

UN TETHERED 2021

THE HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLNESS CHAPTER

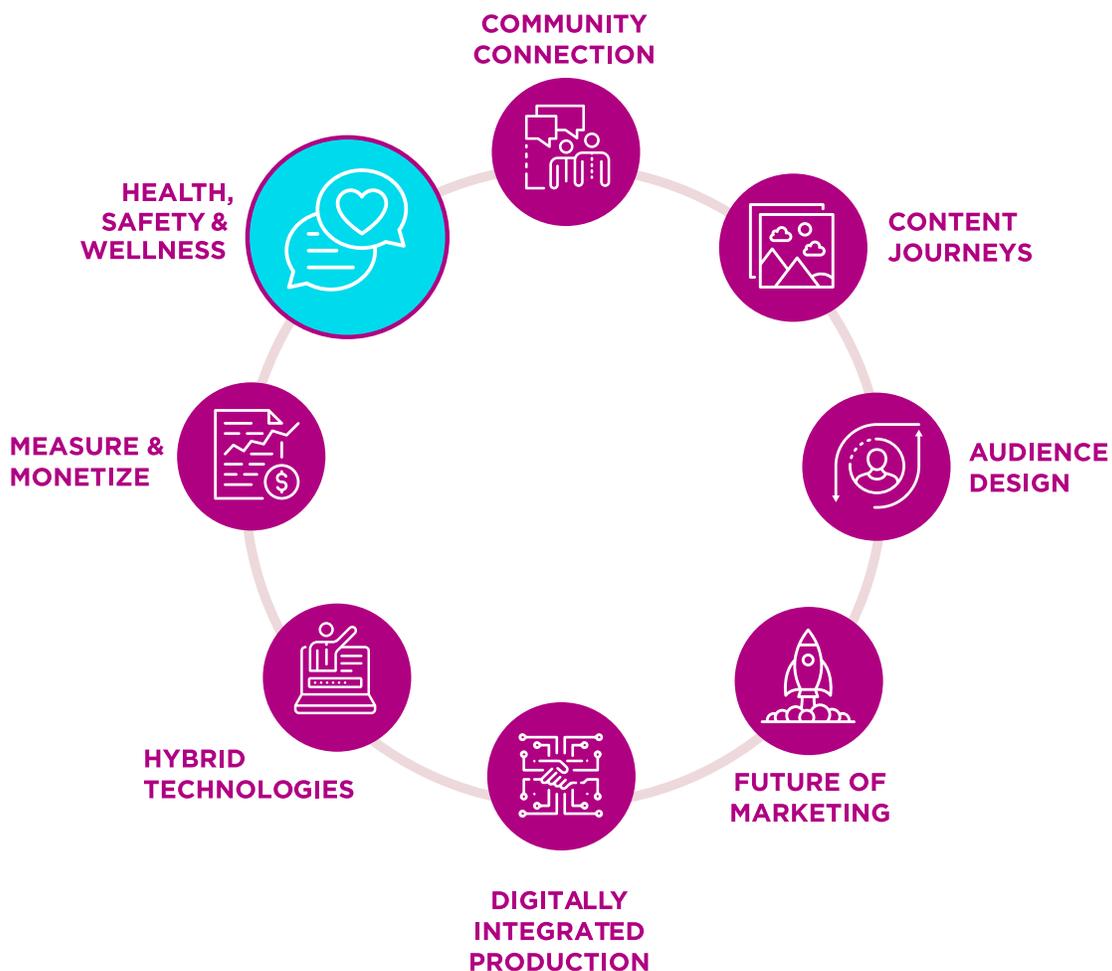


BIG IDEAS

It seems that nobody likes talking about safety—until we start talking about safety. Wow! Folks in the Health, Safety & Wellness circle workshops got fired up on the finer points of creating healthy environments, communicating to attendees, and dealing with skeptics, naysayers, and resisters. We combed through all the ideas and curated the best of them for you here.

As with the other chapters, we've sorted the content into mind blown moments and tactical ideas. The mind blown moments might give you a novel way to ponder an existing problem. These are best read while sipping your favorite caffeinated beverage and gazing skyward as your thoughts ping around your brain like pinballs at the arcade.

The tactical ideas section offers to-do's that you can road-test at your next event. For these, open up your favorite task-management or reminder app (a pencil and notepad will do the trick, too) and get crackin'.



MIND BLOWN MOMENTS

People first. Safety always! Okay, we're not working with live ammunition or dismantling Dr. Evil's latest threat to the world as we know it. But still. Let's keep it safe, people! Safety should be the number-one priority. The best way to do it: Create a safety culture. Rather than making safety a separate thing, bake it into everything you do.



