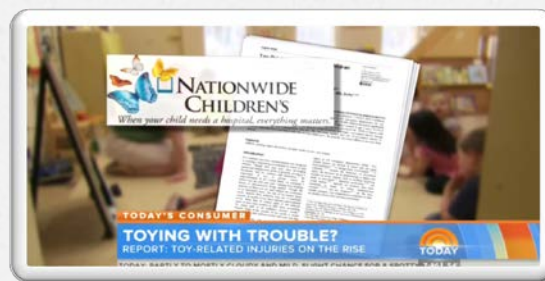


*This is our story and how we craft messages. Make this your own. Choose what works for you or what you can accomplish now. Took us 10 years to get where we are now.*

# Media Successes

## *Top Stories for 2014*

Topic	Audience
Laundry Pods	1 Billion+
Toy injuries	900 million
Baby gate injuries	768 million
Medication errors	490 million
Basketball injuries	20 million
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.2 billion!!</b>





# Why Do I Want to Work with the Media?



# Public Benefit: Reach a Broader Audience

- o The general public:
  - o does not read scientific journals
  - o does not understand statistics
  - o likes to trust “experts” they see and hear in the media





# Immediacy

o Progress can be slow –  
media is now



o Media coverage can  
motivate immediate  
action



# Professional Benefits

- o Position yourself as the “go to” person
- o Increase ability to obtain funding





# Citizenship

- o Be a “good citizen”
  - o For researchers/public health practitioners at large
  - o For your field
  - o For your institution
- o Go beyond the scientific journal
  - o Responsible use of taxpayer funds
  - o Keep the “heart and soul” in research



# Influence

## o Manufacturers

- o Encourage manufacturers to change a product design



## o Legislators

- o Get the attention of legislators and let them know a law is needed





# But Does It Work to Change Behavior?

- o Project on media use and effectiveness
  - o Online parent survey
    - o 1,081 mothers of children <6 years
    - o Media and Internet use, health and injury information sources, health and injury status and experience, socio-demographic info
  - o 6 focus groups (Columbus)
    - o 2 each with low, middle and high income
    - o Watched 3 randomly ordered news clips (car seats, high chairs and household cleaners)



# Yes, It Does...

- o Mothers generally:
  - o Understood the main messages
  - o Learned something new
  - o Found the information to be important and believable
  - o Intended to change some aspect of their behavior
  - o Would share the information they heard with others (as long as it didn't seem like common sense)
  - o *Not many differences across income levels*





# Most Effective Aspects

- Story of a child who had been injured
  - The more severe the injury, the more effective
  - More effective when the injury matches the message
- Visual demonstrations
  - A crash test, or the visual comparing the look of some beverage containers to those of common household poisons
- Recommendations
  - Don't just tell me about the problem, tell me how to prevent this from happening to my family
- Numbers
  - But only if the numbers were conveyed in a way that the audience could relate to and understand



## Safety Precautions



- 1 Follow height, age, weight and health restrictions.
- 2 Follow special seating order/loading instructions.
- 3 Always use safety equipment such as seat belts and safety bars.

- 4 Know your child. If you don't think he/she will be able to follow the rules, keep him/her off the ride.
- 5 Trust your instincts. If you are worried about the safety of the ride, choose a different activity.

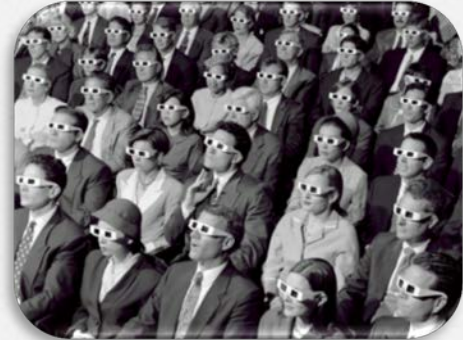
How can I use those findings to craft and pitch stories that the media will cover and the public will learn from?





