

# Public Relations Guide

for  
Community  
Anti-Drug  
Coalitions



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Congratulations on recognizing the importance of your coalition implementing a PR plan.

You have the opportunity to make a major impact on how our publics—consumers, legislators and the media—feel about community anti-drug coalitions and the substance abuse prevention movement. You can also affect how coalition members feel about themselves, the coalition and the community.

This book is designed to give you step-by-step guidelines on how to organize, implement and build a successful public relations program. Whether your coalition serves an area with a population of 2,500 or 500,000, this book will give you the tools to help you generate positive publicity for your coalition and substance abuse prevention activities in your local community.

Please read this booklet from cover to cover, take advantage of the self-help resources that have been created to assist you, and use this opportunity to make a difference for your volunteers, your coalition and your field. Remember, public relations is NOT a project. It is a process. Below are some initial steps that will help you get started. Good luck!

### **PRELIMINARY STEPS**

- Be sure CADCA has your correct contact info so you receive all information and updates from CADCA.
- Meet with the other coalition leaders to discuss their needs.
- Develop a budget, plan, and publicity calendar and submit to your board or leadership. Remember to save copies of these materials for your historical files.
- Attend the CADCA Annual Leadership Forum and any local or regional training that may take place in your area. Don't be afraid to confer with other local coalitions to coordinate your activities.

Now that you've gotten started, here are some guidelines to follow throughout the year:

### **ONGOING RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Develop a monthly PR status report for the coalition leaders and volunteers. Remember, PR isn't just about external relations, it's about internal ones as well.

- Maintain a documentation file. Be sure to document activities on an ongoing basis - and don't rely on end-of-the-year recall. This will help you prepare for year-end reporting and grant close-outs.
- Create or update your coalition's media list of print, radio and TV contacts. This networking list will be the foundation of your publicity efforts.
- Develop or update a coalition press kit including: story ideas, a spokespersons list, coalition fact sheet, etc.
- Submit basic releases (new program launches, special events, funding news, etc.) to your media contacts. Only consider material that your contacts will find interesting.
- Develop and submit press releases on the activities of other coalition programs. Press releases not only illustrate the coalition's involvement in the community, but add value to volunteer efforts.
- Utilize CADCA staff and materials when possible. These materials include sample press releases, articles, radio PSAs, advertising slicks, etc. Visit the Press Gallery at [www.cadca.org](http://www.cadca.org) for more information.
- Help to promote CADCA national partners' programs.

**Note:** Your media contacts may not be able to use all of the materials you develop/obtain throughout the year. You may want to be selective about what you send to a particular contact.

### **FINISHING UP THE YEAR: FINAL MONTH**

- Use the documentation file you developed in the beginning of the year to complete a year-end report. You may wish to use the year-end report to assist with year-end grant wrap-up activities.
- Give a final report to your board, your coalition leaders and volunteers.
- Thank everyone that helped make it a successful PR year.

### **REFERENCE**

Subscribe to and read CADCA's weekly E-News (electronic newsletter) and Coalitions, CADCA's quarterly newsletter. These can help you learn about what CADCA and its members are doing and may provide you with some activity ideas, as well as a vehicle to promote your own coalition's success stories!

## WHAT IS PUBLIC RELATIONS?

Public relations is activity designed to project a positive image to certain identified publics in order to create messages that will influence attitudes and actions.

### Who are "Identified Publics?"

In general, we have both "internal" and "external" publics. Examples are:

#### *Internal Publics*

- Coalition leadership
- Board of Directors
- Volunteers
- Staff
- Coalition Member Organizations

#### *External Publics*

- Community Leaders (law enforcement, faith community, businesses, civic groups, health community, treatment providers, educators)
- Funders and potential funders
- Consumers
- Legislators
- Government Agencies
- Local businesses
- Print media newspapers and magazines.
- Broadcast media-television, cable and radio.

### What messages do we want to create?

#### *Internal Publics*

- To volunteers: Helping the coalition has value.
- To your members, board and leadership: Public relations is important to the overall success of the coalition.

#### *External Public*

- To consumers: The coalition provides valuable assistance to the community and the coalition can add value to the fight to prevent substance abuse - and you can be a part of both.
- To legislators, community leaders, funders: Coalitions provide important services to the community and need continued funding.
- To media: Coalitions can provide accurate, useful information and coalition news is of interest to the community and general public.

### What attitudes do we want to convey?

We want the community to be aware of the drug problems it faces and to see emerging trends accurately rather than deny them. We want the opportunity to convey our efforts to curb substance abuse and build healthy, drug-free communities as well as influence potential funders and legislation.

Public relations can benefit your coalition by working to achieve your coalition's goals. Here's how:

*Awards* - Being recognized by a national organization for a job well done is always gratifying. By informing the media, recognition can reach the general public as well.

*Coalition Development* - Publicizing coalition expansion programs can make your community more appreciative of the benefits of working as a group.

*Local Government and Legislative Environment-Issues-oriented public relations, or "public affairs,"* is vitally important to the success of your coalition. Through press releases, press conferences, op-ed pieces and letters-to-the-editor, public affairs can sway public opinion and stimulate constituents to contact their town, county, and state officials on behalf of the coalition. An effective public relations campaign can encourage committed and effective action on the part of your members.

*Coalition Building* - Promoting your coalition helps make non-participants aware of the benefits of being a part of the group. Repeated public exposure will prompt interest in the coalition, attract new volunteers and groups, and help retain current ones.

## Educate Yourself

Your first objective should be to educate yourself about public relations. Familiarize yourself with the tools available to you, the current status of your coalition's public relations efforts, and your coalition's current goals and objectives.

- Meet with your predecessor (if one exists) to familiarize yourself with what was done in the past—committee members, projects, what went right and what went wrong. Even if your predecessor may have done a poor job, meet with him or her anyway. You may obtain valuable insights.
- Take advantage of all CADCA training opportunities. If possible, use the occasion to meet and visit with other coalition leaders to brainstorm ideas.
- Meet with your coalition's officers and leadership to discuss their goals and objectives both for public relations and for all other aspects of the coalition.

## Organize and Implement Good Public Relations

Your coalition public relation efforts should be directed toward both internal and external publics. You may choose to implement one or more public relations activities for both.

### Organization

You should not attempt to be a one-person public relations committee if at all possible. Try to locate coalition members or volunteers who have special skills or an educational background in photography, writing or media relations, but utilize anyone who is willing to assist you.

### Initial Objectives

- Learn the components of public relations.
- Discuss the objectives of your coalition.
- Review the resources available to you from CADCA.
- Inventory the various public relations skills of coalition members.
- Brainstorm appropriate projects.
- Identify the tasks you want to accomplish for internal and external public relations programs.
- Prepare a public relations "master plan" for the year including a budget, specific tasks to accomplish, and deadlines for their completion.
- Review goals monthly. This will keep you on track and permit you to regularly evaluate progress.

## Internal Public Relations Programs

Your internal publics are your board of directors, your coalition leaders and your coalition members. As such, you should create a methodology for regular communication with each. We believe a successful internal public relations effort requires the following:

- Present your public relations master plan and budget to your board or coalition leadership. Report on public relations activities to your board at every meeting. You should mark your calendar to attend (or send a representative) and to submit a written report at every board meeting.
- Regularly contact other coalition members and leaders to learn of their public relations needs.
- Report on public relations activities to your membership and volunteers. At every meeting, do any or all of the following:

- \*Distribute published articles to members.
- \*Report on public relations activities.

Also, you should prepare articles that highlight your activities for each issue of your coalition's newsletter.

## External Public Relations Programs

Your principal external publics are the print and broadcast media, consumers, lawmakers, funders and non-member organizations.

CADCA's communications staff has created several "self-help" resources to assist you in organizing external public relations efforts. The objective is to make your job as easy as possible.

### **How to implement a good public relations program**

It is important to realize that "doing" good public relations work is very much like selling any idea.

- Create informational material.
- Identify prospects.
- Approach prospects and get appointments.
- Fact find.
- Analyze the situation.
- Prepare a plan.
- Present the plan.
- Implement the plan.
- Follow up and review your program regularly.

The resources and tools that make this strategy work are as follows:

#### **A. Developing and Using a Press Kit**

If you are to be successful in obtaining favorable articles in the print media about substance abuse prevention issues, coalition activities and/or your members and volunteers, then you must begin by creating and building a positive, long-lasting relationship with media representatives in your area. To do so, we suggest you begin by developing a coalition press kit.

A press kit is a folder of information the media should keep about your coalition. It can help you "open the door." It is something tangible you can send to your media prospects or leave behind after you've had a face-to-face meeting. It should contain information about your coalition, provide story ideas for reporters, summarize issues of concern to insurance consumers, list contacts for the media to call and describe any programs that the media may be interested in.

Once developed, this kit need only be updated annually with a new fact sheet and new biographical information on officers and chairmen. Any new community service projects, legislative and regulatory issues, or story ideas should be added as well. See page (15) in the Media Relations Section for more details on how to create a press kit.

#### **B. Identifying Media Prospects**

You will need to identify media prospects and build a media file. Compiling a media file requires some research if your coalition does not already maintain one (or if you are starting from scratch). Sources of "instant" lists include the public relations departments of local government agencies. Your list may also include the following:

- Daily newspapers
- TV and radio stations (specific programs)
- Wire services-Associated Press, Reuters
- Trade, civic, other non-profit, and company publications
- Suburban newspapers
- Newspaper supplements
- Local and regional trade and business publications
- State and local coalition publications

Ascertain the names of reporters, editors and producers of the media best suited for your coalition's purposes. Record the name, title, address and phone number of each individual. Note all deadlines and editorial requirements. As you contact the media, record information and results. Store this information on a computer or make a card file. Duplicate name, title and address on mailing labels. Prepare a set of labels in advance for press release mailings.

#### **C. Approaching the Media**

When your press kit is ready and your media prospects are identified, you are ready for the approach.

We suggest you call or write the media contact and ask for a brief appointment for the purpose of introducing yourself and delivering your press kit.

Clearly, you won't make every sale. The truth is you may not get an appointment. Don't worry! Mail your press kit with a friendly, straightforward cover letter. Then, follow up by phone and ask for an appointment to discuss ways in which you might be of help to the media contact.

Even if you still don't get the appointment, you have made the initial contact. It is critical that you follow up periodically.

