

AUDIENCE AWARD
SAN FRANCISCO INTL FILM FESTIVAL

Four kids

Four languages

One city

One world

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A film by Marcia Jarmel & Ken Schneider

EVENT PLANNING TOOLKIT

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Event Planning Toolkit

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From the Filmmakers

We are delighted you are screening *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* for your group or community. You are a critical part of the impact we hope the film can have —starting important, often hard-to-have, conversations in communities across the country.

We intend our film to speak for itself, but wanted to share the experience that led to our making it in the first place.

Ten years ago when we decided to enroll our son in one of San Francisco's two Chinese immersion schools, our friends and family thought we were crazy, since neither of us knew the language.

Four years later when we enrolled our second child, the response was totally different. "What an excellent opportunity!" "How lucky he is!" What had changed? Not our kids. Not the school. But the country, and, significantly, the times.

As parents in this language school we began to meet others—new immigrants and parents with family languages that had been lost, as well as native English speaking families like our own. Their stories felt to us like a window into many of the thorny dilemmas we face as a country now—about who we are, how we fit into the world around us, and most profoundly, what our children need to know to be citizens in the global world where they will find themselves. That trajectory led us to the stories we've told in *SPEAKING IN TONGUES*.

We would welcome an e-mail letting us know how it goes, and hope you will sign up for our newsletter and make use of the other tools we are developing in conjunction with our national engagement campaign. To find out more, contact us,, and download additional resources, visit our website: www.speakingintonguesfilm.info.

Best of luck with your efforts.

Marcia Jarmel & Ken Schneider
Filmmakers, *SPEAKING IN TONGUES*

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About the Film

Meet Jason, Durrell, Julian, and Kelly. Four typical American kids, with one exception. Their parents placed them in schools where, from the first day of kindergarten, their teachers speak a foreign language. *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* uses this scenario to explore the provocative notion that being bilingual can be a national asset regardless of your home language.

Taking us beyond rote arguments and stereotypes, this intimate and charming film witnesses the joys and challenges of these four diverse kids' journey to become global citizens and, in the process, reframes the contentious debate about bilingual education.

Winner of the Audience Award at the San Francisco International Film Festival, *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* will be broadcast on PBS in the fall of 2010.

For more information and to see the trailer, visit www.speakingintonguesfilm.info.

About this Toolkit & Community Screenings

This toolkit is designed for organizations, advocates, non-profits, and faith-based, grassroots, and student groups working to draw attention to and create dialogue around the issues raised in *SPEAKING IN TONGUES*.

Think of the toolkit as a menu of ideas to pick and choose from to create the most effective event for your goals and audience.

To acquire a DVD licensed for public performances, or organizational, library, or classroom use, visit www.speakingintonguesfilm.info.

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Getting Started

Consider your organization's goals and needs:

1) *IDENTIFY OBJECTIVES*

Why are you screening the film? How can it benefit and support your group or organization? Here are some ideas:

- **Raise awareness** about the benefits of multilingualism, the cost of lost languages, **and** how language skills can build Americans “cross-cultural competencies” and help us thrive in a global environment where we are all stakeholders.
- **Heighten visibility** of your organization and/or local issues.
- **Build bridges** between English Language Learners, and Heritage Language and native English speaking groups.
- **Educate** parents: new immigrants, heritage language speakers, or native English speakers about the benefits of multilingualism.
- **Create coalitions** with other organizations and inspire the development of new programs to provide opportunities for kids to become bilingual.
- **Engage general audiences** about the importance of language education in the schools.
- **Prompt local decision-makers** and business leaders to create and support language programs in the public schools.
- **Fundraise for your organization** by purchasing the ‘Pay for Itself Community Screening Package.’ For more information, visit our [‘Host a screening page.’](#)

2) *TARGET YOUR AUDIENCE*

Are you trying to reach a wide range of your community, or a more specific group. (e.g., parents, new immigrants, educators, policymakers, students, etc.)