Safety is sexy. Safety is no longer the red-headed stepchild that people would rather just ignore. As our helmet-wearing friends in the construction trades and motorcycle gangs can attest, safety is sexy. It's expected, too, and people want to know what you are doing to keep it that way. Make it fun with things like color-coded masks that identify tracks, core interests, or other community-building elements.

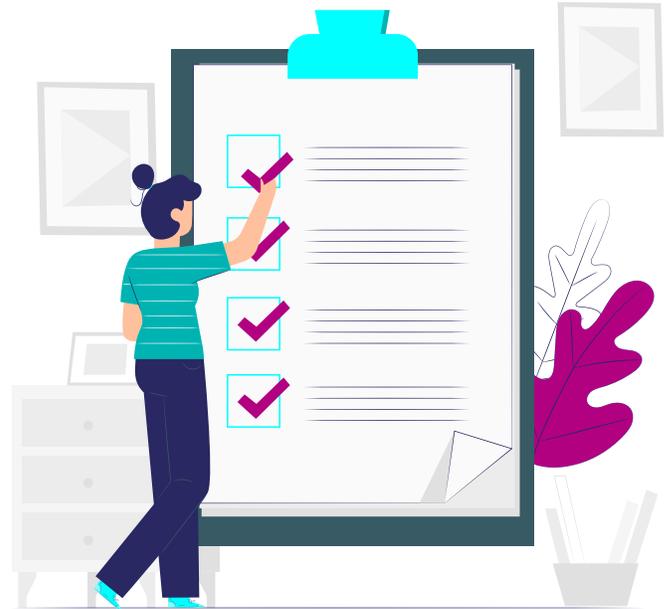
Get a slice of safety. We live in the real world where s!@# can happen. So no space can ever be 100% guaranteed safe. Think of your safety plan like several slices of Swiss cheese (Jarlsberg will do in a pinch.) Let's say proof of vaccination is one layer of cheese, and masking indoors is another. Each layer of protection can have holes, but as long as those holes don't line up, then you have a solid plan. Would you like mustard on that?



The COVID-19 safety officer is a full-time job. Whether you call it a COVID compliance officer, COVID safety officer, or pandemic compliance officer, those are all standalone roles on a production team. Don't combine their duties with other production responsibilities.

Stick to the plan. Communicate your expectations. Then stand firm on those expectations. If you fall asleep at the switch and let some things slip by, things could get ugly fast. Your firm's and your own rep are on the line. So stay vigilant.

Safety is an opportunity. When the spotlight is on, it's time to shine. When your event goes well, the afterglow of a successful conference not only feels good, but it lights up new opportunities. By hosting an event that serves as a model for others, you position your organization as a thought leader and prospect for future business. Be sure your stakeholders understand that.



TACTICS TO TEST

CHALLENGE 1: HOW DO WE CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS SAFE?

Our grandparents were big on the benefits of fresh air and hygiene. Turns out that their folk wisdom is back in vogue. As people begin to come together indoors again, they may be skeptical, tentative, and even a touch fearful. Your job is to ease their worried minds by taking steps to make their safety paramount.

A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

- The pandemic introduced us to the weird world of aerosols, droplets, and the startling images of what comes out of stage actors' and singers' open mouths. Translated: You want to exchange old, stuffy air with the fresh, outside stuff as often as possible. The ideal is about every 20 minutes. But once every hour is acceptable. Draw in fresh air from outside, and vent stale air back outside.



NO VAX, NO MASK, NO GO.

- As anyone who works in retail can attest, it's no fun having to turn away someone who refuses to wear a mask. But your responsibility to the health of the group makes this a no-brainer. Make proof of vaccination, negative test, or agreement to wear a mask 100% of the time a part of the registration process. If people don't agree to the rules, they can't register. Case closed.

WHERE YOU BEEN SO LONG?

- Look at the film and television world. On the shooting set, people collaborate closely. So everyone on set wears a contact tracing detector on a lanyard. The device records when you've been within six feet of another person for more than 10 minutes at a time—the threshold for possible exposure. That makes tracing a lot easier.

CHALLENGE 2: HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE TO OUR AUDIENCE AROUND SAFETY?

It's not like we expect to be told in advance of all the safety checks the engineers do (we hope) for the buildings we enter and the bridges we cross. We just put our trust in our systems (which, tragically, sometimes fail.) But with COVID-19, yeah, we want to know we're entering a safe environment before we step inside. That's where you come in.

