

## **Pilot Testing Guide for Positive Community Norms Materials**

### **Before pilot testing your materials, check to be sure all media follows the 7 Guidelines for PCN Communications:**

1. **Positive** - Is media positive, hope-based, healthy, legal, and not fear or shame-based?
2. **Normative** - Does the media promote and cite a healthy norm in the community?
3. **Reflective** - Do the images and language reflect and relate to the focus audience?
4. **Inclusive** - Does the media make members of the focus audience feel like they are included?
5. **Neutral** - Is the media based on fact and presented in a non-judgmental tone?
6. **Clear** - Are the messages short, simple and easy to understand?
7. **Data-based and source specific** - Have the numbers been double-checked? Is a source included along with a 'Funded by' citation?

### **Different Types of Pilot testing:**

- **Intercept Interviews:** This type of pilot testing is typically done in person with one or two people at a time. Intercept interviews often will “intercept” people when they are doing something else...such as shopping, at lunch, in the school hallways, at a coffee break, or working. Intercept interviews typically ask the respondent to fill out a pilot test ballot or answer specific questions and the interviewer will record their answers. Intercept interviews also offer the person conducting the pilot test an opportunity to engage in conversation with the person being tested.
- **Focus Group:** This type of pilot testing is done in person with a group of 4 or more individuals who have been invited to participate in a discussion about certain media. Members of the focus group should consist of a diverse representation of your focus audience. Focus groups should include a facilitator asking specific questions and allowing everyone the opportunity to speak and be heard. Remember, all responses should be honored, and there is no need to ‘correct’ the respondent. We are interested in their opinion and the reasons they feel that way.
- **Online Survey (Survey Monkey, Email, Facebook, etc.):** This type of pilot testing is done via the Internet and typically asks respondents to fill out a pilot test survey. The respondents are typically anonymous and there is almost no opportunity for interaction between the respondent and the surveyor.



















- **Polling Presentation (Smart Phone Apps, Zoom Polls, etc.):** This type of pilot testing is done using smart phones and a polling app. Polling Presentation pilot testing allows anonymous individual responses to mix with discussion and conversation in a larger group setting.
- **Classroom/Pilot Test Ballot combo:** This type of pilot testing is done in a focus group setting, and allows participants to not only voice their opinions and have discussions, but to also write down their thoughts and opinions in an anonymous manner using a “Pilot Testing Ballot”.

You may want to pilot test in phases:

1. ***Image Testing Phase*** a broad test of potential pictures to use in media. Create an Image Bank: (See example 1 below) This works well for pre-testing images for use in your media campaigns. You simply ask, on a scale of 1-5 how much do you like this image. Once you have several images that have been tested and liked, then you can create a “bank” of images to choose from when creating your media.

IMAGE PILOT TEST:  
 Tell us about yourself: GRADE \_\_\_\_\_ GENDER \_\_\_\_\_  
 We are looking for images to use on posters, etc. Please rate each image according to how much you like it:

			
Like it Awesome	Like it Awesome	Like it Awesome	Like it Awesome
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
			
Like it Awesome	Like it Awesome	Like it Awesome	Like it Awesome
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
			
Like it Awesome	Like it Awesome	Like it Awesome	Like it Awesome
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
			
Like it Awesome	Like it Awesome	Like it Awesome	Like it Awesome
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

EXAMPLE 1

(When using Example 1, images should test with an average score of 3 or higher to be used in media. Please be careful of images that have great extremes. For example an image that has as many dislikes as likes, may not be an image you would want to use, even if its average score is 3.)

2. ***Message Testing Phase***– a test of the messages on their own, without any images or other messages present. You might test messages using a 1-5 rating scale to help test for meaning (understandable, positive, and believable) and then tested for wording preference (Most, X out of Y, AB%, etc).

3. ***Final Media Testing Phase***– consider testing more than one option to be considered for the final media piece. Media should be tested using a 1- 5 rating scale and could include the following 4 categories: Attractive, Eye Catching, Understandable, Postive. You may add additional categories as you see fit. A good rule of thumb is to seek to create media that tests with an average score of 3.5 or above on the rating scale. Please watch for rating extremes. If the media has an equal number of likes and dislikes, it may be necessary to re-evaluate, make revisions to, or not use it. Additional questions testing inclusivity or offensiveness, meaning, and comments/suggestions should also be included in this testing phase. Consider using any of these:

- What’s the first thing you noticed?
- What do you like?
- Is there anything you dislike?
- What message do you get from this?
- Could this offend or make anyone feel excluded? Why?
- What would you change?

**IMPORTANT:** Pilot testing images/messages/and final media should be based on representativeness. It is important to get a good cross-section of your populations. This means that you shouldn’t test exclusively with your football team, for example, because that would not be representative of your entire focus population.

#### **Other considerations:**

1. Number of people tested per round (Image, Message, and Final) will vary depending on your findings. However, a good starting point would be:

Students: 5 per gender per grade

Adults: 20 total with at least a two-thirds/one-third gender split

2. While testing or tallying, look for similar responses or themes. If you have tested a good cross-section of your focus audience, and the results are similar and conclusive, no further testing is needed and you can revise your piece as needed. However, if the results are inconclusive, more testing may be needed. If this happens, it may be beneficial to use a different testing method with different or deeper questions.