



Tips for Working with the Media



The more effort you put into publicizing your child abuse prevention events and activities, the more successful they will be. Here are several ways to promote your events.

Provide Information

Create a "press kit" which includes a news release and a fact sheet about your event and organization. Make sure you include statistics regarding child abuse and neglect in your community. Keep in mind the media is very busy, so provide them with enough information to produce a story without making a phone call.

Community Calendar Listings

Most television, radio stations and newspapers provide free community calendar listings. Submit information at least four weeks prior to printing or airtime. Keep your listings short – two to three lines only – and precise.

Ask for Public Services Announcements

Contact your local radio stations and ask them to air a public service announcement on child abuse prevention prior to your event. You may also consult a local marketing, public relations, or advertising company and ask them to donate their talents to your cause.

Submit an Editorial / Letter to the Editor of your Local Paper

Write an editorial for your local newspaper on some aspect of child abuse and its prevention. Make sure you put a name and a face on the statistics with stories (protect people's privacy) or reference a recent, publicized case of child abuse in your community and add a one or two line closing about your upcoming event. Be sure to include your name, address, and phone number on the letter.

Public Affairs Shows

Local radio and television stations are always looking for good issue orientated topics and spokespersons to appear on their public affairs shows. Contact the producers of local shows to let them know that your spokesperson – community leader, parent, volunteer – or communications person is willing to appear and discuss family support and child abuse prevention. Include information on preparing for a public affairs show or additional speaking opportunities. Send a follow-up thank-you letter, press kit, and suggested speakers.

Invite Local Celebrities

Invite local politicians, sports figures, community leaders, or other notable locals to your event. A proclamation from a state or local official can be effective in attracting attention. When you've received confirmation from one or two for attendance, place a call to the media and advise them of potential photo opportunity. This little push can sometimes get the media to attend.

Take Photographs

Although the newspaper reporters and photographers may not be able to attend, they may be willing to run a photo caption. Be sure to follow-up by sending in photos with a suggested two-line caption. Resend your event fact sheet or press release along with it. For best results, use black and white film and a 35mm camera. Affix a label to the back of your photo that contains your organizational information and caption. Take close-up shots with no more than four people in them. (Do not wait more than three days to submit photos or it will be "old" news.)