3) *FRAME YOUR EVENT*

The most effective screenings use *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* to engage your audience in a targeted way. There are many possibilities. Here are some that have worked well for other groups:

- **Panel discussion:** Set up a post-screening panel with speakers who can attract the audience(s) you most want to reach. This could be a range of community members from interested individuals to community leaders, policymakers, or a more targeted group. Speakers can share a range of perspectives or all speak in support of a specific goal (e.g. supporting legislation, starting or expanding language opportunities in the schools, encouraging parents to continue speaking home languages to their children.) For more ideas, check out the panel discussion video on You Tube: <http://bit.ly/34KjUh> or the comments on our Facebook group: <http://bit.ly/1RWDcH> (please cut and paste link).
- **Town hall meeting:** Create a forum for members of the community to learn more about the intersection of language education, student achievement, school integration, global competitiveness, and cross cultural competency in a local context, with an opportunity to voice related ideas, questions or concerns. The panel can include a teacher, parents with different language perspectives, students, a school board member, an immigrant advocate, an elected official, a professor or other academic studying the relevant issues and most importantly, an experienced facilitator. Reserve as much time as possible for dialogue with the audience. **Note:** An event like this should be held in a neutral space so that all community members feel comfortable expressing their opinions such as the public library.
- **Cross-sector policy review:** An event designed to engage specific sectors, such as policy analysts, local government officials, and community leaders in a thoughtful solutions-based conversation. The dialogue would be carefully framed, focusing on ways to improve the situation. To keep the conversation focused, this type of event is better as a small, invitational screening.

4) *INCREASING IMPACT: Some ideas*

- **Keynote Speaker:** Invite a local leader or scholar to speak about some of the themes the film raises, such as: academic achievement, school integration, globalization, business perspectives or brain development. Make sure the speaker has a chance to view the film in advance.
- **Invite the Filmmakers:** Depending on availability, the filmmakers may be able to come speak about the film and to lead discussions. For more information about availability and fees, contact us at <http://www.speakingintonguesfilm.info>.
- **Partner with other organizations:** Invite local organizations to co-sponsor the event or speak about their work and local issues.

- **Experienced Moderator:** Use a moderator if you'll have a smaller group that will tackle tough issues or if you expect the discussion to be contentious.
- **Reception:** Plan a special meet-and-greet with refreshments to allow opportunities for networking either before or after the screening. Depending on your budget and capacity, this could be open to the public or invite-only.
- **Exhibit hall:** Provide opportunities for co-sponsors to display information about their organizations and relevant programs/services they provide.
- **Continuing Education Credit:** See if it is possible to arrange for teachers attending the event to receive continuing education credit.
- **Performances:** Invite a local choir, band, playhouse or dance troupe to perform a **short piece** dedicated to language or cross cultural experiences.
- **Co-Sponsoring Organizations:** We strongly encourage including other organizations in your event plans, as it helps you broaden your reach and establish new, potentially long-term coalitions. Allied organizations can get involved in a range of ways including getting the word out about the film through newsletters, flyers, and websites, contributing time or resources to the screening event, and/or participating in a post-screening panel discussion.

There are many groups that would make good co-sponsors, including education and business associations, teachers unions, PTAs, parenting groups, immigrant support organizations, rotary clubs, universities, film societies, and media/film centers.

The key in approaching co-sponsors is to help them understand how your event supports their organizational priorities, and how they will benefit from being associated with your plans. Be sure to allow enough lead-time – building new relationships often takes time.

For on-campus screenings consider inviting departments, research centers, and student organizations that have an interest in the topic to be part of your event. This will increase visibility and help spotlight the issues in the film.

- **Action Steps:** Offer motivated audience members ways they can help or become involved—right now, after the screening! For example, they can volunteer at a local organization, join a working group, write to their school board or legislature. Offer specific ideas. Think about giving people something to do immediately (e.g. have postcards available for people to write to legislators, a petition to sign, a group to join).

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Getting the Word Out

People will come to events that feel relevant, important, and timely. Since *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* covers many issues—education, immigration integration, the achievement gap, school segregation, globalization, and cross cultural communications—there are many possible current event “hooks” for particular media outlets or communities. And, because *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* is an award-winning film, you can reach “beyond the choir” to engage general audiences more interested in a rich, emotional, cinematic experience, than an exploration of “important issues.”

Take into account how best to reach your target audiences. Not everyone uses e-mail, and not everyone hangs out at progressive coffee shops. A clear understanding of how each segment of your audience gets their information will make your outreach more effective. The best strategy is likely to be a combination of the techniques listed below. And remember, good publicity will do much more than attract an audience: it will bring your message to a wider audience than those that can attend the event itself.

