



External Brand Messaging Guide

For partners, supporters and community ambassadors

For guidance & approvals, please contact Lauren Nelson, Marketing & Communications Manager:
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PURPOSE

Use this guide when posting on social media, creating promotional materials, speaking with reporters or talking publicly about Make-A-Wish South Carolina. It highlights the language that keeps our shared message accurate, respectful and focused on the life-changing impact of a wish.

Our Foundation

MISSION

Together, we create life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses.

VISION

To grant the wish of every eligible child.

TAGLINE

Transform lives, one wish at a time.

How Our Voice Should Feel

Straightforward

Direct and clear, not terse or dry.

Sincere

Warm, authentic and personal, not pretentious or sappy.

Powerful

Bold, engaging and informed, not aggressive or academic.

Vibrant

Compelling and expressive, not overemotional.

The Core Message

A WISH IS EMPOWERING AND LIFE-AFFIRMING

A wish does not signal the end. It can be the start of feeling normal again, a source of strength during treatment and the beginning of renewed hope. Focus on the positive, life-changing nature of a wish-come-true and the impact it can have before, during and after the wish experience.

Messaging Guidelines

Common misconceptions to avoid

- Make-A-Wish South Carolina is not a “last wish” organization. A wish is empowering and life-affirming, and many wish kids go on to learn to cope with or even beat their illnesses.
- Make-A-Wish South Carolina grants wishes to children with a wide range of critical illnesses, not only children with cancer.
- Funds donated to Make-A-Wish South Carolina stay with the South Carolina chapter and help grant wishes for eligible children across the state.
- Make-A-Wish South Carolina grants wishes statewide, serving children and families throughout South Carolina.

Lead with the child, not the illness

- Use “child with a critical illness” or “children with critical illnesses.”
- Avoid “critically ill child,” which defines the child by the condition.
- Use “wish kid,” lowercase, when referring to a child who receives a wish.
- Share a wish kid’s medical condition only when Make-A-Wish South Carolina has provided or approved it for public use. When in doubt, say “critical illness.”

Describe wishes accurately

- Say Make-A-Wish “grants wishes” or “helps make wishes possible.”
- A wish is a carefully planned journey that can bring hope, strength and joy before, during and after the experience.
- Focus on the specific wish experience and what it meant to the child and family.
- Use “wish granter,” not “wish grantor,” for a volunteer who helps make a wish possible.

Use the Make-A-Wish name correctly

- Use “**Make-A-Wish South Carolina**” throughout when referring to the South Carolina chapter.
- Do not use “Make-A-Wish” as a verb or as another word for a wish.
- Include the hyphens in “**Make-A-Wish**” & proper capitalization.

Choose specific, meaningful language

AVOID	USE INSTEAD	WHY
dream	wish	We grant wishes, not dreams.
magical	life-changing, transformational, extraordinary	Wishes take people, planning, time and resources to grant.
special	a specific detail about the person or moment	Specific language is more genuine and memorable.
critically ill child	child with a critical illness	This describes the condition without defining the child by it.
wish grantor	wish granter or volunteer	“Wish granter” is the preferred term.

Social Media Guidance

Before you post

- Use only photos, names, ages, medical information and wish details that Make-A-Wish South Carolina has approved for public sharing.
- Name Make-A-Wish South Carolina when the content relates to our chapter, and tag the chapter's official account.
- Keep the focus on the wish kid and the impact of the wish. Avoid language that centers your organization as the hero.
- Be accurate about your role. Use language such as "proud to support," "helping make wishes possible" or "supporting the Make-A-Wish mission."
- We encourage collaborative social media posts, but the language, graphics and timing must be approved by Make-A-Wish South Carolina before posting.
- If a detail is uncertain, leave it out and contact Lauren Nelson for guidance before posting.
- Refer to our [Social Media Guide](#) for more!

Sample social media language

PARTNER OR SUPPORTER POST

We are proud to support Make-A-Wish South Carolina and help create life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses. Together, we can bring hope, strength and joy to wish kids and their families.

FUNDRAISING POST

Your support can help make extraordinary wishes possible for children with critical illnesses across South Carolina. Join us in supporting Make-A-Wish South Carolina and helping more wish kids experience the hope and strength of a wish-come-true.

WISH STORY INTRODUCTION

Meet [first name], a wish kid who wished to [approved, specific wish description]. [Add one or two approved details that show the child's personality, anticipation or experience.]

Quick caption check

- ☐ Is the child at the center of the story?
- ☐ Are all names, images, medical details and wish details approved?
- ☐ Does the wording say "wish," not "dream"?
- ☐ Does the post avoid "magical," "special" and other vague descriptions?
- ☐ Does the caption sound warm, clear, hopeful and accurate?

Speaking with the Media

If a reporter contacts you about Make-A-Wish South Carolina, please notify Lauren Nelson before responding or connect the reporter directly with the chapter. When you are authorized to speak, stay within your own role and experience.

Safe, consistent talking points

- Make-A-Wish South Carolina creates life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses.
- A wish can bring hope, strength and joy to a child and family throughout the wish journey.
- Partners and supporters help make wishes possible through fundraising, awareness, resources and community involvement.
- The vision is to grant the wish of every eligible child.
- For questions about eligibility, referrals, a child's medical information or individual wish details, refer the reporter to Lauren Nelson.

Public Communication: Do and Do Not

DO	DO NOT
Use approved facts, photos and language.	Share private or unapproved details about a wish kid or family.
Describe children as "children with critical illnesses."	Define a child by the illness or use pity-based language.
Highlight hope, strength, joy and lasting impact.	Suggest a wish is a final experience or signals the end.
Be specific about the wish experience and your support.	Rely on vague terms such as "magical" or "special."
Say your organization supports Make-A-Wish South Carolina.	Imply that your organization independently grants wishes.
Refer detailed media, eligibility or medical questions to Lauren Nelson.	Guess, speculate or speak beyond your role.

Final Review Checklist

- ☐ The message is accurate and uses approved information.
- ☐ The wish kid is presented as a whole person, not defined by an illness.
- ☐ The language is hopeful and life-affirming without becoming overly sentimental.
- ☐ The content explains the impact of a wish or how supporters help make wishes possible.
- ☐ The Make-A-Wish name and brand terms are used correctly.
- ☐ Any media inquiry or sensitive question has been directed to Make-A-Wish South Carolina.

WHEN IN DOUBT

Pause before publishing and contact Lauren Nelson, Marketing & Communications Manager, at lnelson@sc.wish.org. It is always better to verify a detail than to correct it after it has been shared.