

Taking action

Okay, you've mastered the basic concepts of media literacy and learned the language of persuasion. You know how to deconstruct media and how to make your own media.

You've become media literate, but you still live in a media environment chock-full of stereotypes, misinformation and manipulation. What do you do?

Take action for a better media system!

In recent years, an international grassroots movement has developed. It takes many forms, including:

- Improving the local media environment. Most activists start local: They work to get advertising out of schools and Channel One out of the classroom. They fight "ad creep" in their communities and protect commercial-free zones like parks, public buildings and houses of worship.
- Challenging media messages. Whether it's stopping a racist advertising campaign or keeping news programs accountable to the truth, media activists keep the pressure on media makers. Media watchdog groups and media literate individuals have had a number of successes.
- Protecting and advancing independent media. Public television and radio are under assault, and most community-based, noncommercial media outlets struggle to survive. Media activists provide critical support for these alternatives to the corporate media system.
- Advocating media reform. When the FCC tried to loosen ownership rules that would have allowed big media corporations to get even bigger, an unprecedented 2 million people sent in public comments opposing the changes, and the people won. Today, several campaigns seek to limit the power of Big Media and open up space for alternatives.
- Demanding media justice. Too often, our media system produces negative, demeaning imagery. It renders many people invisible. And it provides too little funding and too few outlets through which people without a lot of money and power can tell their stories. A grassroots movement for media justice is emerging, led by communities of color, indigenous communities, and other working class communities.

Unlike some media literacy organizations that seek only to make us smarter media consumers, the New Mexico Media Literacy Project believes that media literacy leads to media activism.

Take the next step. Take action!