



Science Review

All documents that are intended for public dissemination; include the American Heart Association (AHA)/Voices for Healthy Kids branding or name OR are created using grant dollars; and include statistics, statements of fact, or make scientific claims must be reviewed by the AHA Office of Science and Medicine.

Why we do science review:

Assure that the public gets credible and reliable information

Protect the AHA's credibility as a science-based organization

Make tracking reviews and proposed changes easy

It helps build credibility of individuals delivering this information to policymakers

Questions to Ask Yourself When Deciding if a Product Must Go Through Science Review

Does the product contain the AHA or Voices for Healthy Kids (VFHK) name, tagline and/or logo OR was it created using VFHK grant dollars?

Is the product for public dissemination? (flyer, brochure, advertisement, fact sheet, presentation materials, etc.).

Does the product contain a statistic, include a statement of fact, or make a scientific claim?

Examples:

- “The prenatal period through the first 3 years of life is a critical period when the foundation for a child’s lifelong health and well-being is built.”
- “When families can’t reliably access nutritious food, young children may miss critical building blocks for their health and development.”
- “SNAP is a lifeline for people who work hard but still struggle to afford food—more than half of working-age adults on SNAP are employed.”
- “Access to paid family and medical leave is lowest among workers who may need it most.”

- “Mothers who have access to paid leave are more likely to breastfeed, which has been shown to reduce their risk of heart disease or stroke by about 10%.”
- “Heart conditions are one of the leading causes of pregnancy-related deaths in the United States.”

If yes, then the product **MUST** go through science review.

If no, then science review is not needed.

If you are unsure, ask your VFHK Advocacy Consultant. Better safe than sorry!

Timeline and required information to submit

If you have a document that needs to be science reviewed by the AHA, please follow these steps to submit your materials through the Advocacy Support Hub.

Start early! Science review can take 10 business days to be completed (with an additional 1 to 2 weeks for revisions).

Send the following information via the Advocacy Support Hub:

The document you would like reviewed

PDFs (full texts) to all studies and reports cited in the document

Best practices:

Use original sources where possible (i.e., the journal article cited in the report, instead of the report itself).

Look for sources published in the last 5 to 7 years.

Requested return by date

10 business days is the minimum time needed

Types of approvals

Approved

The product is approved with no further edits needed.

Approved with changes needed

The AHA Office of Science and Medicine has made edits or additions/deletions in the product that need to be made before it can be considered approved. The product does not need to be resubmitted again unless requested in the comments. However, the assumption is that the final product will incorporate the suggested changes before being deployed.

Needs Revision

Read the comments in the “needs revision” email from the AHA Office of Science and Medicine.

Once you have made ALL of the edits, the Voices for Healthy Kids staff will go into the original review and re-upload the product

Please put “revised” or the new date into the description of the new product

Not approved

This product cannot be approved by the AHA Office of Science and Medicine. Again, please read the comments in your email for further instructions.

When a document is not approved, it may be because of conflicting science or inaccurate information listed.

Remember! To reduce review time, materials developed using VFHK Science Fast Facts exactly as they are written will not need additional science review, which will reduce the overall product review time.

See more here: <https://voicesforhealthykids.org/campaign-resources/resource-library> and filter by “Science Fast Facts”