

Tips for entering our video contest

What's a PSA?

A Public Service Announcement is a media message designed to raise public awareness and change behavior. There are numerous approaches to PSAs. Consider searching “best public service announcement videos” online to view examples.

Sometimes shorter is better

Don't feel like you have to use all 90 seconds. Some of the best PSAs are much shorter. The key is to have a very clear message and to make your delivery compelling.

Be original

Resist the temptation to use images, video clips and music created by others (especially if it is not fair-use or you have not purchased a license). Show us what you can do with original images and original video.

Gun violence topic

Gun violence is a broad topic. Choose one aspect to focus on. Your message could be informational, emotional, frightening, hopeful, etc. You might focus on personal experience, statistics, fears of young people, reasons for hope or any other component of this issue. Your video does not need to reference the Sisters of Mercy, or the Mercy Critical Concerns, but it should reflect the spirit of the Mercy Community in regards to gun violence.

Advocating for justice topic

The Sisters of Mercy advocate for justice in a variety of ways including, but not limited to, public witness (such as [protests](#), [demonstrations](#), [making statements](#), [writing op-eds](#), etc.), advocating for legislation (especially through [action alerts](#) and with coalitions), meeting with lawmakers and other leaders, and [advocacy education](#). Your video does not need to reference the Sisters of Mercy, or the Mercy Critical Concerns, but it should reflect the spirit of the Mercy Community in regards to advocating for justice.

Tips for producing a great video

Planning

What is the story you want to tell? Brainstorm ideas, then [storyboard](#) or script your plan. Good storytelling keeps viewers interested in your video.

Image Quality

Focus, lighting, frame composition and image stability all contribute to image quality. Careful attention to these details will help you produce a video that people want to watch.

Sound Quality

Not all messages are conveyed visually. Sound is an important component, and not all video cameras are good at recording audio. Paying attention to volume and background noise can help improve sound quality. Subtitles can assist when in places when speech is not clear. If you use them, make sure subtitles are clear and easy to read.

Orientation

Consider producing your video in portrait mode. Since we are interested in videos that can be posted on social media, and will likely be viewed on phones, portrait mode can be a better choice than landscape, which looks better on a computer screen.

Editing and Transitions

Choose essential scenes. Editing to hold the viewer's interest while keeping under 90 seconds and selecting appropriate transitions to move from one scene to the next will keep your video flowing.

Online Resources

Search out online resources that explain the video production process. Watching videos that others have created, and that you like, is another way to get ideas for your video.