



Partner Toolkit

Rising Incivility

The freedom to express oneself, to explore alternative theories and beliefs, and to openly criticize ideas are all essential components in retaining our fundamental freedoms. As former president, Harry S. Truman said, "Once a government [or a people] is committed to the principle of silencing the voice of opposition, it has only one way to go, and that is down the path of increasingly repressive measures, until it becomes a source of terror to all its citizens and creates a country where everyone lives in fear."

Recent events at campaign rallies have not only threatened to limit America's freedom of speech, but have resulted in the physical violence between those expressing different opinions. In light of many such incidents occurring at rallies in Fayetteville, St. Louis and Tucson, it is imperative that we highlight the fact that uncivil words have led to uncivil actions. These incidences of physical violence are not happening in a silo; they are the direct result of the nature of the rhetoric expressed by those competing for our nation's highest office.

Core research conducted by the National Institute for Civil Discourse (NICD) has determined that while people have different standards for identifying political activity, nearly everyone agrees that threatening physical harm and using racial, religious, ethnic or sexual slurs is uncivil.

Recent polling by Weber Shandwick found that 95 percent of Americans think civility is a problem, with 74 percent reporting that it has gotten worse in recent years. Seventy percent think that incivility has risen to "crisis" levels, an increase from 2014. Furthermore, many parents have expressed embarrassment that they aren't able to watch the debates with their children for fear of showing them bad behavior, bad language, and bad role models who are nevertheless in the running to lead the country.

In conclusion, NICD was founded to preserve our First Amendment rights by eliminating political dysfunction and incivility, and allowing diverse viewpoints to be heard and discussed. The increasing examples of incivility on the campaign trail are a rising threat to America's ability to preserve those rights. With this threat reaching a crisis level, thousands of groups and individuals are beginning to plead for the restoration of civility in our political dialogue. Left unchecked, our lack of civility in all walks of life will compromise our freedoms of safety, mutual respect, and basic humanity. NICD's commitment is to take action now, and be a force for improving our nation's political dialogue. We welcome your participation.



Revive Civility Campaign

The rising incivility in the 2016 campaign is concerning, and the National Institute for Civil Discourse (NICD) believes now more than ever we need to focus on how we can respectfully share different opinions.

Our [Revive Civility](#) campaign will focus on defining civility, fostering conversations that will help candidates and elected officials transcend their political differences, and empowering the public to hold politicians accountable for their actions.

There are three essential components to this campaign:

1. **Standards of Conduct for Campaigns:** NICD, in collaboration with political leaders, state legislators, leading researchers and civility experts, is rolling out a [Standards of Conduct for Campaigns](#). The Standards should serve as a guide for candidates, the media, and the public as they bear witness to the election season. As the nation becomes consumed by the heated rhetoric of a divisive campaign season, having clear, research-backed definitions is essential to building a dialogue on this important issue.
2. **Citizen Toolkits:** We are empowering citizens to get off the sidelines. We must call on our elected officials to act civilly, denounce examples of bad behavior, and not compromise on this foundational element of our democracy. A [Citizen Toolkit](#) will provide actions that citizens can take to get off the sidelines and start Reviving Civility in our politics and in our everyday lives.
3. **Text, Talk, Revive Civility:** Through an innovative text messaging platform, [Text, Talk, Revive Civility](#) will bring together thousands of citizens across the country to educate them on how civility strengthens our democracy, how to advance a more civil discourse, and how to hold elected officials and candidates accountable when they do not uphold our ideals.

We are currently enlisting partners to stand with us in a national effort to revive civility, because our democracy depends on it.

Becoming a Revive Civility Partner

Join us in the campaign to Revive Civility. To become a partner, your organization agrees to share the Revive Civility campaign with your network (using the materials included in this toolkit) and in exchange your organization will be added to our website and materials as an organizational partner.



To become a partner, please send your organization description and high-resolution logo to Raquel Goodrich at rgoodrich@email.arizona.edu.

