

DEVELOPING YOUR MESSAGE

1. Think about your community's biggest issues. Focus on those. What are the most important words and ideas that emerged from your discussions about your library's community - what issues it cares most about and how your library addresses those? Access to technology? Fostering student achievement? Jobs and a healthy local economy? Pre-school learning? Services for non-English speakers? Use these words to craft your message.

2. Make your message crisp, catchy and easy to remember. Can you reduce it to 10 or 15 words? See the sample messages in the Section #4 of the toolkit for some ideas to get you started.

Important! Remember that your message is not about the library (*"Keeping the library's Sunday afternoon hours means keeping the library's staff."*). It's about what the library means to the community - (*"Keeping Sunday afternoon hours means keeping a safe community place for weekend studying and hanging out."*)

3. Come up with some "talking points" that your celebrity spokesperson can use. This is where you can use the data your library collects so diligently. Put some of your most compelling information into a short, simple fact sheet. Your talking points should include:

- Some statistics about your library's use (who, how, when).
- The impact on users (students, parents, preschoolers, seniors, job seekers, etc) if services must be reduced. Be specific, use your data.
- Other reasons that cutting the library's budget is not a good solution. Can your local notable add a personal story here?
- What the listener can do to help.