**Personal Contact—Some Do's and Don'ts**

Whether it's your first call or a later contact, keep in mind these basic rules when dealing with the media:

- Identify yourself by full name, organization, title and a quick explanation of why you're calling.
- Be courteous and attentive. Have all your facts at hand and be helpful and informative. Don't press information or attempt to extend a conversation. Highlight the new and unusual.
- Be prepared to respond to questions with simple factual information. If you can't answer a question, tell the reporter you will call back with the correct information and follow through.
- Keep in mind that what you say might be interpreted as an "official policy position" that can be reported to the public.
- Don't talk "off the record," because it may be used anyway.
- Do not thank a reporter for running your story; compliment the presentation.
- Never question why your story wasn't run; there will be another opportunity.
- Never bypass reporters by seeking coverage through their advertising department or other sections.
- Be brief when visiting reporters or editors.
- Socialize with the press at community, social and business affairs.

**D. Developing Story Ideas**

An important component of your public relations plan is the development of story ideas to present to the media for their use.

For your media contact program to be successful, the information you give the press must be "newsworthy." You can determine each medium's news standards by careful reading, listening or viewing.

Coalition news is either activities or issues related. See the Media Relations guide (page xx) for suggested activities and issues that may be worthy of media coverage.

**E. Using Public Service Announcements**

TV and radio stations are required to devote a certain amount of air time to public service. Generally, this is accomplished through public service announcements, advertisements, talk show programming and editorials. Each represents a potential opportunity for your coalition, so evaluate them with the same care as news stories.

Don't overlook cable television. Each cable franchise is required to offer a public access channel

which may create yet another opportunity to disseminate information.

**F. Seeking Publicity for Community Service Projects**

One of the very best ways to establish a relationship with the media is through the promotion of your coalition's community service projects. These projects do good things for the community and illustrate that coalition members and volunteers are caring people.

**G. Conducting media interviews**

A reporter may be interested in interviewing you or a member of your coalition. Keep these interview pointers in mind when preparing for the interview. Ask questions about the story: its angle, the context of your comments, who else is being interviewed, deadline, etc.

- Anticipate contrary points of view.
- Plan your points and make them early.
- Prepare yourself by knowing the style of the medium.
- Remember you're a guest and an authority.
- Be brief.
- Speak in language everyone understands.
- Refute untrue statements immediately and politely.
- Don't get mired in statistics.
- Beware of manipulation.
- Beware of negative words and phrasing - try to phrase your comments in a positive way.

For additional assistance in preparing for an interview, contact the CADCA communications staff at 1-800-54-CADCA.

**H. Maintaining a presence**

This is the most important part of the process - ongoing follow-up with the media. The fact is, you may not "sell" the media in your area on printing a story or airing an interview or program, but all is not lost! The key to success is perseverance.

So, how do you persevere? Simply prepare and send a steady stream of news releases to your media prospects.

**I. Distributing Releases**

Refer to your media file and decide who is best suited to receive your release. Don't overlook weekly papers. Remember, reporters cover different "beats" or subject areas, and not all stories are appropriate for all reporters. If there is a question of whom to send a release to, send it to all. If there is

no particular reporter to send it to, direct your mailing to the city desk (daily papers), or editor (weeklies, neighborhood papers and local magazines). For radio and TV, send the release to the news director or assignment editor. Follow these guidelines:

- Address envelopes by personal names when possible.
- Use first class mail or messenger to deliver the press release use fax only for time sensitive issues.

### **J. Making Policy Statements**

The media may request a statement of policy from your coalition regarding a current issue, or the coalition itself may believe a statement is desirable.

Important criteria to follow when making a policy statement are:

- Make certain you have the facts. Verify facts as necessary with experts in the field and CADCA staff.
- Obtain approval of your coalition leadership on the propriety of making a statement.
- Release the statement in the name of the person authorized to speak for the coalition—usually the president or other officer.

### **K. Dealing with negative press**

If you determine that you have been wronged in a news story, you must decide what to do. Your decision should be based on the following questions:

- Is it really important or would a correction amount to nit-picking?
- Just how damaging is the charge, criticism or error?
- Will a correction simply give greater visibility to the opposing view?
- Is a correction worth a restatement of the entire problem, including the error, to new audiences?
- Did you respond promptly and accurately to the media inquiries which led to the story?

Four ways to make bad news even worse are to:

- Lose your temper.
- Phone the offending medium and demand a meeting with management.
- Call the reporter and demand a retraction.
- File a lawsuit.

### **L. Molding public opinion with Public Affairs (Issues PR)**

Public relations can also help your coalition win its battles in local, county, and state lawmakers' offices. A special brand of public relations, known as "public affairs," uses public relations techniques to shape public opinion on legislative and regulatory issues.

Public affairs can be as simple as issuing a press release in support of a bill or as elaborate as a full-blown public relations campaign to change public opinion on a major issue. Often, public affairs is just a matter of publicizing your activities, such as putting out a press release when you speak at a town hall meeting, address a school board, present testimony in your State capitol, or testify in a court case.

There are a few points that you should keep in mind:

- Always coordinate your activities with coalition leaders. Don't do anything that would undermine your coalition's government affairs efforts.
- Work with your board to designate a spokesperson who can speak for your coalition and make sure he or she is accessible. Develop talking points that will be used to stress your strongest arguments.
- Send out releases whenever you testify on a bill, or would like your views known to the public. Develop a media kit on your issues with background materials.
- Submit letters to the editor and guest columns to newspapers on your issues.
- Contact radio and TV stations and ask to appear on public affairs programs to discuss your issues.
- Organize a speaker's bureau to present your coalition's views to civic and community groups. Develop sample speeches or use those supplied by CADCA.
- Develop contacts with allied groups and other members in your coalition. Consider joint media activities.
- Never underestimate or ignore the impact of an issue on the consumer. Develop a message that plays to the public.

### **M. Using advertising to get your message out**

Advertising (also known as paid media) is purchased TV and radio time and print space. You control the message. Advertising may be costly compared to publicity, but sometimes there is no substitute for getting your message across.

Public service announcements (PSAs) are

accorded free air time that can be obtained only when your message is non-commercial and is deemed for the public good. You cannot control when or if PSAs are used.

CADCA has produced a PSA for local coalition use. For more information, visit [www.cadca.org](http://www.cadca.org) and review the information posted in the Coalition Toolkit section.

If your coalition plans to sponsor advertising that was not produced by CADCA, it is advisable to ask the CADCA communications department to review prior to use.

#### **N. CADCA Awards**

The Coalition Awards honor coalitions for outstanding accomplishments. The award is an excellent opportunity for your coalition to receive recognition for an outstanding program. Media coverage is an important component of a successful program.

Awards are conferred on coalitions of all sizes—from the smallest to the largest. A coalition does not have to be large to win, but has to demonstrate the effectiveness of its programs.

#### **O. Getting Assistance**

Caught in a PR bind? Don't know where to turn for help? CADCA's communications staff is ready and willing to help. Public relations professionals can be reached by calling 1-800-54-CADCA.

#### **P. Sample Public Relations Plan**

##### **1. GOALS (long-term):**

- A. To make the coalition more visible and valued in its community.
- B. To raise the public's respect for and understanding of coalition members.
- C. To make membership in the coalition more valued and desired among the community.

##### **2. OBJECTIVES (short-term):**

- A. Begin a program of regular press contact with local media.
- B. Establish continuity in coalition media contacts.
- C. Feature outstanding members in the coalition's publicity program.
- D. Establish a program of regular communications to members and non-members of coalition activities, achievements and benefits.

##### **3. PROGRAMS (one-year):**

- A. Begin bi-monthly media contact with community's leading daily and weekly newspapers and

radio and TV stations.

- B. Take advantage of national celebrations, such as Red Ribbon Week, Family Day, the Great American Smokeout, etc.
- C. Take advantage of the special anti-drug supplement created for newspapers by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). The supplement, part of the newspapers in education program, can be customized with local information. For more details, write to [antidrug@aed.org](mailto:antidrug@aed.org) (and see the "Coordinating a Newspaper Supplement" in the back of the Nationally Declared Observances section).
- D. Begin a program of selecting the "coalition success of the month" and distributing news release and photos to all local media.
- E. Publish a coalition membership directory for broad distribution.
- F. Begin publication of a newsletter if one doesn't already exist.
- G. Begin an advertising program.

**Q. Monthly Publicity Calendar:**

(write in your annually recurring events as well as national awareness events/weeks.) Refer to sample national observance calendar on page (37) for ideas.

January

February

March

April

May

June

July

August

September

October

November

December

**R. THE PUBLIC RELATIONS BUDGET PROCESS**

**Step I What is Your Plan?**

Decide what you want to accomplish. Reduce your objectives to specific programs. Begin with fundamental activities and build from there.

**Step II Basic Programs**

1. Attend CADCA's National Leadership Forum, and any relevant information dissemination track workshops.
2. Establish media contacts, produce press kit.
3. Distribute press releases.
4. Develop advertising program.

**Step III Additional Programs**

- 1.
- 2.

**Step IV What are the costs?**

Break down the costs associated with each program. Get firm estimates or bids for services.

Typical costs to be covered include:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>
CADCA Annual Leadership Forum	_____
Travel, Hotel, Meals	_____
Registration Fee	_____
Media Events	_____
Meals	_____
Transportation	_____
Entertainment	_____
Public Relations Agency/Consultant	_____
Equipment and Room Rental	_____
Press Kit	_____
Paper	_____
Printing/Reproduction	_____
Typography	_____
Artist	_____
Postage	_____
Press Releases and Photos	_____
Stationery	_____
Postage	_____
Reproduction	_____
Photographer/Photo supplies	_____
Public Relations Agency/Consultant	_____
Paid Advertising Program	_____
Newspapers	_____
Radio	_____
Television	_____
Public Service Ad Program	_____
Customization (tags)	_____
Distribution	_____
<b>TOTAL:</b>	_____

**Step V Self-Funding/Surplus-Producing Programs**

Offset total costs with revenues generated by programs funded by members or outside parties.

- **Some examples:** Corporate contributions to project costs, directory advertising fees, cooperative or cost-sharing programs, fund-raising events, newspaper supplement advertising and fees.