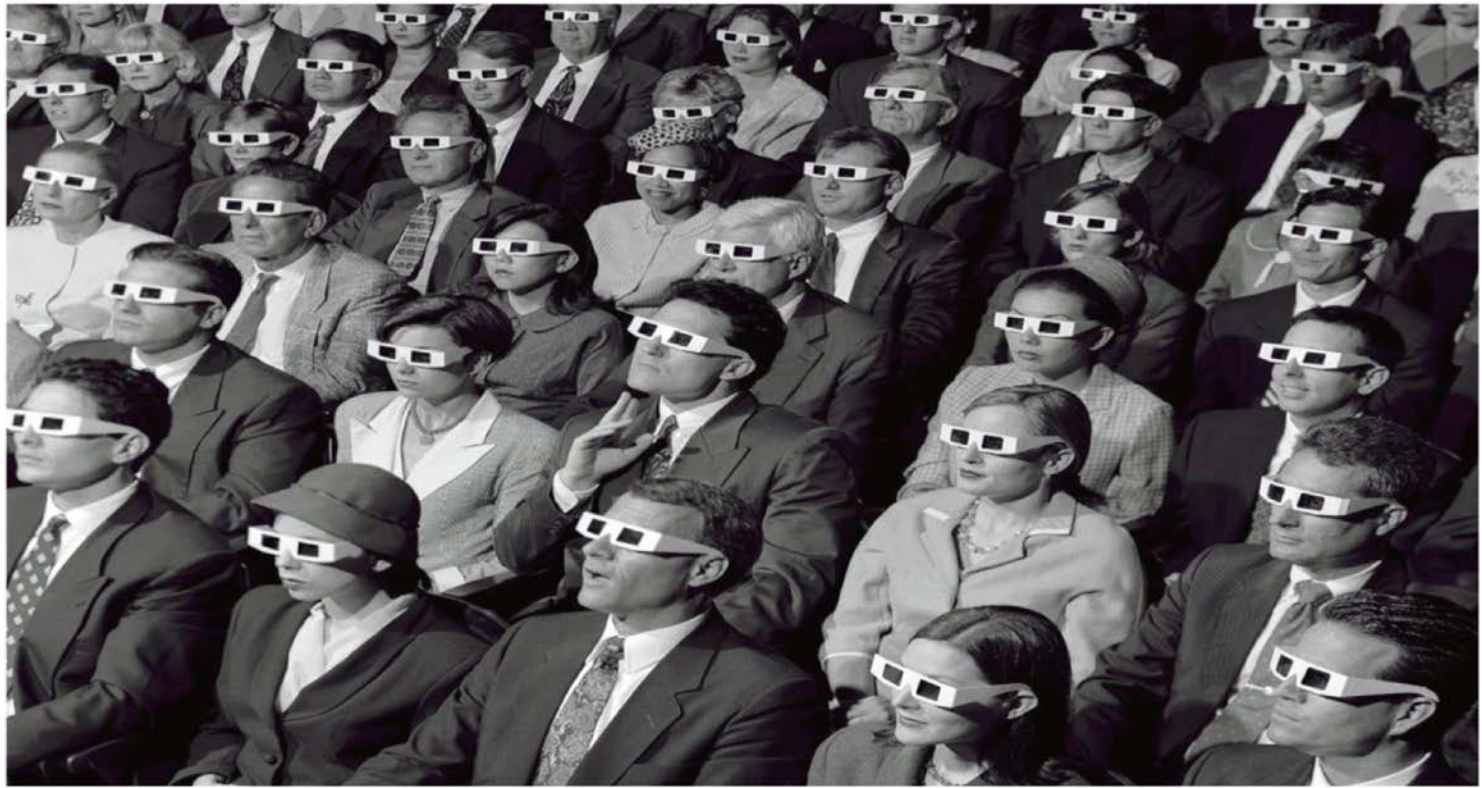
# Key Steps

- o Audience
- o Goals
- o Match your tools/outreach to your audience & goals
- o Develop components and messages your audience will relate to and understand