Be sure to send us your event information info@patchworkfilms.com so we can publicize it on our website, newsletter, and Facebook pages.

1) *VIRAL WEB OUTREACH*

For audiences using the web, this is one of the most effective tools for publicity, but since attention spans are short, it works best when used in conjunction with other strategies.

In all electronic outreach, be sure to include a link to www.speakingintonguesfilm.info so people can view the trailer, or better yet, embed the *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* trailer on your website so people can see a preview!

- **Newsletter or e-mail announcement:** You can use the downloadable flyer templates available at www.speakingintonguesfilm.info as the basis to create an email announcement to spread the word about your event. We recommend you send out these emails at least twice: two weeks before, and then a reminder a few days before your event.
- **Blogs:** Reach out to bloggers interested in your subject or popular with your target audience. Even a brief mention with a link to the event is helpful. Be sure to send them information to link to or embed the *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* trailer from www.speakingintonguesfilm.info onto their site.

- **List serves, Yahoo and Google groups:** Post announcements with a link to the trailer on e-mail lists that serve your target audience (parents, students, teachers, etc.).
- **Facebook, MySpace and Twitter:** Social networks like Facebook, MySpace and Twitter have become hugely important in reaching certain audiences, and can be especially useful when there's a Facebook group or MySpace page connected to a specific local community such as a university, local organization, etc.

Set up an "event" and invite members of your community to forward and distribute the event information to friends. (Be sure to enable the features that allow people to forward your event information to their friends.)

You can also just send a message with the event information to your friends and to groups that might be interested, including links to the *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* website and to Facebook group: <http://bit.ly/1RWDcH> (you need to cut and paste this link). If you are on Facebook yourself, post info and a link in your status.

2) *POSTERS & FLYERS*

Putting up posters and flyers around your community, in the right coffee shops, libraries, laundromats, and other community bulletin boards can be incredibly effective. We offer a free downloadable mini-poster template at www.speakingintonguesfilm.info that you can easily customize to include your event details and then print on your own printer and/or photocopy.

Ideas for distributing posters and flyers:

- Leave a stack of flyers at appropriate local businesses and ask if you can place a mini-poster in their window. Try video stores, coffee shops, restaurants, community centers, barbershops/salons, churches, synagogues, schools, campuses, libraries, and anywhere else that your audience spends time.

You can also try placing an ad on local bus systems, on school shuttles, and similar places. (Some ambitious organizers have even gotten sponsorship from a local bus system in the form of free ad space!)

- Distribute flyers at events with similar themes. Be sure to send (or e-mail) flyers to co-sponsoring organizations to distribute at their events.
- Ask local organizations working on related issues to distribute flyers and put up a mini-poster or forward an e-mail to their networks.
- The Screening Kits available on our website also include a striking 24"x 36" full-size movie poster that can attract attention for your event! Put it up in a strategic location. Attach a simple flyer at the bottom with the basic details about your event.

3) LOCAL MEDIA

Beginners can find an excellent overview at: <http://www.hersheycause.com/clients-cause.php>

For a full tutorial on news releases from the SPIN Project check out: <http://www.spinproject.org/article.php?list=type&type=22>.

Think about who is most likely to understand and appreciate your event, and what media your target audience listens to, reads, and logs on to. By targeting your core audience, you might decide that it makes more sense to focus on, say, an alternative weekly paper that already covers innovative community initiatives or local ethnic media vs. the headline-driven daily paper that tends to focus on crime and celebrity.

Below are some basic tips for your media outreach:

- Use the template press release available at www.speakingintonguesfilm.info as a guide to create your own. Interesting details to include would be a complete list of the co-sponsoring organizations, information on local language programs, statistics on home language from your school district or community, or any local efforts to increase language learning opportunities. Relevant national statistics can shed light on the local situation (see the facts section of www.speakingintonguesfilm.info for ideas.) Be sure to make a special mention if your event will feature the filmmakers or other special guests.
- Ten days before the event, issue the release to a wide range of mainstream, alternative, community, and specialized media (radio, tv, print, web). Make sure to send it to reporters covering education and immigration issues, arts/entertainment and metro sections. Compare notes with your co-sponsors to make sure you reach all the relevant press only once.
- If press want photos or a press kit about the film itself, you can always direct them to www.speakingintonguesfilm.info where they can download materials directly.
- Get the event on calendar listings in your city's weekly publication(s) and on the web.
- Make calls to local television and radio programs. Let them know about your event, and be prepared to give them contact and title information of local experts or advocates that are available for interviews. Pay particular attention to local radio shows and shows that focus on themes in *SPEAKING IN TONGUES*, as they frequently need guests and may be very happy to promote a local event! Some suggested contacts:
 - Local TV news assignment editors
 - Public affairs or magazine programs producers
 - Talk radio or local/community radio producers and hosts
- A couple of days prior to your event contact the people you sent press materials to and encourage them to attend the event. Pitch the value of this unique screening,