The goal of PR is to communicate your coalition's message to your targeted audiences. To do that, you need to choose the medium that your audience most likely uses to obtain its information. Then, you have to understand a little bit about how that medium operates and how it decides what stories to carry. This aspect of public relations can actually be fun. It gives you permission to take the time to read the papers or watch TV news. And as you watch and read with the eye of a public relations practitioner, you'll find ways to make the media work for you.

## A Better Climate

Public relations can help you create a better climate by influencing the beliefs and behavior of people whose support you will need for success. Public relations can persuade:

- Your members and the public to support your coalition's positions and lobbying efforts;
- Lawmakers to vote on issues or develop laws and ordinances that help foster drug-free communities;
- Journalists to write positive editorials and balanced stories that strengthen your public support.

In deciding who you need to persuade, ask yourself: How much influence do they wield? Do they support your positions? Why not? What do you want them to believe? What action do you want them to take on your behalf? Then, you must convince each segment of your audience how they personally can benefit from your coalition efforts.

## "Managing" the News Media

Open any newspaper to the local or national news section. Is there a story about a substance abuse problem in which "experts" comment on the situation? Is there a column that reports the latest drug busts? Find a "good-kid-gone-bad" story in the lifestyle section. Is an industry expert quoted, giving advice? Turn on the radio. Surf the TV channels. Everywhere you look or listen, ordinary people with some kind of professional knowledge, just like those in your coalition, are providing information to reporters who are asking them questions and putting their names and messages before the public.

Certainly there have been many times when you've read a story in the paper or seen a local TV news spot that focused on a person or place familiar to you. Have you ever wondered, "Why them,

and not us?" Or, have you found yourself sitting in your den, talking back to a local TV anchorman's comments, or strongly agreeing or disagreeing with a newspaper editorial? Yes? Then you see the value of a good PR program.

Consider the torrent of news and information produced and disseminated in the United States every day. Then consider that just about every one of those stories used sources who supplied information to the reporter and that many of those sources reached the reporter through a public relations contact.

Why did the TV consumer reporter choose to do a holiday shopping story in one mall rather than another? Why did one junior high's hockey uniform drive merit a 3-minute feature in the sports news, while another school's fund drive went unnoticed?

Whether it was a public relations-savvy person in the police department, hospital, congressional office, PTA or local stationery store, chances are that someone supplied the media with information on most of the stories you see. Perhaps the PR person even proposed the story. Now, you, too, can assume that role.

What will happen once you have crafted and packaged your message and placed it in the proper medium? Your neighbors and colleagues will greet you and acknowledge that they saw or read "that piece" about your coalition, and you'll learn another secret of PR - once you've captured the "time" or "ink" for your coalition, you'll have the confidence to get similar results again and again.

## Keep a Media List

You should keep a list of all of your media contacts and update the list every six months. To begin, make a list of all the newspapers, magazines, radio and TV stations (broadcast and cable) in your state or community. Don't overlook regional publications or cable public affairs programs. Then, expand upon that list. (See Section 1, page 5 for tips on how to build your media file.

Remember to note all deadlines and editorial requirements. As you contact the media, record information and results. Store this information on a computer or make a card file. Duplicate name, title and address on mailing labels. Prepare a set of labels in advance for press release mailings.

Which person should you send your release to?

•**For print**, you should send your release to the News Assignment Editor. But the larger or more specialized the paper, the more kinds of editors there are. If there is a major, regional daily in your area, for example, you would want to address your release to the main paper's City Editor, as well as to

the editor of the section that serves your area (e.g., the Lake County Edition Editor).

If you are dealing with a daily or a major suburban chain, add the Features Editor for community event news; and Health Editor for treatment or prevention news.

When compiling your list, you may call to ask the names of these editors. Is there a certain person in the health department who puts together the weekly column or special section, for example? For trade publications and community papers, the masthead may list the names and titles of editors who belong on your list.

●**For broadcast TV**, you should send your release to the News Assignment Editor. The assignment desk is the central clearinghouse for most stories that end up in the station's news shows. If the station has a separate health correspondent, you may want to add them.

●**For radio**, send your release to the News Assignment Editor. If it is a news and information or a talk station with various local shows throughout the day, decide which shows would be appropriate and send your releases to the host of those shows, as well.

Once your basic list is complete, continue to familiarize yourself with the news medium. As you read and watch, make a note of "bylines," the names of reporters who cover the kinds of stories that you want to place. Add them to your list.

How do you compile a list of news outlets? There are a number of good directories. Many of them are a bit expensive but should be available in your local public library. Directories are often outdated when they hit the streets, so even if you have a directory, call to find the correct reporter. A good source is your local United Way or Chamber of Commerce directory. Other sources:

PRINT:  
Hudson's Directory  
44 W. Market St.  
Rhinebeck, NY 12572  
914/876-2081

Editor & Publisher  
11 W. 19th St.  
New York, NY 10011  
212/675-4380

NEWSPAPER/MAGAZINE/  
RADIO/TV/CABLE:  
Bacon's  
332 S. Michigan Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60604  
800/621-0561

Include fax numbers in your media lists. Fax

machines are "must" tools for any coalition that deals with reporters. And don't be surprised if the editor or reporter asks you to e-mail your information to her.

## Cultivating Relationships

Carefully cultivated relationships with your local media will prove to be a valuable asset over time. If you have identified and developed a good relationship with reporters, you'll be that much ahead of the game when you're ready to go to the press with a news release. Your first step is to identify who reports on health, crime or social issues for the publication or radio/TV outlets you want to reach. Ask to set up an appointment with them to offer background information on your issue. When you have suggestions or story ideas, you may want to call the reporter or take him to lunch to discuss your ideas (be aware, though, that some news organizations prohibit their reporters from accepting free meals.) You may also want to call from time to time without a "string attached" as well just to offer yourself as a resource.

## Developing a Contact File

Generally, local newspapers will want to talk to local people for quotes and information. For this reason it is important to develop a list of contact people within your community, your state, and perhaps, even nationally (CADCA may be able to assist in this area). Your board members and coalition leadership are good resources. You should choose people who are articulate and well-versed on the issues. In this way, when a reporter in your area wants an expert in your city to talk about current education or prevention programs and how they affect the community, you are prepared with the name and number of a coalition member in the area. Make sure you send the list to appropriate reporters and editors. Be sure to let your contacts know that you have given their names to a certain media outlet, so they will not be surprised if they receive a call.

## A. Developing Story Ideas

An important component of your public relations plan is the development of story ideas to present to the media for their use.

### Possible Topics To Attract Publicity

- You may be able to obtain coverage for:
- speeches by your president or key officers

- your opposition or support of legislation or local government activities
- summary of the year's events/activities
- providing a service in an emergency situation
- results of a poll or survey of members or the community
- an officer or a member is appointed to a government advisory position
- a coalition anniversary
- announcing better service or a new publication
- headquarters expansion
- issuing an annual report
- support for local programs to reduce health care costs, promote better health habits, etc.
- the hiring/promotion of staff
- attendance at CADCA's Forum
- Red Ribbon Week or other nationally declared observances
- community service projects
- coalition awards
- a coalition sponsored event, exhibit or seminar
- introduction of a new program or service
- an important or unusual visitor or group

Be sure newsworthy events make your calendar of activities for the year!

## Other topics include:

- Current local versus national use trends
- Emerging drugs (club drugs, ecstasy and others)
- Prescription drug abuse
- Underage drinking problem/recent death
- New treatment programs

## Localizing News

Localizing news is a good idea. Your media may well overlook substance abuse information disseminated from other cities. Whenever possible, point out a relationship between your coalition, the community and the issue. The information may become "newsworthy" if it can be attributed to a local spokesperson.

## B. News Release: Pipeline to the Public

The news release constitutes your most effective pipeline to the public. First, reporters rely heavily on releases for story ideas or to summarize news events they can't cover in person.

Second, as the writer, you control the message. You decide what's said and how. You shape the story and set the agenda. Newspapers often run your release verbatim or summarize it closely. Editors, reporters and broadcast assignment editors might use it to generate story ideas. If your release is written well, it can be a key ally in helping you educate the reporters, consumers and legislators whose understanding is critical to your success.

## Packaging the Release to Sell

A release is a kind of sales piece, and you must follow certain rules of effective selling. Put yourself in the shoes of many typical reporters and editors. They're often overworked, crowded by phone calls for news stories and probably have a four-inch stack of releases on their desks. How do you get these reporters to read your release? Nobody said it would be easy, but you can increase the odds if you're smart.

Your lead paragraph must be interesting and brief (try to keep it to 30 words or fewer) and clearly summarize your entire message. Reporters have too little time; if they aren't interested by the first paragraph, the release may end up in the wastebasket. Anticipate the reporter's questions. What are the key points that need to be communicated? What is the news value of your release? How will it affect the reporter's readers or audience?

Write a headline that summarizes the lead paragraph and catches the reporter's attention.

Remember who you're writing for. The consumer press wants to know how their readers or audience will be affected. Trade media usually want to know how agents or the industry are affected.

Be brief - three pages maximum (one page preferred). Use short, basic words. Avoid legal or industry jargon. Quote your coalition leader or other spokespeople liberally (this is also good internal politics). Avoid unattributed statements, especially when your release expresses an opinion.

Send the release on your coalition's letterhead. Even better, create special news release stationery and envelopes with the word "News" in bold letters at the top. But never send a release on blank stationery.

List the name and phone number of your coal-

tion's contact person(s). Reporters may have follow-up questions. Your contacts should be qualified to answer a reporter's questions. You, your coalition's chairman or executive director are good contacts to consider. Always be sure that the contacts know each time that you send a release, so they won't be caught off guard by a call from a reporter.

## Neatness Counts

Your release should follow a few basic rules of neatness and professional appearance.

**Press Release Format** (see samples in back of the book beginning on page 34)

Follow these simple rules in putting together your release:

- Use white 8 1/2" x 11" paper or coalition letterhead. Page one should be on letterhead. The other pages should be on plain white paper.
- Type on one side of each sheet only and make photocopies. Be sure to keep an original.
- Double space. Leave an inch and a half margin on either side, top and bottom of copy; do not end a page in the middle of a paragraph or word.
- Your name (or the contact's name if it is someone else) and phone number should appear in the upper right corner of the first page.
- Include the date and the city from which the release is originating.
- Instructions about the release time and date should appear above the story. Editors prefer "For Immediate Release" because they can use the story without delay. If your news must be held, be specific: e.g., "Embargoed until Monday, January 1, 2002, after 2:30 p.m."
- Indent all paragraphs five spaces.
- Begin the story about halfway down the first page and five or six lines down on each successive page.
- Type the word "more" at the bottom of a page to signify more copy follows.
- On all succeeding pages, use a two or three word "story identification" in the top left corner, and the page number.
- Type three pound (#) signs beneath the final paragraph to signify the release has ended.
- Proof for errors before printing!
- Include pictures with captions. Photos can increase your chances of being published.