# Knowing Your Audience





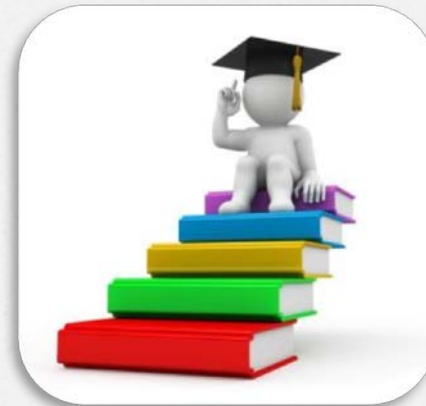
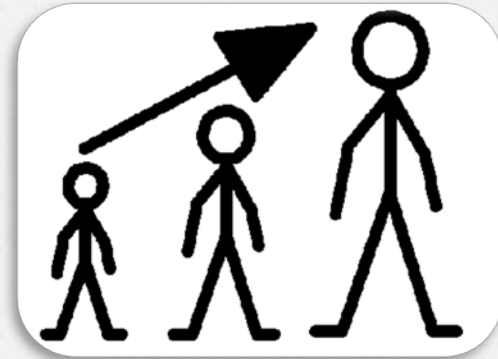
# The Big Questions

- o Who or what is your audience?
- o Why do you want to reach them?
- o What are your goals for them?
- o Where can you find them?



# Ways of Thinking About an Audience

- By age
- By relationship
- By language spoken/country of origin
- By interest or job
- By education level or socioeconomic status
- By ability to influence policy or behavior





# Types of Media

- o TV News
- o Newspapers
- o Radio
- o Social Media/Blogs
- o Newsletters
- o Trade Journals



Photo credit: Valerie Everett

# Is It Newsworthy?



(Probably,  
but maybe not)

Photo credit: [NS Newflash](#)



# Newsworthy Take-Away



- 💡 Just because you think something is important doesn't mean other people will. You have to find an angle that will spark the attention of your audience (and the media).

# Timeliness

- o Is it immediate or new?
- o Is it important to a certain timeframe or season?
- o Is it an anniversary of some important event?



**4 nbc4.com**  
WCMH-TV COLUMBUS

NEWS ▾ WEATHER ▾ SPORTS ▾ SLIDESHOWS FOR YOUR HEALTH COMMUNITY ▾

## NBC4 Investigates: Who's Inspecting Your Child's Summer Camp?

By Denise Yost  
Published: July 15, 2014, 2:48 pm | Updated: June 26, 2015, 5:15 pm

Tracey Mehan, of the Center for Injury Research and Policy at Nationwide Children's Hospital, said it is difficult to find out how many camps operate around the country, and how many children get hurt at those camps.

There are not national regulations in terms of health and safety for camps, so sometimes it can be hard to access injury and health information for camps," Mehan said.

According to a set of injury data for campers who visited the hospital in the last two years, the injury rate is low. There was only one injury per 2,000 camper days.

[PDF: Summer Camp Questions](#)  
[PDF: Summer Camp Packing List](#)  
[PDF: Summer Camp Safety](#)



# Uniqueness

- o No one has done this before.
- o People have done this before, but we are doing it a different way.
- o People may have done this before, but our county or town or department never has.

## First of its Kind Study Compares High School Knee Injuries by Sport and Gender

 Tweet  +1  Like  Share Be the first of your friends to like this.

COLUMBUS, OH - 5/22/2008

Knee injuries, among the most economically costly sports injuries, are the leading cause of high school sports-related surgeries according to a study conducted at the [Center for Injury Research and Policy \(CIRP\) of the Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital](#) and published in the June issue of *The American Journal of Sports Medicine*.

# Conflict, Controversy, or Change

- o Is there an argument that you are strongly on one side of?
- o Do you have something to say that is against conventional wisdom?
- o Has research or experience made you revise your opinion or the advice you give to other people?

The Sydney Morning Herald  
World

With legal marijuana, more little kids are accidentally consuming drug

June 10, 2015

Read later

Abby Phillip

Children's rates of exposure to marijuana have increased, even in US states where the drug has not been legalised.

Tweet 15 Share 21 Share 1 in Share Pin it submit  
Email article Print



A medical marijuana plant – often baked into brownies where such drugs are legal. Photo: AP

**Washington:** In the places where marijuana is legal, more and more children are being accidentally exposed to their parents' drugs, a study finds.



# Geographic Area

- o Is the subject local?
- o If it's not local, is it important to the area for a reason that is special to the area?
- o Can the subject be localized?

## The Columbus Dispatch

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### Experts push for laws on bicycle helmets

Based on an examination of hospital visits in Columbus, researchers at the Center for Injury Research and Policy estimate that 28 traumatic brain injuries and \$190,000 in hospital charges alone could be prevented each year in the city as a result of the ordinance.