remind them of local angles, and the importance of educating people about the issues addressed in the film.

For Campus screenings:

- Post information on websites, in newsletters, on twitter, and in blogs at your school and at other schools in the area.
- Create a Facebook event and encourage students to forward it widely. (Don't forget to link to our Facebook page at: <http://bit.ly/1RWDcH>. (please cut and paste this link)
- Send press release to on-campus newspapers & publications, and on-campus radio & TV.
- Place flyers around campus, on tables in student mailrooms and dormitories and do chalking.
- Make a big banner outside a particular building (like Student Union, etc) advertising the event.
- Ask professors to offer school credit – this is a great way to bring students to the event, and they're never disappointed afterwards!
- Ask relevant departments to ask their professors to announce the event in classes.
- Ask all the organizations and departments involved to include the information about the event in their newsletters.

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Before the Discussion Begins

1. Pass around an e-mail sign up sheet.

This will help you keep in touch with people concerned with the issues addressed in *SPEAKING IN TONGUES*. (Please remember to send us a copy, so we can build the nationwide network for our campaign as well.)

2. Pass out the postcards that came with your *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* Screening Kit.

These postcards will help audience members carry the message of *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* with them, find out more about the issues, and share the film with their network. Distribute any other materials (flyers, etc.), at this time, as some people may leave before the end of the post-screening discussion.

At www.speakingintonguesfilm.info you'll find a one-page *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* flyer that you can download and distribute along with info about local issues and actions.

3. Announce that you'll be selling the DVDs that came with your *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* Screening Kit.

In the Screening Kit, you received extra *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* DVDs to sell or raffle to cover the cost of the screening kit and raise funds for your organization. Announce that these DVDs are available before discussion. Have someone stationed at a table at the back of the room so that people walk by the DVDs as they leave. Our experience is that people normally want to buy DVDs after a screening, and every DVD out there in the world is doing good work!

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Tips for Post-Screening Discussion

Complex films like *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* can raise a range of emotions, questions and/or concerns from the audience. The post-screening discussion gives you an opportunity to address these questions and concerns and motivate the audience to get involved or take action toward your group's goals. At www.speakingintonguesfilm.info you'll find a guide to help focus the discussion.

1) *PANELISTS*

Your post-screening discussion will vary depending on your event objectives, but it's always a good idea to have a range of perspectives represented on a panel.

- Your co-sponsors are great resources for identifying potential panelists for the discussion. Also, they'll have more incentive to promote the event if they're being represented on the panel.
- For a cross-sector discussion, you might include: a parent in an immersion program or with a bilingual family, a teacher, a business person who looks for multilingual employees, a city or state level educational policy person, a school board member, a local politician, someone who works with new immigrants, an academic or researcher from a nearby college or university, a policy expert, or an organizer experienced with education, immigrant integration, or related issues. If you're planning a town hall-style event, it's good to include an experienced facilitator as well.
- If possible, ask panelists to watch the film before the event.
- Give your panelists an idea of who will be in the audience, so they can tailor the discussion. For example, if you anticipate a general audience, ask panelists to tone down any sector-specific jargon.
- Have a translator present if you'll have audience members with limited English proficiency.

2) *MEETING YOUR OBJECTIVES*

The way the discussion is framed can be helpful in meeting your objectives.

- If you're hoping to build coalitions create new programs, or enhance existing programs, the discussion should be action-oriented. Focus on what needs to be done, how to facilitate action, and how various community sectors can contribute.
- If you'd like to raise your organization's visibility, showcase your press, potential funders, and other influential decision makers.