COMMUNICATE FORWARD

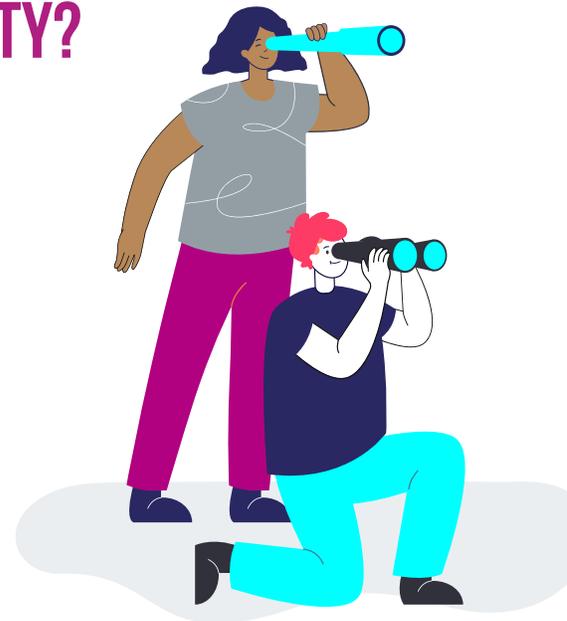
- So much of what we fear is based on simply being uneducated, under-informed, or misinformed about the threat. Counter that fear by being proactive. Rather than waiting for the inevitable questions that can arise over safety, anticipate their concerns. We call this communicating forward. Also, allow for questions. Your registrants may have questions that you didn't even think of. Let the conversation roll and have people share their concerns.

LOOK TO THE SKIES

- Who says safety videos have to be dull? Just look at those famous pre-flight safety videos from the likes of Virgin America, Qantas, and Air New Zealand. As those airlines illustrated, you can turn something as dull as how to buckle a seatbelt into something glitzy and entertaining. Get your sponsors, experts, and VIPs involved. Bonus: You can even use it as part of your marketing effort.

CROWD-SOURCED CROWD CONTROL

- In the events business, we love a good crowd. But there can be times when we'd like to distribute the crowd more evenly. Rather than trying to shepherd people yourself, try a high-tech fix that empowers event-goers to self-monitor congestion. These apps allow audience members to communicate with each other about how many people are in each space, ballroom, or breakout room. And they can be paired with RFID tracking on badges. If the app sees a session is too crowded for comfort, attendees can check out another one, visit an expo booth, network, or try a breakout room.



CHALLENGE 3:

HOW DO WE CONFRONT STAKEHOLDERS WHO ARE RESISTANT TO ADDITIONAL SAFETY MEASURES?

We live in an era rife with mistrust of authority. If it sometimes feels as if you're the parents of surly teenagers, take heart. Our brainstormers shared some of their secrets for turning the hecklers from the peanut gallery into enthusiastic endorsers of your safety protocols. It's all about getting people to take ownership of their actions.

CHANGE THE FRAME

- Few of us like being told what to do unless we ask for it ourselves. So when you notice the heels digging in and wallets snapping shut when the topic turns to safety, turn the tables. Give them the opportunity to be a thought leader when it comes to producing a thoughtful, safely executed event. Suddenly, the clouds will open and angel choirs will sing as the resisters turn into enthusiastic compliers. Okay, maybe not quite so dramatic. But you get the idea.

THE 80-20 RULE

- And if you run into concerns about the extra costs for health and safety? Talk about how it helps them scale their revenue. Let them know how putting a stake in the ground with safety is sexy, fun, and appealing to ticket buyers. Don't worry about the 20 percent of people who don't want masks and don't care about safety. Focus on the 80 percent who do. You'll have much better talking points and a better framework for discussion.

PLAY WHAT IF

- Still getting pushback? Start a conversation with the skeptics. Look them straight in the face and say, "If you were attending the event, tell me what you would want to know and what would you need to feel safe?" This usually works like a charm. When you reverse roles and put the question to them, you'd be surprised at how fast the skeptics transform from naysayers to problem-solvers.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

- At the end of the day, you have one thing that you will carry with you your entire life. And that is your reputation. Reputation takes decades to build and seconds to wreck. Invest in protecting your name by making sure that you are doing everything you can to keep people safe.

FACILITATORS AND PARTNERS

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Thank you to our Health, Safety & Wellness Circle Partner
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LOVE THESE IDEAS?

Join us at the Fall UNTETHERED event for more ideas, inspiration, and innovation! Go to untethered.events to learn more.