"And these figures are likely to be very conservative," adds Smith. "With this one vote, members of Columbus City Council will be able to save more children's lives and prevent more life-long disabilities than I could ever hope to achieve in working the rest of my career as an emergency physician in a leading children's trauma center. And for that they should be commended."

# Human Interest

- o Is someone in your community an example of an important issue or larger trend?
- o Has someone in your community had an interesting experience that is somehow tied to current events?





# Personal Relevance

- o Will your message have an immediate impact on an individual's life?
- o Can your message help a person make a decision about something important?
- o Can your message help people protect their loved ones?



Keep your child safe.

More than **60,000** young children end up in emergency departments every year because they got into medicines while their parent or caregiver was not looking.

Always put **every** medicine and vitamin up and away **every** time you use it. Also, program the Poison Help number into your phone: 1.800.222.1222.

To learn more, visit [UpandAway.org](http://UpandAway.org)

Put your medicines  
**up & away**  
and out of sight

In partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)



# Knowing What Tools to Use





# Press releases

## General tips

- Press releases are for the general population
  - Remember the goal is to help people understand your research and why it is relevant to them
  - Avoid jargon
  - Write for a non-scientific audience
- Catchy headline important to attract reporters attention
- Quotes should contain your take-away information



# Press Conference

## (Media Advisory)

- o A press conference is an event held specifically to provide information to the media
  - o Usually have experts that speak and then are available to answer reporter questions
  - o Can include media kits
  - o Require a media advisory to go out that tells the members of the media where & when the event will be.





# Letter to the Editor/ Op Ed

- o An op-ed (which literally means opposite the editorial page) is meant to be an opinion piece.
- o Give your perspective on an issue
- o Encourage members of your community to write on how policies, programs, etc affect them personally
- o Short pieces – check limits



# Public Service Announcement (PSA)

## o Video

- o More expensive
- o Takes more time

## o Radio

- o Can produce yourself and provide to station or provide text for them to read

## o Tips

- o Give stations a lot of notice (4 weeks or more)
- o Conversational
- o Typically 15, 30 or 60 seconds
  - o 15 seconds = 30-35 words
  - o 30 seconds = 60-65 words
  - o 60 seconds = 120-125 words




# Blog Posts

- o Starting your own blog
- o Guest blogging on others blogs
- o Providing a blog to be used by others in their materials

The screenshot shows a web page from Nationwide Children's Hospital. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Our Services', 'Find a Doc', 'Request an Appointment', 'Home', and 'About This Blog'. The Nationwide Children's logo is on the left, and the text '700CHILDREN'S where everything matters' is on the right. Below the navigation is a search bar. A 'Categories' sidebar on the left lists various topics like 'Allergies & Infections', 'Child Development', 'Diseases & Conditions', etc. The main content area features a large image of a young girl sitting in a high chair at a table, eating. Below the image is the article title 'Are You Using Your High Chair the Right Way?' by Emily Daper, MD, MEd, FAAP. The article text discusses the importance of using high chairs correctly to prevent injuries. At the bottom of the page, there is a video player showing a woman demonstrating how to use a high chair.

# Social Media


- o Recommended posts
- o Creating and managing social media channels
  - o Know your audience and your goal before you decide on which channels to use
  - o Don't “do” social media just to do it



**TV TIP-OVERS SOCIAL MEDIA**

**f Facebook Posts**

1. Did you know your flat screen TV can be a danger to your child? Check out TV Tip-Overs by the Numbers to get the facts! <http://bit.ly/9W7D8a>
2. Every 45 minutes, a child ends the ER because of an injury from a TV tipping over. Be sure to follow this safety check-list when installing your TV. <http://bit.ly/2246E3c>
3. The who, what, where, and why of TV tip-overs. <http://t.me/gov/W8Wp5n>
4. Furniture tip-overs can cause serious injury to children. Here is an example of just one of the tragic child deaths due to a TV. <http://bit.ly/GA75Q>
5. Where is your television? How is it displayed? Each year, more than 12,000 children are injured by TV tip-overs. Prevent your child from being one of them. <http://bit.ly/1D6M9YD>
6. Young children are curious. Don't let them be around an unsecured television. Prevent TV tip-over injuries. <http://bit.ly/1UR5Dz6>
7. Want to help teach others about the dangers of TV tipovers? Get at resources here [www.preventchildinjury.org](http://www.preventchildinjury.org)
8. Looking for an article for your newsletter to parents? How about teaching them how to prevent TV tipovers. <http://bit.ly/1C8Uggy>
9. Want to learn about TV tipovers from Pinterest – check out this board. <http://bit.ly/1C8Uggy>

