



# Strengthening Your Voice

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- Educating and Bringing Awareness to Policymakers
  - Our Community
  - Programs That Work
- Preparing
- Following Up



# Why Get Involved

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- You Are
- You Can
  - You already have the skills you need
  - It doesn't take that many of us
- You Should
  - There are things we want known
  - Democracy=Responsibility
  - Decision-makers REALLY need our help



# How Do We Affect Change?

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## **Educating the people who can make the changes you want**

- Informing Decision-Makers
  - Child abuse and neglect issues within your county
  - About great work being done
  - Using data, information and stories
- Talk to Other People
  - About issues of concern
  - Sharing the good work



# What You Need to Know

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- WHAT we are talking about – the issues
- WHO are making the rules – the players
- WHEN to target them – the process
- HOW to assure that they are informed – the message



# Know the Issues

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- We Know the Issues
- We Are Experts in Life and Work
- Solution as important as the problem, and we know those too!



# Michigan Context

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- Families Remain in Economic Distress
- Good/Bad News! Fixed our Structural Budget Deficit
- Limited Economic Tie To Child Well-Being
- Needs and Priorities Disconnected, Why?
  - Competition and ideology
  - **Policymakers may not hear about issues of concern or community successes**



# Know the Players

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- Who can make the change
- What interests them
- Who Do We Know
- Who Do We Need



# What Motivates You?

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# What Motivates Decision Makers

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- Friends
- Title or position
- Information
- Numbers
- Constituents
- Success
- Money



“When you need a friend, it’s  
too late to make one.”

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Mark Twain



# How Do We Get Them to Listen?

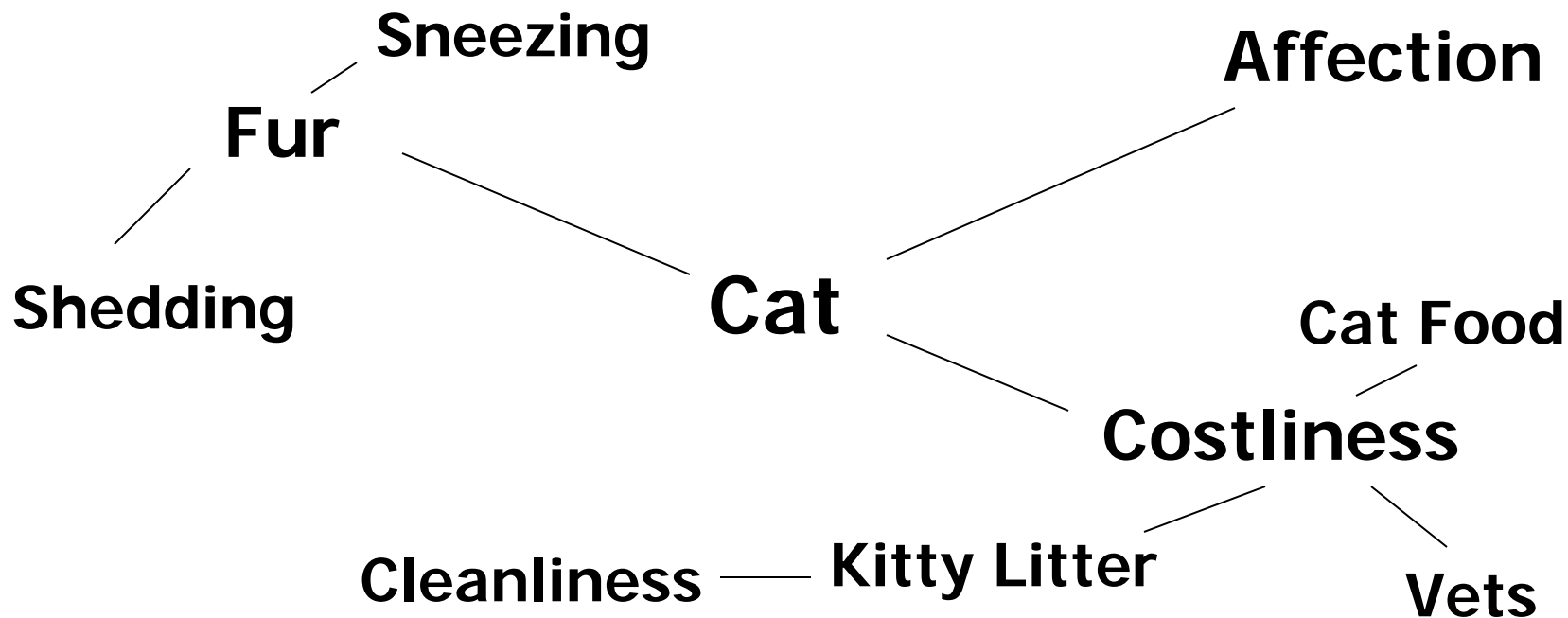
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- We use mental shortcuts to make sense of the world
- Based on our life experiences, including the media
- We use “frames” to filter new information



# Cat Frame

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# Putting Strategy Into Practice

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- What is your message?
- Who are your best messengers?
- What could you do to prepare?
  - KEY: Make an appointment for 4/16
- What could you do to follow-up?



# What To Expect in Lansing

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- Short Meetings
- Often Meeting With Staff – Hooray!
- Hand Them Something
- Leave With a Plan for Next Steps



# Prevention Awareness Day Follow-Up

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- Thank You
- Extend Invitation to Visit
- Ask About Coffee Hours and Go
- Include Policy Makers in Communications
- Build Relationships With Key Partners

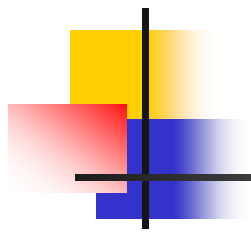


# Always Keep the Door Open

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- If they don't make decisions that you agree with...
  - Can you blame them? Did they know what you know?
  - Express disappointment, but look for other possibilities
- If all else fails...
  - Don't get angry
  - Get a better person elected/appointed/hired





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