## Writing Press Releases

Write your news immediately. Whenever possible, the editor will want news on – or preferably before - the day it happens. If an event fails to take place, notify the editor immediately.

Reporters will make a quick judgment on whether or not to use your story.

- Get all the facts; report them in order of importance.
- Write in straightforward language; tell the story quickly, simply, clearly.
- Omit superlatives, judgmental adjectives and industry jargon.
- Write your story as an observer; in the third person.
- Use quotes around important statements.
- Keep it short
- Review the release for errors; accuracy is paramount and typos detract from professional appearance.
- Use full names and complete addresses.

## The Five Ws

Effective communications depend on following at least one simple rule—make sure you report the five "Ws". When writing a news story release, these questions should be answered as close to the top of the story as possible:

- **WHO** - the person or thing
- **WHAT** - the event
- **WHERE** - the place
- **WHEN** - the time
- **WHY** or **HOW** - the reason or the manner

The story will determine which of these "Ws" is the most important. It's not necessary to try to get all the information in the first paragraph.

Be complete in reporting each of these points. A "when," for example, should include the date and the time if it is relevant. Be accurate. Spell names correctly, make sure days and dates agree, and check the address of the meeting place. Make sure quotes are correct. Avoid personal comments and lengthy ramblings. Save your personal comments for the editorial page, and even there make sure you back up your opinions with facts.

## C. Evaluating Results

Review the publications receiving your press releases. Clip the articles in which the coalition or a member appears. Maintain a file or album of these articles, as they are one measure of your success

with the media. Keep a record of the stations and times when coalition members appeared on radio or TV. **Remember:** Report all results to the CADCA Communications Department!

If your stories or activities do not appear right away, don't be discouraged. The competition for time and space is fierce. It takes time to build relationships with the media, which will produce tangible coverage.

## Advance Preparation

Sometimes you can write releases before hand and have them ready when the news event breaks. For example, if your president gives testimony before the town council or in the statehouse, write the release from his/her prepared remarks, and distribute it immediately after the testimony. If you know how the lawmakers are likely to vote on an issue next week, write the release in advance, make final adjustments the day of the news event and send it out the moment the vote is announced. If you can't predict the outcome, you can write separate releases for either outcome.

## Photographs

When appropriate, you may wish to include photos with your news release. At one time, newspapers were only interested in black and white glossy photos, preferably 5 by 7 inches. Today, many publications run color photos, and most can convert a color photo to black and white.

If you choose to use a photo, make sure you label the back of the photo with the names, titles and organizations of the individuals in the photo. Always identify from left to right, and use a (L-R), seated, standing, etc. to indicate it. Never write on the back of a photo, instead, affix a typed or neatly handwritten label.

## Reap Your Rewards

Compile your hard-earned news clips to monitor what the media are saying about your coalition. You also want to be able to show your members, leaders and staff your successes. Tracking down clips can be time-consuming, but here are two hints:

- send out a bulletin asking members to mail you clips they see in their hometown newspapers.
- use a clipping service. You'll pay a small fee per clip. A service assures more complete pickup of clips than an agent network, but you must decide whether it's worth the extra expense.

## D. Press Kit Components

The components of a good press kit are:

### *Fact Sheet*

The first page of your press kit is your fact sheet. Preferably no more than one page, the fact sheet is a concise review of your coalition's important data. It should include:

- Founding date
- Purpose
- Names of member organizations and number of volunteers
- Names of board of directors
- Community activities and programs
- Short biography on coalition growth and size
- Affiliation with state coalition and CADCA.

### *Background Sheet*

A background sheet can expand on the subjects outlined in the fact sheet.

### *Glossary of Terms*

A glossary will help reporters become familiar with the field and interpret jargon that appears in other materials.

### *Story Ideas*

A press kit without story possibilities is seldom enough to generate much interest. Propose a few interesting topics that show your coalition's relationship to the community.

### *Spokespersons*

Reporters will want to contact a spokesperson for interviews. Select several people in your organization and in the community who are articulate and knowledgeable about the field and the coalition, from whom the media can get additional information.

### *News Clips*

Include clippings of favorable news stories, columns or editorials. They add information and credibility.

### *Design and Distribution*

Your press kit is a reporter's first opportunity to meet your coalition. Make it visually appealing and well organized.

Put your coalition name and logo on the front of the folder. Name, address and phone number should appear on all of your materials. Attach your business card to the kit.

Send your press kit to all media contacts. Keep

a supply on hand for new reporters or publications and inquiries.

## E. Editorial Boards

Often, newspapers will have editorial boards comprised of representatives from the paper, the community and local business. These boards generally act as 'sounding boards' for the newspaper to interact with the various readerships it serves. If appropriate, you may want to call the editor and see if you could make a presentation.

These forums provide an excellent opportunity for you to present your case and describe how your issue affects your community. Needless to say, you should treat your meeting with an editorial board with great seriousness, just as you would a meeting with your legislator. Obviously you must be well prepared. You should appoint a spokesman from your group to make the presentation and be ready to answer questions. You should also bring along any supporting materials that will help you make your points - studies, surveys, letters from experts, as well as the background kit you have prepared.

Sometimes reporters are sent to cover editorial meetings. That means whatever you say will be 'on the record.' Keep in mind, too, that even if what you say won't be printed in the paper, it could still determine how the paper will editorialize on an issue and whether the editor will assign a reporter to cover it.

## F. Letters to the Editor and Op-Ed Articles

Just about every newspaper, regardless of size, has an editorial page that publishes "letters to the editor" on issues of the day. Some newspapers also print guest columns and opposing editorials (known as "op-ed" articles because they appear on the page opposite the editorial columns) by prominent citizens and community and industry leaders. Getting letters and columns by your members published on these pages can go a long way toward influencing the public debate on issues affecting your coalition.

### Letters to the editor

Many of the same rules that apply to news releases also apply to letters to the editor. Your letter should be timely and to the point. As in a release, the lead paragraph is the most important. Keep it short and concise. Use it to quickly make your point and draw your reader into the rest of the

letter. Remember, in many cases you are competing with dozens or even hundreds of other letters. Most newspapers print only a handful of letters each day. Yours has to stand out to be accepted.

Some suggestions:

- Your letter should be no more than a page long (many papers include length restriction information on the editorial page itself). Type the letter on your coalition's stationary or your own. Use regular business letter style.
- Your letter will more likely to be published if your coalition leader or CEO or someone of similar stature who represents your entire group signs it.
- Find out the name of the editor of the letters page. Address your letter to that person, rather than using the less personal, "Attention: Letters to the Editor."
- It sometimes helps to attach a note or brief cover letter explaining who you represent (i.e., your coalition) and why the issue is important to your group.
- If your letter is responding to a specific article or editorial, reference it by title and date in your letter.
- If you have established a good rapport with the editor, a telephone call may help, particularly if you can convince him/her an article or editorial that appeared in the paper misrepresented your position or gave it short shrift. He/she may even suggest a guest column in the interest of granting you "equal time."
- Double and triple check for errors, both typographical and factual.

### Op-Ed Articles

Don't be afraid to tackle an op-ed piece. It may be easier to get one published than you think. Some papers encourage readers to submit such articles and feature one or two each day. Others use only those written by syndicated columnists, but occasionally will augment them with something written by a local person. As with any endeavor, it never hurts to ask. You may be surprised to learn that your newspaper is interested in getting your side of the story on an issue.

Most columns are about 500-750 words long. This gives you an opportunity to develop your arguments and make more points than you can in a letter. Columns are also displayed more prominently in the paper - another advantage over a letter.

But writing a column is not easy. It must be a tight, carefully considered and written piece. It cannot meander, or the reader will abandon you for the

sports page or the comics (assuming it even gets past the editors and into print). Above all, your piece must be persuasive. You want the reader to feel the same as you do about your issue when he's finished reading.

Generally it's best not to write a column unless you know it will be used. Newspapers will print unsolicited columns, but usually they assign such pieces after they have discussed it with the writer. This is where your ongoing contacts with the media will help. You can discuss the possibility of a column with the editor over the phone or at lunch. If he/she likes the idea, he/she will probably give you the go ahead to submit an article.

If you do have an opportunity to write a column, make sure you alert your coalition leadership, members and volunteers. You will want to review with key players any arguments and points to be made in the article as well as supporting data. It will help, too, to have a professional communicator take a look at it (CADCA's communications department may be able to help if your coalition does not have a PR staff person.)

### Sample letters and columns

Your coalition may have already written sample letters and columns that you can adapt for your own use. Or it may have examples of what other coalition members have written. These will save you the time and headache of "reinventing the wheel."

## G. Other Media Opportunities

News releases and contact with individual reporters will form the basis of your public relations program but you may find it necessary to go beyond these basic tools to meet all of the goals in your PR game plan. A news conference or other "news event," for example, may be an effective way to communicate your message to the media and the public. Listed below are some strategies for taking advantage of these news opportunities when they arrive.

### The News Conference

The news conference has become a widely accepted forum for disseminating news to a large number of media outlets, key partners, and members of the public and is an excellent means for releasing important information or announcing major decisions. For example, you may want to use a news conference to announce the addition of a new partner in the coalition or a new program or

to release an important local study regarding substance abuse patterns.

Keep in mind, also, that although you have a great deal of control over what occurs at a news conference, things can quickly get out of hand if you are not adequately prepared or the media's line of questioning strays from what you anticipated.

On the other hand, a good news conference can pay tremendous dividends. With a single conference, you can quickly establish yourself as an expert on a topic or a key player to be reckoned with. More importantly, the news conference gives you a platform to present your side of the story. You can have an impact on how an issue will be covered and help shape the course it will take in the public arena.