- If your main objective is public education, have fact sheets handy. See the *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* website for downloadable examples.
- Offer your audience members ways to get involved, and information about specific actions they can take locally or nationally. You can direct them to the *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* website for more information (www.speakingintonguesfilm.info) or your own website or to other local organizations.

Here are some good discussion starters:

- Ask the panelists for their take on the situation in your area. What are the issues? What programs are available? Is there an Active English-only movement?
- What's the biggest challenge you're facing in creating more opportunities for bilingualism?
- Most kids can't take language until high school, the hardest time to start learning. Why not?
- Not every child can be in an immersion program now. What benefits have you seen in other types of language programs?
- What can we do as teachers, parents, members of this community to make more language learning opportunities available to our kids?
- What can those of us working in schools do to lay the ground-work for bigger change?
- Tell me a story about what you've seen that's made you a believer.

3) *CONTROLLING THE DISCUSSION*

- An experienced moderator can keep the discussion moving and field questions from the audience.
- Introduce each speaker and explain how their work is relevant to the issues raised in the film.
- Decide whether each speaker should give a brief reaction to the film in the context of their work or if you want to go straight into a moderated discussion. In either case, encourage the panels to illustrate their comments with specific scenes from the film.
- Be prepared for criticism. A neutral moderator can help make sure that the conversation remains productive and all perspectives can be heard.
- Guide any comments or concerns to a positive end that applauds the benefits of sharing information in an open forum. Encourage critical audience members to think about how the film might be a helpful way to address the tensions that they are feeling.

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Additional Resources

Explore the *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* website's "Links" section of the film's website, which contains a number of additional resources, including links to organizations that deal with the issues portrayed in the film. You may also want to explore these links to find potential speakers or partner organizations in your area.

For more information about the film or to contact the filmmakers, visit www.speakingintonguesfilm.info or email info@patchworksfilms.net.

Acknowledgments

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Event Planning Checklist

Once you have defined your target audience, objectives, and framing, begin planning your event:

1. PRELIMINARY PLANNING – *at least 6 weeks prior*

- Book the venue and date for your screening. Recruit local organizational partners to broaden your reach, and help identify roles for each one – such as publicity, panelist coordination, reception planning, etc.
- Determine speakers (including filmmakers), panelists, and moderator (if applicable).

2. LOGISTICAL PLANNING – *3-4 weeks prior*

- Create a flyer to publicize your screening (template flyers at www.speakingintonguesfilm.info).
- Customize the downloadable mini-poster with your screening information.
- Confirm that you have the right equipment to screen the DVD. You'll need a DVD player and a large TV: or a DVD player, a projector, screen and sound system.
- Secure food for reception (if applicable).
- Draft agenda and vet with partners.

3. LOGISTICAL PLANNING – *2 weeks prior*

- Create an email blast to publicize your event electronically. (Template e-mails available at www.speakingintonguesfilm.info). We suggest sending one announcement 2 weeks prior and another several days prior.
- Contact community calendars about your event.

4. MEDIA OUTREACH – *10 days prior*

- Send out press releases to media outlets (template press releases at www.speakingintonguesfilm.info).
- Make calls to local television and radio programs.

5. *FINAL PLANNING – several days prior*

- Test the DVD in advance of the event to make sure there aren't any glitches.
- Be sure that the screen is high enough so that everyone can read the subtitles!
- Send second round of email blasts.
- Follow up with press who expressed an interest in covering the story.
- Finalize agenda.
- Make copies of handouts, including literature from your organization, fact sheets, etc.

6. *AT THE EVENT:*

- As people arrive, ask them to sign up to receive updates from your organization. Pass out the postcards that came with your screening kit, along with any other materials.
- Before the discussion, announce that you have DVDs for sale to help cover the cost of the screening! Set up a table near the exit and have someone stationed with the DVDs during the discussion.
- Pass a *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* sign-up sheet around at your event (download at www.speakingintonguesfilm.info) and send it back to us so that we can add interested attendees to the *SPEAKING IN TONGUES* community & mailing list!
- Have a timekeeper so that panelists/speakers remain within their assigned speaking time. If possible, announce a call to action or have materials available for attendees to take action.
- Encourage participants to spread the word and let them know that they can learn more about the film and download a flyer to share with their networks at: www.speakingintonguesfilm.info. Let your audience know they can also join our Facebook group to find out more about new opportunities and materials to increase the impact of the film.