PREVENT CHILD INJURY  [www.PreventChildInjury.org](http://www.PreventChildInjury.org)



# Crafting the Message



# Find the story

**O**nce  
upon  
a  
time...





# Finding the Story

- o In the data
- o In the “hook”
- o With a real life story

*Remember, it is best to tell the story with both WORDS and VISUALS.*

# Telling the Story with Words

SOCO's (Single Overriding Communication Objectives)

o The most important 2-3 things you want people to remember from your story.

o Don't try to tell them everything you know

o Will only remember 2-3, what do you want them to remember?

1

• If they only remember **one thing**, this is it

2

• Second most important

3

• Third most important



# SOCOs

o Think of SOCOs as:

o **Sound Bites**

In a television or radio interview you only get a few seconds (minutes if you are lucky) to get your message across. What will you say?

o **30 second elevator speech**

You have from the 1<sup>st</sup> floor to the 5<sup>th</sup> floor to tell someone about your research. What will you say?

o **The “Dad” test**



Photo: [Gideon Tsang](#)

# Tips for developing SOCOs

- o Highlight the most important facts only
- o What will have the most impact
- o Be brief and use simple language
  - o Think about the language of your audience Simplify
- o Health literacy principals



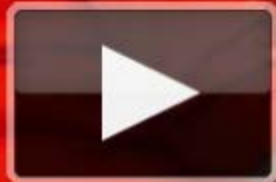


# Stair injuries example

 **NBCNEWS.com**

March 12, 2012

NBC's Jeff Rossen reports on the common defects in home staircases that safety experts say can cause serious falls and shows families what they can do to protect themselves.



# Tailor the Message to the Audience

- o To players
  - o *It's better to miss one game than the whole season.*
- o To parents
  - o *Talk with your children and teens about concussions. Tell them to report their concussion symptoms to you and their coach right away.*
- o To school principals and athletic directors
  - o *Keeping students healthy and safe helps protect the reputation of the school and provides a positive supportive environment for learning.*



# Catch phrases

o Up, Away and  
Out of Sight



o Click It or Ticket



o Drive Sober or  
Get Pulled Over



# Make it memorable

*“If you were to put the best engineers in the world in a room and ask them to design the perfect plug for a child’s airway, they couldn’t do much better than a hot dog.”*

– Dr. Gary Smith



Photo credit: [RKSdesign](#)





# Make it memorable

*“Trampolines are an orthopedic fracture machine.”*

– Jaime Friedman MD



Photo credit: [Lauren Tucker](#)