A news conference usually consists of two parts: prepared remarks by a designated spokesperson (such as your director or CEO), followed by questions and answers. Keep in mind this format when considering news conference opportunities. Also keep in mind the following pointers:

- Hold your news conference when and where it is convenient for the media. Generally, a good time for the press is mid-morning, around 11 a.m. Make sure the facility you use is well lit, has good acoustics and can accommodate television and radio crews. You will also want a podium and possibly a PA system with a "mult box" (allows many crews to plug their microphone directly into the sound source to produce cleanest recording of remarks by the main spokespersons).
- Prepare a press kit containing materials that illustrate and reinforce the points you will be making at the conference. Distribute it at the conference and send it to those reporters who don't attend. If a daily newspaper or local broadcast outlet doesn't send a reporter, try to contact them the same day of the event and provide a copy of the speaker's remarks or significant sound bites within a press release.
- Prepare a short written statement for your spokesperson(s) to use. Make the statement available to the press. Make sure your statement covers the five "W's" of journalism - who, what, where, when and why.
- Rehearse what you have to say until your spokesperson(s) are comfortable with your message. Make sure they are well-briefed and can field all the questions they may get (you should spend some time brainstorming both questions and answers that are likely to arise).
- Follow-up. Have a sign-up sheet at the door so you have a record of all the media (and any other important community leaders) who may

attend. Keep in touch with them to see if there is additional information or comments they may need.

## News Briefing

If you're not comfortable holding a 'full-blown' news conference, you may want to consider a news briefing. A news briefing is very much like a news conference, but there are subtle differences. A reporter who attends a news conference expects to get a story, while at a briefing he expects simply to learn more about an issue. A good briefing gives him information he/she can file away for future use.

A briefing takes as much planning and preparation as a news conference, so the above considerations apply. You will need a capable and knowledgeable spokesperson who can brief reporters and field questions. Also keep in mind that like a news conference, whatever you say is "on the record" and can be used in a story. Follow-up is key, since you may not see the results of your briefing right away.

## Testimony

Whenever possible, alert the media to any public hearings where one of your coalition's members will testify. Such hearings provide an excellent opportunity for establishing your coalition as a credible, expert source on the issues. You will want to do the following:

- Make available to reporters copies of your testimony.
- Write a press release, summarizing the testimony's highlights and explaining your position.
- Make available a spokesperson to answer any questions the press may have after the hearing.

Testimony, by its very nature, is a persuasive communications tool, so keep in mind that its usefulness extends well beyond the immediate audience of a legislative committee or regulatory body. Your testimony becomes a written record of your position on an issue. Draft your testimony with this in mind, so it can be used as widely as possible to get your message across.

## Speeches

A major speech by one of your coalition leaders can also be a good media relations tool. Your first job will be to alert the media of the time and place of the speech so they can decide if they want to cover it. As with testimony, a press release covering the high points of the speech should be written

and distributed. Enclose a copy of the speech, and, if you have one, a 5" x 7" black and white photograph of the speaker. You may also want to make your speaker available to the press on site for questions or individual interviews.

## Studies and Surveys

The media love statistics. Nearly any survey or study of consequence will be of interest to reporters. However, don't be too hasty in releasing the results of your studies. They may be used against you.

Obviously, you should take pains to make sure whatever results you are releasing are statistically valid and will hold up under close scrutiny. You must also be prepared to defend your study against those offered by your opponents.

Depending on the nature and significance of your findings, you should consider a range of media relations possibilities, including press releases, speeches and a news conference.

## Case Studies/True-Life Stories

The human, emotional element offered as an example to reinforce your issue appeals to reporters because it is attractive to their audiences. Has a local community member's life improved or worsened because of a situation relating to the issue at hand? Respecting their right to retain confidentiality, ask them if they would be willing to tell their story to the media. Public and consumer attitudes nationwide have been swept into change because, in the beginning, just a few people were willing to share their dramatic stories.

## Public Forums

Don't neglect the media in planning conferences and meetings where substance abuse issues are sure to come up. If a well-known speaker, such as a public official, is part of the program, then the media may be interested in attending.

An open debate or dialogue on a substance abuse issue may also be of interest to the press, particularly if a specific problem in your community has been in the news a lot. In organizing such an event, make sure the expert representing your side is a capable debater. But do not try to stack the debate in your favor; the media will smell a rat and conclude the event has been staged. Conversely, if your opponent stages an event, try to alert as many members of your coalition as possible, and encourage them to be a part of the audience.

Don't overlook your own coalition members'

communications resources when planning your public affairs strategy. Your coalition's newsletters and web site should be used to inform and motivate your membership and the community on issues. Special bulletins can be used to update your members on late-breaking news. Brochures can be produced to get your message to the public.

Consider using your grassroots network to set up a speaker's bureau to get your message to the public. Establishing an effective speaker's bureau takes time and a high degree of organization, but the results can pay handsome dividends in increased awareness for your issue.

### CADCA Can Help You

CADCA has a communications department staffed with capable and knowledgeable communications professionals. You should consult them whenever you have questions or want to talk over an idea.

For more information, contact:  
Communications Department  
Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America  
901 North Pitt Street  
Suite 300  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
1-800-54-CADCA, ext. 224  
www.cadca.org

### Working with the Electronic Media

Don't forget to include the electronic media (radio and TV talk shows) in your media relations plan. You'd be surprised how easy it is to get on local public affairs programs or your local cable TV access channel. The following tips are offered as a guide for getting your spokesperson on television or radio.

#### Know the Players

Just as you wouldn't approach an important prospect without first finding out something about him, you don't want to call your local radio or TV station "cold" and ask to be on a program you've never heard before.

Take the time to listen to the programming in your area. Make a list of stations that have talk shows or air public affairs programs. Often public affairs programs air on Sunday mornings.

You can get information about stations by consulting commercial media directories such as Bacon's, sometimes available in the reference section at the library. Also, some United Way chapters

provide media directories. Or, use the phone book to compile your own media list.

As you listen to a station, make a note of:

- the name of the program,
- the name of the host,
- the time the program airs,
- the kind of subjects covered and how they are treated,
- the types of guests on the show and whether they are live or taped,
- whether there are call-ins and if the guests respond to them,
- the host's attitude toward guests (is he or she fair or biased?),
- whether the host interviews guests with opposing viewpoints

#### Coming up with a Pitch

Once you've done your homework, draw up a list of stations you wish to contact. Think about how you will "pitch" your coalition as a guest on these programs.

- Will you respond to a specific editorial or news report you've heard?
- Do you want to talk about legislative or regulatory issues?
- Is there new research you wish to share?
- Promote an event or program?

Choose topics that you believe will be interesting, perhaps even provocative - something that the station's listeners will want to tune in. For example, a call-in show that caters to public awareness of a new trend might be interested in having two members of your coalition's hotline field calls from consumers for an hour on air.

#### Selecting Your Guest

Now think about who from your coalition would make a good guest on the program you want to appear on.

Characteristics of a good guest might include:

- someone who has experience with the media and is knowledgeable about the topics you've selected;
- someone who is an officer in your coalition, or perhaps yourself;
- above all, someone who is articulate and can effectively represent your coalition and its concerns.

Contact these members of your coalition and discuss your plans with them. Once you have selected your potential guests, get a bio from each of them. You will need these later.

Of course, the above sequence may be reversed. If one of your members shines as a knowledgeable and captivating speaker on a certain topic at a meeting, for example, you might want to ask them if they are willing to discuss it on radio or TV. Pitch this person and his topic. Once you deliver a "good guest" to a show, chances are they'll turn to you again when they need someone.

## Making the Call

Armed with some exciting topic ideas and potential guests, you can now call the stations on your list to convince them that you have a topic or expert who would be great on their show.

Who do you call? If you already have a contact at the station, start there. It's always best to start with people you know and have them open doors for you.

If you have no contacts at a station, ask to speak to the producer of the show you want to be on. In some cases, the host also produces the show, so don't be surprised if the host answers the phone. Or, you may need to talk to the "booker" who books guests in advance.

Some stations have a director of public affairs who is responsible for public affairs programming. Sometimes the program or news director is the appropriate person.

Don't get frustrated if you don't reach the right person on your first call. You may have to call several times and leave a series of voice mail messages. But eventually you will get through!

Many shows are booked weeks, sometimes months, in advance. So if you have a topic in mind that is "hot" today, it may be "yesterday's news" six weeks from now. In order to be timely, try to think of an event, anniversary or milestone that is coming up that you can pitch as a tie-in to your guest or topic. Is an important substance abuse issue being considered in your legislature? Use it as a "hook" to pitch your spokesperson as a guest to talk about it.

Producers are good at saying "no." They get bombarded with requests for people to be on their show. You'll have to "sell" the producer on your idea. Be persistent - but not a pest! You don't want to turn off the producer to future requests from your coalition.

You may have to get creative to get someone on a program that doesn't normally deal with substance abuse topics.

## Cross Sell

Even if the host or producer is not interested in your topic at the moment, he or she may mention a related topic they would consider. Don't pass up the chance, on the spot, to explore this topic with them in conversation. Then hang up and promptly put together a proposal on the topic with a guest that the producer would be happy to feature. Remember: much of PR is just like sales. You must give the customer what he wants.

## After the Call

Rarely do producers agree to book guests right over the phone. Usually they will tell you to send some background material about the topic and your guest. You need to be prepared to send or fax something immediately.

Producers don't have time to read a lot. You should write a short cover letter on your coalition's letterhead summarizing your topic idea and why your coalition's spokesperson is the right person to talk about it.

Attach to your cover letter any kind of supporting material you might have - a fact sheet, brochure or talking points about your issue.

Often a producer will ask for a bio of your guest. For tips on writing a bio, see p. 24.

Finally, the producer may be interested in 10 or 12 suggested questions on the topic that your spokesperson can answer. Believe it or not, some hosts are so harried and have so little time for preparation that they will literally use your questions word for word!

Most producers will ask that you fax this material. Be prepared to do that. Have the material ready to go before you make the call. That way you can follow up right away.

## Getting Your Ducks in a Row

That magic day will come when the producer or program director says "yes." That's great...but you've still got a lot of work to do.

Make sure you get all the details about the show so you can properly prepare your coalition spokesperson.

- You need to know the date, time and location.
- Ask if the interview will be live or taped.
- Will it be in the studio or over the phone?
- Will there be other guests? If so, who are they?
- How much time will your spokesperson actually have (subtracting out commercial breaks)?