Revive Civility Launch

The campaign to Revive Civility will launch on Wednesday, May 25, 2016. On that date, partners should send the Revive Civility messaging to their networks, asking them to become a Citizen for Reviving Civility. The campaign will run through the November elections, at which time the campaign will continue on with a more general civility focus.

Campaign Messaging

This toolkit provides sample communications materials for partner organizations to use. Please promote Revive Civility among your networks on a variety of different platforms. Based on the types of networks you have, this could include blog posts, social media messages, eblasts, incorporating the campaign on your website, etc. Please refer to the following Appendices for sample content.



Appendix A: Talking Points

- The rising incivility in the 2016 campaign is concerning, and we believe now more than ever we need to focus on how we can respectfully share different opinions.
 - Recent polling by Weber Shandwick found that 95 percent of Americans think civility is a problem, with 74 percent reporting that it has gotten worse in recent years. Seventy percent think that incivility has risen to “crisis” levels, an increase from 2014.
- Civility—which is about mutual respect-- is a foundational element of our democracy. And NICD is focused this election season on reminding candidates and the public of the important components that build this respect.
 - The Standards of Conduct should serve as a guide for candidates, the media, and the public as they bear witness to the election season. As the nation becomes consumed by the heated rhetoric of a divisive campaign season, having clear, research-backed definitions is essential to building a dialogue on this important issue.
- Without respectful dialogue, our legislatures fall into gridlock. The public is frustrated, and our system is no longer functioning as it needs to. To overcome this, NICD brings together elected officials from across the ideological spectrum to find common ground.
 - The Next Gen program has worked with dozens of lawmakers across the country who have successfully built new relationships that transcend partisan divides and have yielded more productive working relationships.
- We are also empowering citizens to get off the sidelines. We must call on our elected officials to act civilly, denounce examples of bad behavior, and not compromise on this foundational element of our democracy.
 - Our Citizen Toolkit provides steps to help Revive Civility, in our politics and our everyday lives.
 - Our innovative text messaging platform, Text, Talk, Revive Civility, will bring together thousands of citizens across the country to educate them on how civility strengthens our democracy, how to advance a more civil discourse, and how to hold elected officials and candidates accountable when they do not uphold our ideals.



Appendix B: Press Release

Partners Join National Effort to Revive Civility in Campaigns

Contact: Raquel Goodrich, National Institute for Civil Discourse
520-621-0082, rgoodrich@email.arizona.edu

EMBARGOED until May 25, 2016 – The freedom to express oneself, to explore alternative theories and beliefs, and to openly criticize ideas are all essential components in retaining our fundamental freedoms. As former president, Harry S. Truman said, “Once a government [or a people] is committed to the principle of silencing the voice of opposition, it has only one way to go, and that is down the path of increasingly repressive measures, until it becomes a source of terror to all its citizens and creates a country where everyone lives in fear.”

Recent polling by Weber Shandwick found that 95 percent of Americans think civility is a problem, with 74 percent reporting that it has gotten worse in recent years. Seventy percent think that incivility has risen to “crisis” levels, an increase from 2014. Furthermore, many parents have expressed embarrassment that they aren’t able to watch the debates with their children for fear of showing them bad behavior, bad language, and bad role models who are nevertheless in the running to lead the country.

Core research conducted by the National Institute for Civil Discourse (NICD) has determined that while people have different standards for identifying political activity, nearly everyone agrees that threatening physical harm and using racial, religious, ethnic or sexual slurs is uncivil.

The National Institute for Civil Discourse is spearheading the Revive Civility Campaign as a **national grassroots campaign empowering citizens to demand the revival of civility for the sake of our democracy.** The Revive Civility Campaign will amplify the condemnation of political incivility via the mobilization of press coverage while simultaneously creating a civility movement by giving citizens and leaders solution-oriented actions to call for civility in the presidential elections.

Organizations are coming together in a collective concern of the tone of incivility in 2016 campaigns. The National Institute for Civil Discourse is creating the Revive Civility campaign to join people together who share a vision of a more civil nation.

