



Using social media to reach families is a great way to ensure information is accessible, but the methods and frequency of use will depend on the unique characteristics of your region. Before you begin, answer the following questions:

- **Do families in my region look online for information?** If not, maybe social media isn't the right strategy for your families, and your time is best spent trying to connect in person or other means.
- **Where do families of young children go for online information about raising children?** There might be a particularly popular Facebook page families use, or a popular mommy blog in the region.
- **Do I have access to an existing account on social media that I can leverage to spread information?** Your organization may already have social media accounts. Can you become a manager or share information with the social media manager to use?
- **What is my goal for using social media?** Is it to create interaction with families or just to share information with them? The delivery method you use will depend on your answers.



If you are unsure of which method is best suited for your needs, review the chart below and find the right platform based on your objectives.

Objective	Social Media Strategy	Platforms to Use	Key Tips
Move your message to families.	<p>Use social media to have an ongoing presence as a resource for families.</p> <p>Follow individuals or organizations to stay up-to-date on new information.</p> <p>Post messages that are relevant to your followers, move your issue into the forefront of discussions, and make priority stakeholders think about your issue.</p>	Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Medium, Vimeo, Periscope, Snapchat, WordPress	<p>Stay on message; use your Parent Toolkit information to support your online activity.</p> <p>Tag appropriate individuals and organizations.</p> <p>Reply to positive comments and questions to gain new supporters and deepen the conversation about your issue.</p> <p>Do not engage in arguments within the platform.</p>
Cultivate and engage early childhood champions.	<p>Share pictures, news, and event updates.</p> <p>Follow individuals or organizations you are seeking to engage as champions, including members of the media.</p>	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn	<p>Strategically tag appropriate individuals and organizations.</p> <p>Share posts from other individuals or organizations to build a coalition around your issue.</p>
Position your organization as an expert.	<p>Publish articles or resources (as full articles or links) about early childhood.</p> <p>Engage in conversations that allow you to demonstrate subject matter expertise.</p>	LinkedIn, Medium, Facebook, Twitter, WordPress	Reply to positive comments and questions to gain new supporters and to deepen the conversation about your issue.
Get followers and families to take action.	<p>Create and post a call to action to help move families to respond.</p> <p>Post about an existing initiative within your organization and ask your followers to join.</p>	Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, Vimeo, Periscope, Snapchat, WordPress	Stay positive and thank those who take part.
Tell a story, share successes, and give recognition.	<p>Include relevant photos or videos in all posts whenever possible.</p> <p>Provide followers an inside look into your world by using photos, audio, and/or video.</p> <p>Share photos and videos of a successful campaign or initiative led by your organization.</p> <p>Use photos and videos to recognize and thank a champion or critical team member.</p>	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, Medium, Vimeo, Periscope, WordPress	<p>Stay on message. Share only visuals that are related to your core objectives.</p> <p>Ensure your content is well edited, has clear visual and audio quality, and is related to your core objectives.</p>

Create a Calendar

Once you know **where** to meet your target families, create a calendar for yourself (or whoever will be posting the content) to make sure your social media engagement is consistent and impactful. You might use several delivery methods, in which case consider the value of cross-posting information to give your posts the greatest possible exposure.

Below is an example of a potential calendar. Don't forget to build in the internal time needed to make sure the use of social media is impactful.

Platform	Posting Frequency	How Often to Monitor	Time Commitment
Facebook	Mon-Fri: 1-2x per day Sat/Sun: 1x per day	5-6 times per day during normal business hours 1-2 times in the evening 2-3 times each weekend day	30 minutes per work day (to be combined with Twitter)
Twitter	Every day: At least 3-5x per day	5-6 times per day during normal business hours 1-2 times in the evening 2-3 times each weekend day	30 minutes per work day (to be combined with Facebook)

Types of Content & Where to Find It

Some content can be shared at any time throughout the year. Other content may be more relevant to the specific time of year and what's going on in the world at large at that time. Content for sharing can be found on the website www.michigan.gov/mikidsmatter



Social Media Glossary

The following are some common social media platforms you might use.

Twitter is an online social networking service that enables users to post and read short 280-character messages called "tweets."

Facebook is an online social networking website that allows registered users to create profiles, upload photos and video, send messages, and keep in touch with friends, family, and colleagues.

Instagram is an online mobile photo sharing, video-sharing, social networking platform that allows users to take, edit, and share videos and photos. The IGTV feature allows users to share long-form videos with followers.

YouTube is a video sharing website that allows users to upload, view, rate, share, and comment on videos.