- Will it be Q&A with the host, or will there be call-ins as well?
- Exactly what is the topic to be discussed?
- What are some questions your spokesperson might expect to answer? Do you have any say in what questions will be asked? Does the host want sample questions?
- When will the program air if it is taped?

Call your spokesperson and arrange a time for you to meet to prepare for the interview. You may want to include other coalition leaders who can help "coach" your spokesperson. Get together at someone's office and plan to spend some time reviewing questions and the appropriate answers.

Make sure your spokesperson is thoroughly knowledgeable about the issues to be discussed in the interview. Anticipate questions that represent your opposition's point of view. Pick two or three key points you want to make and have your spokesperson practice delivering them - over and over and over.

## Media Training Makes a Difference

Have you ever noticed how some guests on TV or radio always get in the points they want - no matter what the question or how hostile the interviewer? It's not by chance. Many politicians, corporate executives and "experts" have gone through extensive media training by PR professionals so they can communicate well in an interview situation. While your association may not be able to afford the services of an outside professional, you can take advantage of the expertise of CADCA's public relations staff. Staff can counsel you over the phone. Also, use the "Interview Tips" section which appears later in this booklet.

## Bill of Rights for the Television Interviewee

**In interviews of a spontaneous nature, you have the right -**

- 1.To know who is interviewing you and whom he or she represents.
- 2.To have total agreement by both parties of the ground rules, no matter how hastily arranged.
- 3.To be treated courteously. The questions can be tough but the reporter's demeanor should not be abusive.
- 4.To have "off-the-record" comments, if previously stated, honored. (As a rule, never say any-

thing off-the-record unless you know and trust the reporter.)

- 5.Not to be physically threatened or impaired by such things as television lights too close or microphones shoved in your face.
- 6.To break the interview off after a 'reasonable' amount of time, but only after important questions have been answered

**In pre-arranged office or TV studio interviews you have the right -**

- 1.To all the rights noted above for short-notice interviews.
- 2.To know the general content, subject or thrust of the interview so you have time to research the appropriate information.
- 3.To know approximately how long the interview will last.
- 4.To know if there are other guests appearing with you on a talk or panel show and what the nature of their role will be.
- 5.To have a public relations or other company representative present.
- 6.To make your own audio or videotape of the interview, or to be able to obtain a complete tape from the TV station.
- 7.To make sure that no material is recorded on audio or videotape unless you are told you are being recorded. The 'pre-interview discussions' talk between commercials or after show chit-chat cannot be used on the air unless you approve. (Nonetheless, never say anything you wouldn't want the public to hear regardless)
- 8.To physical comfort during the filming or taping of the interview (i.e. appropriate setting, chair, make-up, etc., as well as the cooperation of the director and the floor manager.)
- 9.To be allowed to answer without the constant harassment of interruptions, assuming your answers are brief and to the point.
- 10.To ignore "editorial comments" or pejoratives by reporters or panelists.
- 11.To have an accurate on-air introduction that will put the interview in the proper perspective.
- 12.In the film or tape editing to have the basic intent and flavor of your answers come through.
- 13.To have the time to get some of YOUR points across in the interview and not be expected only to answer questions obediently and obsequiously.

## Get Out the Word!

If your spokesperson does a wonderful job but no one tunes in the program, then you've only done half your job as PR chairman. Make sure you "get out the word" to your members that someone from your coalition will be on the radio or TV! Depending on the lead time, you may be able to mention it in your newsletter, at your monthly meeting or in a special post card you mail to your members.

## After the Interview

As with any interview, regardless of how it goes, it pays to drop a line to the producer and host thanking them for allowing you to appear on the program. This also gives you an opportunity for follow-up.

Perhaps you feel a point brought up in the interview needs clarification or expansion. Maybe there was a misunderstanding about your position. Perhaps a caller wanted information you didn't have at the time, but now you have the answer. Supply this in your letter along with any other information you feel is pertinent.

If you have other suggestions for future program topics, include them as well. This will give you a reason to call in the not-too-distant future about another interview opportunity!

You'll also want to follow up with your own members regarding the interview by writing an article for your newsletter or making a report at your next meeting. Since you have a tape, why not play a portion of it at the meeting?

## Last-Minute Requests

You may have been pitching ideas to a producer for months in brief, pleasant conversations, even though your proposed guests have never appeared on a show. Suddenly, out of nowhere, the call comes through: her original guest just cancelled or a national story about a drug incident just came over the wires. Can you supply her with a guest for this evening or tomorrow morning?

This could be a great opportunity for your coalition and a pay-off for your efforts. Understand that such a last-minute request is not an insult. The producer is in a bind. You want to help her, but you don't want to compromise your product, either.

Be sure that you understand exactly what she wants the guest to talk about, and at what time. Ask her if she is putting the request out to other prospective substitutes, as well. She probably will be, since she has to fill a slot immediately, and that tells you that you must act promptly.

Don't hesitate to do your best to find someone who is presentable, knowledgeable and available to appear. That in itself could take a bit of internal arm-twisting, so assure your candidate that you will give him all the support he needs to do a good job on such short notice. But never deliver an inferior guest. If you can't find someone quickly, call the producer back and ask for a rain check.

## Success Breeds Success

Unless your spokesperson has a miserable experience (and he won't because you've done your homework and you did a super job coaching him!), he'll be excited about doing another interview. Besides, now you know it can be done! You can get someone from your coalition on radio or TV!

Build on the momentum you've created with this first interview. Start booking more interviews! You'll be surprised how easy it can be once you've hit upon the winning formula.

## Media Relations Checklist

Have you:

1. Studied the media outlets in your area to determine which ones should be included in your media relations activities?
2. Created a media list to send news releases to?
3. Begun to identify specific reporters you'd like to cultivate?
4. Reviewed the sample press releases in this kit?
5. Developed a list of coalitions "experts" you can use for interviews?
6. Put together a press kit using the ideas in this kit?
7. Explored interview possibilities on radio and TV?
8. Considered public affairs possibilities for your coalition such as:
  - a) Letters to the editor and op-eds?
  - b) Editorial boards?
  - c) Coalition testimony?

## Public Outreach

Every coalition should strive for positive visibility in its community. Members have a stake in their community and consequently, they should serve community needs.

Not only can society benefit from the expertise of our members, but the public today expects private entities to respond to its many needs that government can not afford to fix. Government, too, asks the private sector to be socially aware.

Public relations can help this process from beginning to end. It's up to you to maintain good communication with key coalition members and leaders so they consult with you at the inception of each project. That way, you can advise them to include elements that will maximize their chances of gaining publicity for any given project.

You might also advise that certain aspects of the project would not make for good publicity. As the project or event reaches a climax, of course, you will be doing your best to attract attention for the project, using the media and other avenues.

When it works well, public relations itself can be a public service. If you are successful in getting vital consumer information out to the public, or if you notify the public of truly useful seminars, speeches, and other coalition-sponsored events, your efforts have been of value. Keep this service aspect in mind as you perform public relations duties.

In truth, every member of the coalition is an emissary, or representative. You can encourage members to "talk up" the coalition and its approaching events with the people they meet daily.

### "Icing the Cake" with Good PR

Your group may provide a remarkable community service. The recipients of your good works may thank you profusely, and that may be payment enough. But will the rest of the community know of your members' initiative? Will other groups in the community be inspired to follow suit to further improve the quality of life? Will your members get their deserved recognition for their commendable expenditure of time and energy?

Public relations can put the icing on the project's cake by getting your coalition a resounding public pat on the back.

When setting your public relations priorities for the year, consider that your community efforts are some of the most appealing projects that you will produce over the 12-month period. Thus, these types of events and outcomes are important to publicize.

Keep up to date on your coalition's plans. Make a calendar of the community projects scheduled for the year. Assess the amount of work necessary to publicize each of these projects, and set deadlines in your calendar that will allow you to meet your goals.

### Planting the Seeds

Public Relations can be a vital resource for your coalition. It also helps to tailor certain aspects of the project so that it can harvest a bounty of publicity.

Put all of your public relations tools into play. Press releases, public service announcements, even a letter to the editor or op-ed about the community condition that inspired your group's project, can be set into motion. Your specialized knowledge of your community's media - the observations you've made about how certain reporters, newspapers, radio and TV cover certain topics and events in your town - becomes really valuable now.

As you read and watch the media throughout the year, pay special attention to articles on topics related to your coalition's efforts.

If kids are your coalition's target category, for example, clip stories on topics that relate to kids, such as new statistics in your state, new or emerging trends, isolation and depression, and volunteerism. Your research may help you develop some really creative projects.

If your project is a one-time or annual event, notice how similar events are covered. Does a local TV station often preview similar events on its daily morning news show? Did the reporter broadcast live from the event site? What kind of person did they interview on the spot - an executive of the organization sponsoring the event, people from the community actually being helped by the event, or both? Did the station repeat the telephone number and registration information?

Would such publicity help make your event successful? (Don't overlook what may not have gone so smoothly in the interview as well.)

Discuss these coverage possibilities. Ensure that a large and enthusiastic contingent from your coalition will turn out to participate. Also discuss whether there are any still-unresolved elements that could cause the event to be less than hoped for.

If the way is clear, list the elements that you would have to provide to the station to get similar coverage. Who is your most enthusiastic and knowledgeable spokesperson on the topic? Would he or she be available in the morning? Does your coalition have a phone number that people can call to get more information? Is there a machine that

can take messages or a live person to answer questions from the public, especially in the few hours immediately following the broadcast?

Once you have your ducks in a row, call the reporter or the news show to pitch your idea. You should be prepared to quickly send a fax that summarizes the idea you have offered in some detail.

Of course, your media-watching expertise applies to print as well as broadcast. You may have detected that a certain reporter has a soft spot for such causes, and you might want to contact that person.

## Speaker's Bureau

Establishing a speaker's bureau is another means of maintaining a public presence in your community.

The current trends in substance abuse and ever-changing palette of drugs necessitate that we spread our message. By appearing before local groups, members can contribute to a better understanding of the drug problem and of the indispensable role of community anti-drug coalitions.

Coalitions can encourage and coordinate speaking engagements by its leadership, its experts and its members. The following offers basic advice on how to secure engagements and generate publicity for speeches, and outlines tips for effective speaking.

## Finding your audience

At your next coalition meeting, ask members if they have public speaking experience and circulate a sign-up sheet of volunteers for public speaking engagements. You might want to ask them to check off areas of particular expertise or interest. Once you've got an idea of your people resources, target audiences you think might be receptive to a speaker.