Official partners of Revive Civility include... [include partners here].

To learn more and join this effort, visit nicd.arizona.edu/revive-civility or contact Raquel Goodrich at rgoodrich@email.arizona.edu.



Appendix C: Sample Email

Invite an organization to join the effort

Dear _____:

I am writing to ask for your support in reviving civility in our democracy.

The National Institute for Civil Discourse is spearheading the [Revive Civility Campaign](#) as a **national grassroots campaign empowering citizens to demand the revival of civility for the sake of our democracy**. This nationwide campaign provides tools every American can use to help revive civility during one of the most negative campaigns we have seen. The citizen toolkit provides ideas and actions everyone can take to help Revive Civility and the partner toolkit provides information on how organizations can join.

The first step in joining the campaign is to go to the [website](#), read the Standards of Conduct, and if you agree, sign them as an individual. Your support along with others across the country will help us get out the message that Civility Matters, especially when we are talking about the future of our country. Upon signing the Standards, you will become a Citizen for Reviving Civility, and we will send you a weekly bulletin on the Revive Civility campaign and how you can take action to revive civility in our politics and everyday lives.

To become an organizational partner, contact Raquel Goodrich at rgoodrich@email.arizona.edu.

Please also pass this information along to all your friends, colleagues and neighbors who are as concerned as the rest of us about the impact of the incivility in the 2016 campaign.

Your support is greatly appreciated!

Thank you!

Sincerely, _____



Invite an individual to join the effort

Dear _____:

I am writing to ask for your support in reviving civility in our democracy.

The National Institute for Civil Discourse is spearheading the [Revive Civility Campaign](#) as a **national grassroots campaign empowering citizens to demand the revival of civility for the sake of our democracy**. This nationwide campaign provides tools every American can use to help revive civility during one of the most negative campaigns we have seen. The citizen toolkit provides ideas and actions everyone can take to help Revive Civility.

The first step in joining the campaign is to go to the [website](#), read the Standards of Conduct, and if you agree, sign them as an individual. Your support along with others across the country will help us get out the message that Civility Matters, especially when we are talking about the future of our country. Upon signing the Standards, you will become a Citizen for Reviving Civility, and we will send you a weekly bulletin on the Revive Civility campaign and how you can take action to revive civility in our politics and everyday lives.

Please also pass this information along to all your friends, colleagues and neighbors who are as concerned as the rest of us about the impact of the incivility in the 2016 campaign.

If you have any questions, please contact Raquel Goodrich at rgoodrich@email.arizona.edu. Your support is greatly appreciated!

Thank you!

Sincerely, _____



Appendix D: Sample Social Media Messages

The sample messages below can help your organization get started on how to message Revive Civility through social media.

Campaign Hashtag: #ReviveCivility

Sample Campaign Messages

Join us in a movement to #ReviveCivility: <http://bit.ly/ReviveCivility>

Help #ReviveCivility. Our democracy depends on it: <http://bit.ly/ReviveCivility>

Are people around you being uncivil? Learn what you can do to #ReviveCivility: <http://bit.ly/ReviveCivility>

Politics are so uncivil. So we're helping to #ReviveCivility. You should too: <http://bit.ly/ReviveCivility>

Just be kind. Please. <http://bit.ly/ReviveCivility>

Taking a stand against incivility? Find out how here: <http://bit.ly/ReviveCivility>

Don't like what you are hearing? Speak up for civility: <http://bit.ly/ReviveCivility>

Standards of Conduct

We think our candidates, the media, and the public should use these Standards of Conduct to #ReviveCivility. Sign up if you agree: <http://bit.ly/CivilityStandards>

Citizen Toolkit

Want to help #ReviveCivility? Get your citizen toolkit here: <http://bit.ly/ReviveCivility>

Text, Talk, Revive Civility

In an increasing uncivil world, let's talk to help #ReviveCivility: grab some friends and text CIVILITY to 89800. Learn more: <http://bit.ly/ReviveCivility>