# Make it memorable

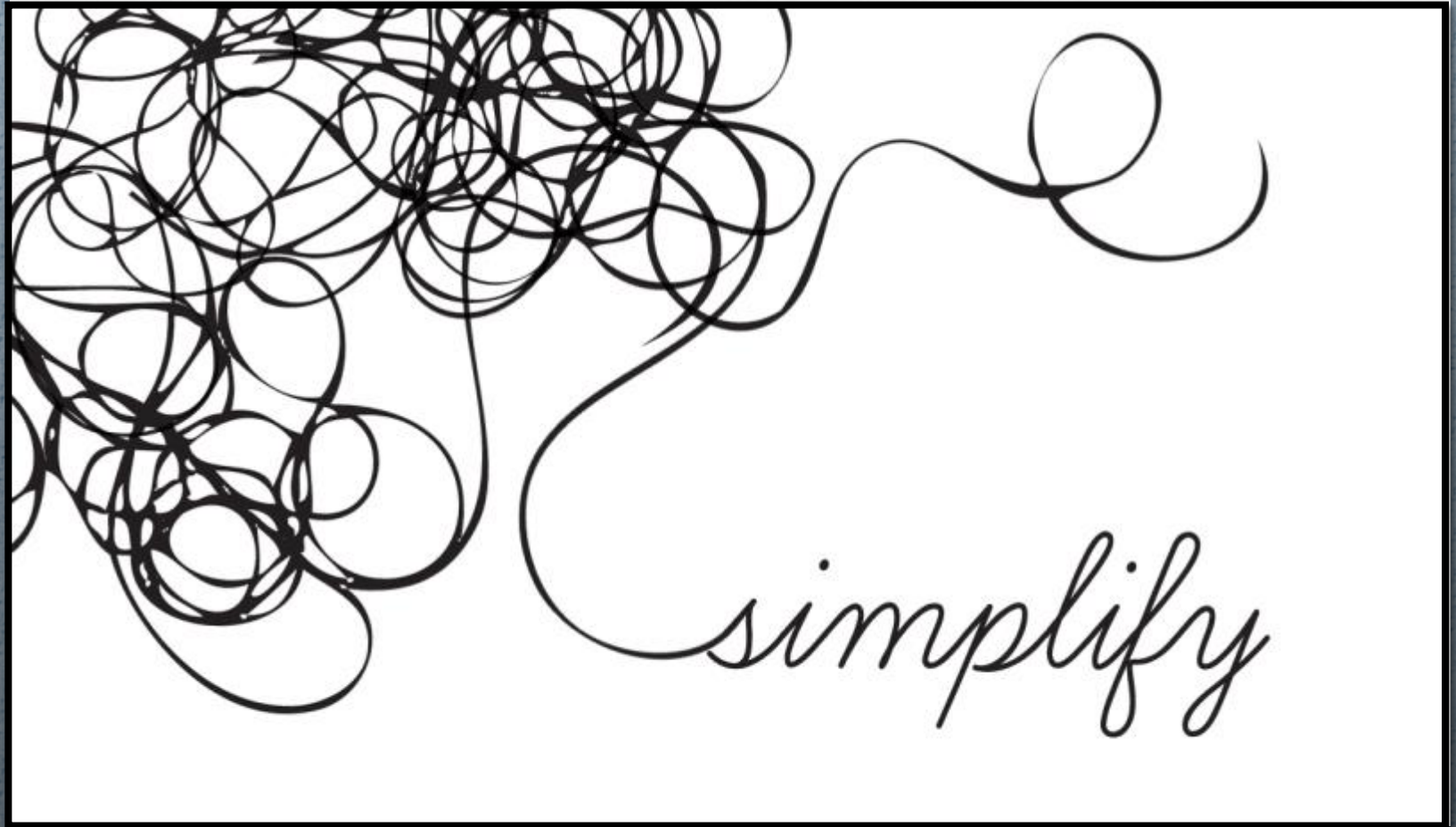
*“Placing a rear-facing car seat in the front seat can kill a child: If the front air bag inflates, even in a low-speed crash, the force of the airbag against the back of the car seat would **be like** “an elephant kicking you in the back of the head. It’s an unsurvivable injury.”*

– Alisa Baer, pediatrician, co-founder of The Car Seat Lady





Simplify



# Social Math

## o Definition

Making data easier to grasp by relating it to something we already understand

*Finding the story in your numbers.*

## o Calculations:

$$931,886/10 = 93,188.6 \text{ per year}$$

$$93,188.6/365 = 255 \text{ per day}$$

$$255/24 = 10.63 \text{ per hour}$$

$$60 \text{ min}/10 = 6$$

*From 1999-2008 an estimated 931,886 children under 5 years of age were treated in an emergency department in the United States for stair-related injuries, averaging 46.5 injuries per 10,000 population annually.*



*Every 6 minutes in the U.S., a child under 5 years of age is treated in an emergency department for a stair-related injury*



# Making Your Message Easy to Understand

- Translate your research in a way that the general public can understand and that will capture their attention
  - For example, use #'s vs. rates
  - Don't use mean/median
  - Tenfold example



# Word Choice

- Aim for 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade reading level
  - Broken bone vs. fracture
  - Cut vs laceration
- Use Flesch-Kincaid test through Word

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Word document titled 'WORD FACT SHEET' with a readability test. The test consists of five numbered questions, each followed by a blank line for an answer. A 'Readability Statistics' window is open on the right side of the document, displaying the following data:

Counts	
Words	132
Characters	782
Paragraphs	13
Sentences	6
Averages	
Sentences per Paragraph	1.3
Words per Sentence	19.0
Characters per Word	4.5
Readability	
Passive Sentences	8%
Flesch Reading Ease	65.5
Flesch Kincaid Grade Level	9.6



# Plain Language Tips

## o Use active voice

**Instead of:** This medicine is to be taken before every meal.

**Use:** Take this medicine before every meal.

## o Use common words instead of technical words

**Instead of:** Neuralgia which accompanies fractures of the fibula indicates the advisability of administering an analgesic.

**Use:** Giving pain relievers to patients with broken legs helps make them more comfortable.

## o Use positive tone

**Instead of:** Do not fail to notify your family doctor in case of illness

**Use:** Call your family doctor when you are sick.

## o Use short words and sentences

o Use instead of utilize

o Start instead of initiate

## o Use serif fonts in at least 12 point type

# Recommendations for Parents

## Where we started

### Tips for Keeping Kids Safe on Amusement Rides

- Always check to make sure the child meets minimum and/or maximum height and weight requirements posted on the ride. Never allow a larger child to board a ride designated for smaller children.
- Evaluate the potential for injury during normal operation. Simply meeting physical standards for the ride does not guarantee your child's safety. With no federal oversight, manufacturers determine minimum size requirements and may not consider the stages of child development.
- Visually inspect the ride. Trust your judgment if a ride looks unsafe.
- Review correct boarding and unloading procedures with the child, and point out ride operators/attendants.
- Ask the child if he/she has any fears about the ride. Remind the child that even if he/she gets scared to stay still until the ride stops.
- Make sure the child is securely fastened using all restraint devices appropriately, including harnesses, seat belts, and lap bars. Tell the child to hold on with both hands and keep hands and feet inside the ride.
- The most serious injuries occur when the child falls in or on a ride or hits the body against the ride. Remind the child to remain secured until the ride stops moving and the attendant tells him/her to unload.
- Soft tissue injuries to the head and neck were the most frequent among children. Avoid rides that expose the child to strong forces that might cause whiplash or other muscle/tendon injuries.
- If possible, choose rides with protective flooring to minimize the risk of head/neck trauma.

## Where we ended up

### Safety Precautions



1  
2  
3

Follow height, age, weight and health restrictions.

Follow special seating order/loading instructions.

Always use safety equipment such as seat belts and safety bars.

4  
5

Know your child.  
If you don't think he/she will be able to follow the rules, keep him/her off the ride.

Trust your instincts.  
If you are worried about the safety of the ride, choose a different activity.



# Telling the Story with Visuals

o Examples of how visuals can be effective

o Laundry pods



o TV tip-overs



o Magnets/ball during press conference



# The Power of a Personal Story

- o Media ALWAYS asks if we have a patient or someone with a story
- o Even at the national level, they are more likely to cover you if you have someone who has experienced it.





# Photos

- o Easy
- o Shareable
- o Many free sources
- o Big impact





# Low Cost Photo Sources

- Bing.com image search
- Death to Stock
- Life of Pix
- Unsplash
- PicJumbo
- Flickr – be mindful & respectful of Creative Commons Licenses





# Videos

- o Great resource if you can provide it
- o Consider partner assistance
- o Ask – may have someone in your office that can help



More simple



A little more advanced

# B-roll

- o If a reporter comes to you to do a video on camera, they will almost always want this
- o Thinking about it ahead of time gives you control
  - o What you have in the background
  - o Locations





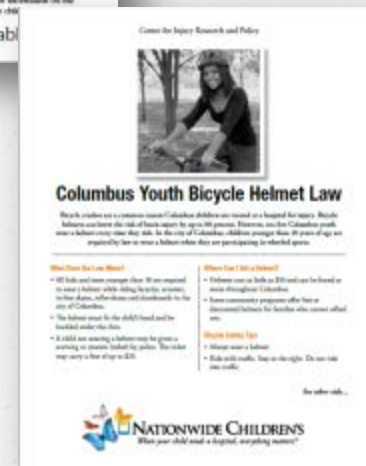
# Infographics

- o Easy to digest information
- o Shareable
- o Text and images



# Fact sheets

- o Why we started doing fact sheets
- o Value to media and to families
- o Can provide more information than what you can give in an interview
- o Can link to them through online stories