In general, local civic groups might include Jaycees, Kiwanis, and Rotary. Business groups might include local chapters of the Conference of American Small Business Organizations, Chamber of Commerce, National Federation of Independent Business and some professional organizations.

Local high schools, universities, churches and synagogues also provide opportunities to generate interest and provide information. Your members may offer suggestions, too.

## Booking a speaking date

Contact your target organizations to find the appropriate person to approach. Most are listed in

the telephone directory, or in the local Chamber of Commerce or municipal government directory. Send that person a letter, emphasizing that there will be no charge for your presentation. Follow up by phone in about a week.

Understand that many of these groups meet only once a month. Because their agendas are set far in advance, it may take some time before you receive an invitation in response to your offer. Be prepared to be flexible in settling on a speaking date. When you speak to your contact, use the opportunity to sell your idea by letting him know why his members need to know more about your topic.

When you have secured the invitation, respond with a letter confirming the time, date and location of your engagement. To avoid any confusion about what is expected of you or what the arrangements will be like, indicate your understanding of the audience size and the topic you will present. If you will need any special equipment, such as flip charts, a slide projector or a video monitor, be sure to make all of the necessary arrangements.

## Publicity for your speakers

Press coverage offers an opportunity to convey the content of your speech to the community at large. But before you notify the media, you must check with the group you will be visiting. It is common courtesy to let them know of your plans, particularly if special arrangements such as preparing meeting programs, setting up meeting rooms or ordering food need to be made in order to make the press feel welcome. This step also may save you embarrassment if the group has a policy against media attendance.

Some organizations will have their own public relations committee to promote their events and may prefer to handle publicity internally. Be prepared to provide them with any information they may need, such as a biography, a photo, copy of your speech or a press release.

If, however, you must do your own publicity, here's what would go into promoting a speech:

- Prepare press materials, including a calendar listing, media alert, news release and biography.
- Send the calendar listing at least two weeks in advance to editors and community newspapers
- Send the media alert a few days before the event, so that a reporter can be assigned to cover it. You must follow this up with a phone call.
- You may prepare a press release that summa-

rizes the speech, but this should be held for distribution at the event. It also can be sent out afterward to reporters who were unable to attend.

- Other options could include paid advertising, direct mail, even printed flyers or booklets that promote your speakers.

## Writing the "Bio"

A brief biography gives your host organization some background about your speaker and provides speaking points they can use when introducing the guest. Keeping bios on a number of your key members and speakers is a useful public relations tool, because you can use the information when writing press releases and sending out other information.

Be sure that all of the information is accurate and up-to-date, and make it clear that your speaker is appearing as a representative of the community anti-drug coalition and not any particular agency or company.

The biography should be brief but should include:

- the speaker's name, title and place of business;
- his/her position and responsibilities;
- his/her relevant career history in reverse chronological order, beginning with the most recent positions;
- his/her education, degrees, designations, accomplishments or special awards in the field and in the community;
- information on his/her family and residence; and
- a sentence or two about the role your coalition plays in the community.

Always be sure to clear the biography with the person being described and update it on each use. Circumstances change, and it is not always obvious which information they might prefer to keep confidential.

If you have a portrait photograph, you may send that as well. Preferably, photos should be 5" x 7" black-and-white glossies. If you have enough need for such photos, you might persuade a local photographer to shoot a number of your leaders and speakers for your files.

## Speaking Tips

You probably are aware of some public speaking basics, such as using relaxation techniques, the

wisdom of knowing how the room will be set up beforehand, anticipating questions that might be asked by the audience and remembering to write your speech in spoken language, rather than a formal, written style.

If you want to learn more, you can visit a local bookstore or the web site of Toastmaster's International, at [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org).

In general, if you are physically up to the task of speaking, feel comfortable with your subject matter and have rehearsed your remarks several times, you should do just fine. Most signs of tension don't show. Just remember to take your time and use brief pauses to give the audience a chance to absorb what you have just said. Audiences tend to be supportive of a speaker and prefer to hear a sincere, enthusiastic delivery rather than the perfect speech.

## Advertising

Advertising is paid broadcast time or print space. Its strongest appeal is that you choose exactly where and when your message will appear, what it will say and how it will look. Advertising does cost money, however, and it's up to your coalition to do the research, to "shop around," for the best value for your dollars.

Particularly in local papers, advertising even several times a year can be a "goodwill" business gesture. Remember that even small newspapers (with the exception of pennysavers) usually respect the division between advertising and news content, which means that buying an ad does not necessarily ensure favorable coverage.

Yet advertising from time to time in the local papers is one way in which local organizations can express their support for their community. Your neighbors will read it and acknowledge your presence.

If your coalition has not done much advertising before, you may have to start from scratch in structuring an advertising "buy" schedule. If you do not already have a budget for advertising placement, you may want to do a bit of research to get a feel for what various types of advertising can cost.

For example, you may want to advertise through a mix of print and broadcast outlets. But basic research may show you that TV is beyond what you can afford.

Once you've done all your research into the best advertising plan for your coalition, you'll want to present it to the board. Once they've approved your budget, you'll want their approval on the copy and appearance of any ads that you intend to place.

If you plan well and get noticeable results from what you spend on advertising this year, you'll be in a better position to increase your budget - and your visibility - next year.

### Getting a Sense of the Market

What elements do you need to consider in determining what's available and what you can afford?

Look at the names of all of the media outlets on your media contact list to determine the scope of possibilities in your area.

- Print.** A major daily newspaper, a suburban daily or bi-weekly, a weekly or monthly business publication, an assortment of weeklies and pennysavers, and even a regional monthly magazine may serve your area.

- Radio.** Looking at a Broadcasting Yearbook or a Bacon's Directory in the library, find out how many radio stations there are in your area and what their formats are. Pick a few that might draw listeners who are the kind of consumers you want to reach.

- TV.** Using the same sources, list the local TV stations.

- Cable.** The attractiveness of advertising on cable TV seems to be growing for local businesses and organizations. The cable companies serving your area probably offer low-cost packages that play commercials in rotation on many different cable channels, so that your ad may appear on an all-news or arts channel, as well as the local access channel.

When you've listed all the possible media outlets for your advertising, call the advertising departments at several venues in each category. You will be put through to an ad salesperson. Be honest that you are exploring possibilities, and they will offer many options to you. Many media companies offer a non-profit rate, and discounts for repeat customers.

A radio or TV station will help you decide whether you prefer to advertise on a particular local show or at a particular time of day. Rates vary, according to the average number of people who tune in during that time slot. They will gladly send you information on their rates.

### Targeting Your Audience

Different publications, radio stations and TV shows have different readerships and audiences. Radio and TV stations may reach different types of people at different times of the day. The ad sales people you speak with can send you information about the demographics of their readership or audience. Although common sense might be enough to help you determine your prime advertising prospects, some of the information they send you, such as median age or household income of audience, could be surprising.

You'll want to target your media buys, that is, aim to deliver your message to the kind of people that you want to reach. If most of your members are on the north side of town, for example, but a certain station's signal is weak in that direction, you might not want to select that station to carry your advertising.

If several new subdivisions are served by one weekly and those subdivisions were developed to cater to young people with children, you might choose to advertise more aggressively there.

## Contracts and Frequency

Being able to plan your advertising for the entire year may save you money. Ads are bought by the second or the column inch. Usually, the more ads you contract to buy within a certain time period, the less each second or inch will cost. Take, for example, a chain of separate weeklies in perhaps a dozen different suburbs, all published by the same company. The publisher might offer packages that reduce rates according to frequency and number of editions advertised in.

## Non-profit Rates

Many general and trade print publications, and even some broadcast outlets, offer substantial discounts for advertising placed by non-profit coalitions. Ask them about this. But also be sure to ask them if there are any restrictions on how the ad can look or what it can and cannot say, because you will be held to strict guidelines to qualify for such a discount.

## Special Sections

Your local daily and weekly newspapers and broadcast media understand that you and many organizations like yours are inhibited by tiny budgets. As a gesture to reach into the community they serve, as well as to increase their advertising revenues, they often run "special supplements" geared toward certain consumer groups. The media outlet then reaches out to organizations and businesses that might want to reach these particular consumers through advertising.

Some examples of special supplements useful to your coalition might be: "Health," "Preparing for School," even Mother's Day or Father's Day (e.g., "As a parent, you're invaluable to your children and the first line of defense in fighting substance abuse. This year, give them a gift. Teach them how to be drug-free!") Once you've introduced yourself to the advertising department of a newspaper, the salesperson will probably keep you apprised of special supplement opportunities appropriate for you.

## Coordinating a Newspaper Supplement

Seeing a newspaper supplement through, from planning to production to publication, is one of the most fulfilling projects you can do for your coalition. Because it involves collecting articles (editorial

copy) and advertising (ad copy and payment), it is similar to being in charge of an awards dinner program. But its results can be even more rewarding, because a much larger and diverse audience will see it. You will, in essence, be the editor and publisher of a four-page (or larger) newspaper. That means you will need a dedicated staff at your side.

It will be financed with ads sold to other organizations that would like to be identified with the helpful information included in the supplement.

To help you, the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy has created a ready-to-go supplement called "Majority Rules." The special supplement tells kids about the benefits of being drug-free. It will provide a forum for young people to tell neighbors, friends, and classmates about their "Anti-Drugs" - the things that stand between them and drugs. The name of the supplement, "Majority Rules," underscores that most kids don't use drugs.

## Checklist

You will need to ask the Advertising Department of your local newspaper the following: Is the paper open to running a supplement? How much will the section cost? How many pages will it contain? Will you solicit the advertisements, or will the paper's sales staff solicit them from their own contacts and from yours? How long a lead-time do they need to do the project? What will your advertising and copy deadlines be? Ask to see samples of other supplements they've produced, and make certain the paper is willing to give you the look that you want.

**Costs.** The newspaper will present various options to you, with costs largely depending on how many pages and colors you want in your supplement. They will explain the percentage of space that will have to be sold as advertising to pay for production costs.

Reach a clear understanding with the newspaper as to what will happen and who will bear the financial responsibility if advertising sales fall short. Should advertising revenue be less than expected, you may want to consider co-sponsoring your tabloid with another organization as a way to offset costs.

