

WE CAN Adaptation Toolkit

Using WE CAN in Your Organization’s Outreach



Social media is a key platform for raising awareness, spreading information, and promoting engagement. In support of the Children’s Bureau’s National Child Abuse Prevention Month, the Children’s Bureau Learning & Coordination Center (CBLCC) developed WE CAN, a social media engagement effort that involved multiple partners and reached hundreds of thousands of people across the nation. The effort is designed to:

- ▶ Engage strategic partners, including those working with vulnerable families who don’t think of preventing child abuse and neglect as part of their core work.
- ▶ Acknowledge stressors families face that are correlated to child abuse and neglect, such as substance use, domestic violence, early parenting, and social isolation.
- ▶ Offer simple, positive actions that can be taken to support families experiencing those stressors.
- ▶ Provide links to resources and tools that will help individuals take action.

The WE CAN campaign includes more than 150 messages, including messages to parents promoting self-care; messages to neighbors, friends, and community members about what steps they can take to support to families under stress; and messages to professionals who work with families every day promoting self-care and voicing appreciation for the work they do. Messages are linked to useful resources.

This toolkit is designed to help you adapt these messages to your state, locality, or organization. You can build on the research and design work that went into WE CAN, but personalize the messages and linked resources to your organization. We encourage you adapt and use these messages to deepen local partnerships, connect your audience to tailored resources, and build a campaign that is both local and connected to national and field-wide messaging.

Adapting the WE CAN Message

The WE CAN messages are designed to convey information or encourage a simple action at a glance. Each message is hyperlinked to an online resource that the viewers can use to deepen their knowledge.



You can find the catalog of adaptable WE CAN messages on the CBLCC website at cblcc.acf.hhs.gov/we-can. Each image is available for download. The figure below shows which parts of the message you can adapt using your own message, and which parts should not be changed. You may include a hyperlink to your own relevant online resource that fits the message.



You are welcome to use CBLCC’s existing WE CAN messages as they are, or adapt them to highlight one of your own services or resources. **Adapted messages must conform to the following criteria:**

- ▶ The photograph should not be altered in any way, so as not to violate copyrights or licenses.
- ▶ The “WE CAN - Work to End Child Abuse and Neglect” identity mark should not be moved or deleted, again, for licensing reasons.
- ▶ The headline message (in the above example, “support a parent in recovery”) must also remain the same.
- ▶ Sub-head messages in the color bar at the bottom can be edited or adapted to accommodate your state, locality, or organization’s priorities or needs.
- ▶ The accompanying social media text/caption and resource link can be changed to align with your new sub-head message.
- ▶ State, local, or organizational logos may be placed in the white spaces on either side of the message bar.

Technical Guidance

- ▶ All of the WE CAN messages are available on the CBLCC website at cblcc.acf.hhs.gov/we-can.
- ▶ To adapt a message, follow download instructions on the web page. The downloaded image file has fillable sections below the headline where you may enter new text. When you are done editing, save the file as a .jpg.

- ▶ Make sure that any text or logos you add follow these guidelines:
 - The typeface is Myriad regular, white, 24pt. If you do not have Myriad, you can substitute [PT Sans](#), available as a free download from Google Fonts.
 - Logo image files should be sized to fit within the white space. Do not place logos over the color bar or over the photograph.

Strategic Decisions

The following guidance is intended to help you use the campaign as strategically as possible for your child abuse and neglect prevention activities:

- ▶ Clarify your target audience. WE CAN messages are designed to reach the following audiences:
 - Parents: Messages around self-care and positive parenting.
 - Community members: Messages around actions to support families.
 - Front-line staff: Messages around self-care and appreciation for the work they do for families.
- ▶ Think strategically about who are your partners. Select partners who are:
 - Already doing work to support vulnerable children and families.
 - Able to reach audiences you don't already reach.
 - Willing to partner in the campaign by supporting message development and promoting the messages/resources widely throughout their networks.
- ▶ Identify appropriate messages. There are more than 150 existing WE CAN messages available to you, each designed to address an important issue in child abuse and neglect prevention.
- ▶ Select the appropriate resource. Resources should be both user friendly and appropriate for parents, community members, and/or staff, particularly those outside the child welfare field.

Example of an Adapted Message with State and Agency Logos



- ▶ Give thought to your customized submessage. In keeping with the campaign, submessages should:
 - Emphasize positive and strength-based actions that can be taken even when addressing difficult issues (e.g., substance abuse, incarceration, domestic violence, etc.).
 - Stand alone. Even if the reader does not click through to the resource, she/he/they should see a complete and an actionable message.
 - Be short—no more than 15 words.
 - Be evergreen (not connected to an event or a date, so that they are always relevant).
- ▶ Write your social media text/caption to accompany the picture when you post it. This is a great opportunity to include some additional information, explain why you are posting this message, and reinforce the action you want viewers to take.
- ▶ Develop hashtags. Topical hashtags help people find your post and connect individual posts to your larger campaign.
 - Consider using the official #WECANPreventChildAbuse hashtag in addition to your own hashtags.
 - During National Child Abuse Prevention Month (April), use #NCAPM2021.
 - Use topical tags your partners already use so your post will get flagged by those already following their social media.
 - Avoid using more than three tags in a Facebook or Twitter post.
- ▶ Coordinate with partners ahead of time. Work with your partners to:
 - Ensure that they know when you will be releasing the post and are poised to push it to their audience on the same day.
 - Coordinate the tags that each organization will be using with the post.
- ▶ Think beyond child abuse prevention month. Families need support all year round. Think strategically about how you can use WE CAN posts throughout the year in your outreach and engagement activities. Do you want to highlight posts related to parental depression in May for Mental Health Awareness Month? Do you want to highlight a different issue each week? Or weave the WE CAN messages into your regular social media line-up?

In Conclusion

However you use the WE CAN messages, we hope that they will help you spread the message that WE CAN all take concrete actions to support parents and families and end child abuse and neglect. Please follow CBLCC on social media and tag us in your posts: [@CBLCC_ACF](#) on Twitter; [@CBLCCACF](#) on Facebook.