# Laundry Packets Case Study

## o Audiences

- o Parents
- o Industry



## o Goals

- o Educate parents & caregivers about the dangers of laundry packets
- o Put pressure on industry to find ways to make packets safer



# Laundry Packets Case Study

- o Numbers

- o 17,000 over the 2 year study period = a child every hour

- o Visual demonstration

- o Comparison of laundry packet packaging to food products
  - o Ease of child getting into “child-resistant packaging”





# Laundry Packets Case Study

## o Story

- o Mom talking about her surprise at:
  - o How quickly kids are attracted to packets
  - o How they confuse them with food
  - o How easy it is to open packaging



# Laundry Packets Case Study

- o Recommendation (in press release and TV script for anchors)
  - o Don't use if young children live in or visit your home
  - o Keep laundry detergent of all types locked up high and out of reach
- o Industry Call-to-Action
  - o Voluntary safety standard
  - o Product and packaging redesign





# Different Messages for Different Audiences

## o For parents and caregivers

- o If you have young children in your home, use traditional laundry detergent instead of laundry detergent pods.

## o For health care providers

- o Tell parents and caregivers about the dangers of laundry pods and the need for careful use.

## o For industry

- o Adopt child-resistant and opaque packaging to make it more difficult for children to access laundry pods.

## o For policy makers

- o A national safety standard is needed to make sure all laundry pod makers adopt safer packaging and labeling.



# The Final Product

**NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S**  
HOSPITAL

**MULTIMEDIA NEWSROOM**

## Consumers Warned About Dangers Of Laundry Pods

Doctors call for tighter standards as pods continue to harm kids

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The study showed the danger of laundry detergent pods, sometimes called for a national product safety standard in an effort to bring greater uniformity. "The study showed that during a year-long study there were more than 17,000 children exposed to the highly concentrated detergent in laundry detergent pods. That's a child every hour," said John Smith, MD, MPH, Director of the Center for Child Health and Safety at Nationwide Children's Hospital.

The study is the first to show that children are exposed to the most highly concentrated laundry pods for yards and less than three. "They're not in the bag, they're not in the canister, they're not in the container, they're not in the container," said Gary Smith, MD, MPH, Director of the Center for Child Health and Safety at Nationwide Children's Hospital.

"The bottom line is, we need a more uniform safety standard for these products before any more children get hurt," added Dr. Smith.

To learn more about the potential dangers of laundry detergent pods, click on the video box on the left to read the full press release. "Click on read more."

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**Marcel Casavari, MD**  
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**Gary Smith, MD, DrPH**  
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	Bites <a href="#">Download</a>	
	News Package Nats <a href="#">Download</a>	
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**Images**

Thumbnail 1: Kids find laundry detergent pods dangerous and harmful to their health. [Download](#)

Thumbnail 2: Nationwide Children's Hospital researchers found laundry detergent pods and children's health. [Download](#)

Thumbnail 3: Laundry detergent pods are dangerous to children's health. [Download](#)

Thumbnail 4: Kids find laundry detergent pods dangerous and harmful to their health. [Download](#)

Thumbnail 5: Nationwide Children's Hospital researchers found laundry detergent pods and children's health. [Download](#)

Thumbnail 6: Laundry detergent pods are dangerous to children's health. [Download](#)

Thumbnail 7: Kids find laundry detergent pods dangerous and harmful to their health. [Download](#)

Thumbnail 8: Nationwide Children's Hospital researchers found laundry detergent pods and children's health. [Download](#)

## Laundry Detergent Pods Frequently Harming Kids

1:34 / 1:34

YouTube



# Successes

- o Media coverage
  - o 1 billion+ audience impressions
- o Stories of behavior change
- o Industry response
  - o Created informational videos
  - o Added language to videos
  - o Some redesign started
- o Voluntary standards



# Thank You!

**Tracy Mehan**

[Tracy.Mehan@nationwidechildrens.org](mailto:Tracy.Mehan@nationwidechildrens.org)

Phone: 614-355-5877



[www.injurycenter.org](http://www.injurycenter.org)