**Advertising content.** Your coalition will have to set clear and defensible standards for what kinds of advertising you'll accept.

**Soliciting ads.** You will have to discuss with the newspaper whether their sales staff or your coalition's volunteers will solicit advertising for your supplement. If the paper will sell the ads, set early deadlines, so your members can step in if the paper's advertising department is unable to garner enough advertising to cover the costs of the supplement.

If your members and volunteers sell the space and pursue advertisers aggressively enough, the advertising revenue from your supplement can exceed the cost of the supplement. The project will be a moneymaker for your coalition.

**Designing your supplement.** The newspaper's professional staff can advise you about how your supplement should look when it is finished. Obviously, the final word is up to you and your coalition, but you will want to rely on the advice of the professionals at your paper to ensure a high-quality finished product.

**Editorial content.** Determine with your board and the newspaper what kind of editorial copy will be included in the supplement. You may use the information already provided by the ONDCP "Majority Rules" special section or you may want to personalize/localize some of the pages with issues, programs and statistics specific to your own community. "

Make certain that all articles and editorial materials are written in a non-biased and objective style; do not compromise the credibility of your supplement.

**Deadlines.** Set generous deadlines for both editorial and advertising content. Monitor your committee's progress no less than once a week.

**Distribution.** You may want to ask the newspaper how you can get extra copies of the supplement. Determine how many extra copies you will need. Not only will you want copies for your records, you will want to send them to coalition members and staff, public officials, and potential prospective members during the course of the year. They can serve as general information pieces for the public. You'll also want to make certain that every member knows when and where the supplement will appear and ensure that each gets a copy after it's published.

Send a copy to the CADCA Communications Department.

**Evaluation.** Evaluate your experience and make sure to pass it on to your successor.

## A Final Note

If you lack the support, time or energy to produce a newspaper supplement for this year's events, scale down your efforts, but try not to give up all together.

For example, you might ask your local paper to run one or two of the stories from "Majority Rules," purchase an ad announcing Red Ribbon Week or other declared event, or persuade a few local columnists to write their own substance abuse related features during the week. Of course, you'll

suggest topics and names of "experts" they can interview for the story.

## Other Advertising Opportunities

Whether or not you're restricted by a small advertising budget, don't overlook chances to establish a presence in specialized publications in your community. Buy a series of ads in the local high school football program. Buy space in the yearbook, the playbills of local school or professional theater productions, and the dinner journals of various charities and civic groups. Even buying announcements on the PA at local school sporting events serves to remind the community that you care about it.

## Your Ad's Appearance

If you want to run an ad specially-tailored to an event or to your particular coalition, your local newspaper will probably be able to produce one for you for free when you buy ad space. They'll ask you to supply some copy and then will submit the layout to you for approval. The arrival of desktop publishing and computer graphics makes it even easier for the publication to offer you an attractive, customized ad in a short timeframe.

## Producing an Ad for Radio or TV

Very often the advertising sales department of a radio or TV station can help you produce a low-cost advertisement, too. Usually, the radio station will write the ad with information that you supply them. (It will be between 15 and 60 seconds long.) Then, one of their announcers will record the ad, or it will be supplied to on-air people to read live in their shows. If you want a certain personality to record your announcement, you may have to pay an extra fee.

Television is, of course, more expensive to produce. Perhaps your state coalition has a videotaped spot that can be customized with your coalition's logo. Or, the local station's sales department may be able to produce an ad for you, using computer-generated slides at a relatively low cost. Shooting and editing videotaped footage will add considerably to your ad production costs, but, if you so desire, the station can usually refer you to a video company who will do the job. If your coalition is interested in a television PSA, CADCA has already produced one that local coalitions can customize with a "tag." For more information, contact CADCA's communication staff.

## Beginning a Photo and Video Library

You might want to start a file of historic and current photos for your coalition. It's also a good idea to hire a professional videographer to tape your major events. That way, you may soon have "stock footage" to use in producing an original video advertisement, if the budget grows. Better yet, ask the videographer to volunteer his or her services, or invite a local college video class to produce an advertisement that will earn them credit and that you can use on cable TV.

### Paying for Your Advertising

As a non-profit coalition, you must distinguish between two types of advertising:

- Commercial advertising usually sells either a product or a service.
- Institutional advertising is more general, because it involves the selling of an idea or concept. The institutional ads are those that stress importance of membership in the coalition or participation in the programs it endorses.

If your coalition chooses to run an institutional ad, then it is permissible to use coalition funds (i.e., dues money) to pay the cost of advertising time or space.

On the other hand, if your coalition plans to publish a commercial ad that does list the names of any for-profit members, you cannot use coalition funds of any kind to pay for the cost of the advertising space. Using coalition funds to defray the cost of a commercial ad threatens the tax-exempt status of the coalition. In such a situation, it is best to solicit voluntary individual contributions from your membership.

Another practical and permissible technique to defray the costs of both institutional and commercial ads is to ask third parties to sponsor and pay for the advertising space.

## Public Service Announcements

Broadcast "Public Service Announcements" are similar to advertisements, but you do not pay for them. It's no surprise, then, that there is a lot of competition for the minimal amount of airtime that's reserved for them. There are two basic forms that PSAs can take:

- A PSA may be a read or recorded announcement run by a station to advise the public of a free service that is available to them through your organization, such as tutoring, an informative brochure, or a seminar open to the public.

**The products or services offered in a PSA**

**must not attempt to sell anything.**

- A PSA may be a "Community Calendar" item that announces a community event that is free or accessible at an extremely nominal fee.

If you decide you would like to distribute PSAs to the media, call the public service director of your local radio or TV station and ask to speak to the Public Service Director, or to whoever handles PSAs. You will most likely be put through to either a person or a recording that will explain how to submit PSAs.

From the local junior high's band uniform fundraiser to a self-help group for those facing terminal illness, huge numbers of community groups are pursuing airtime for their public service spots. The person handling PSAs at the station most likely will not be able to call you back even if your spot is accepted. If it is accepted, you or someone else will just hear it on the air!

Each station may have slightly different requirements. Most, however, ask that the PSA be typed on official coalition letterhead. The PSA itself should include a phone number, which will be broadcast so that people can call for further information.

In sending your PSAs, include any printed flyers or brochures that announce your service or event. Your cover letter should also briefly summarize the mission of your coalition and its members, and give your name as the off-air contact for the Public Service Director's use.

## Nationally Declared Observances

National declared observances such as Red Ribbon Week, Family Day, National Recovery Month and others offer an excellent opportunity to enlist the cooperation of all coalition members in a project that benefits the coalition and the public. It can spotlight the critical role that coalitions play in substance abuse prevention. It can educate your community about substance abuse.

These national events can be the cornerstone of your coalition's PR efforts. It can be the climax of a balanced, well-planned, program, and it can increase media and public awareness of your coalition so that they will welcome further messages from you.

### Events for the Week

Four months in advance, determine the scope of the events and activities your coalition will sponsor during each event/holiday. Be certain to plan with your purposes in mind, such as recruitment of new members, the publicity value of events and what impact you want to make on your community.

Of course, you'll have to publicize any activities to which the public is invited well in advance, perhaps using PSAs and Community Calendar items, as well as press releases. Pictures taken at the events can appear in your local paper, too. Here are some suggestions for events and activities, such as:

- Hold your monthly meeting during the declared week, in the form of a celebratory luncheon, dinner or cocktail reception. Invite public officials and lawmakers; leaders from civic organizations and from groups you have helped through your community service projects; and prospective members. Give special recognition and awards to valued members of the coalition and/or community.
- Obtain a proclamation commemorating the week from your mayor or governor (if there isn't already one) and have coalition leaders and a photographer present at the presentation. Or, arrange for the presentation to be made at your celebratory meeting.
- Conduct a "quick" community service project.
- Schedule a "Day on the Hill" or other type of legislative event so you can meet with local lawmakers.
- Offer an informational seminar on substance abuse prevention, which will be open to the public, including prospective coalition members.

- Sponsor an essay contest in the high schools, and invite the winners to receive their awards at your celebratory meeting.
- Arrange for your coalition leaders to meet with the editorial board of the local paper, to encourage the editors to run an editorial on the significance of substance abuse to your community.

### Involve All Members in Publicity

Of course, you will be busy preparing press advisories and releases on the events. You will need to solicit the help of all members to build community interest and participation.

- This is the ideal time to book that call-in radio show that will answer questions about substance abuse. Of course, your on-air spokesperson will repeatedly promote the informational seminar that will be held later in the week.
- Use billboards, posters, banners, displays, emblems, stickers, seals, plaques and lapel buttons to spread the word. You might even want to ask members to post flyers on community bulletin boards, like those in supermarkets, in their neighborhoods.
- Encourage each of your members to invite one prospective member or significant community member to your event.



## Interview Tips

### TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL NEWS MEDIA INTERVIEW

- Have a topic outline with all the basics clearly noted. Identify no more than 3 critical points to be made, over and over. Polish the elements - to be sharp, forceful, commanding.
- Be concise - it is easy to bore an audience. Get all your key points across in the first half of the interview.
- Be concrete - short sentences, active verbs, simple and colloquial.
- Be colorful - use language that makes an audience sit up and listen. Politicians do this a lot!
- Get good at question and answer sessions. They demonstrate that you can talk off-the-cuff.
- Practice, practice, practice. Keep perfecting, adding, tightening. Get feedback that helps you see mannerisms that harm your credibility and test your messages/delivery to be sure you are coming across as you intend.

### Working With Radio and Television Stations

As for any event, the better prepared you are, the better the result. What you do to get ready can determine the success or failure of your media interview. If you've prepared well, all you'll have to do is take advantage of a few techniques that will help you come across to the audience in a forceful yet friendly way. Here are a few techniques:

- In a friendly but firm way, ask about the reporter's background and experience in dealing with the issues at hand. Be helpful and courteous in doing so.
- Find out how much the host/reporter understands about the topic, preferably before you go on the air, so you can spend a few minutes educating him/her and enable him/her to ask more intelligent questions. You may even want to suggest questions.
- Before the interview, make sure you and the reporter agree on the topic(s) to be covered. That's the only way you or your spokesperson can prepare specific answers and positive points.
- In all of this – be yourself! Concentrate on how to get ideas and positive feelings across – not just words.

- Watch the program or tapes of it beforehand if possible. Know the show's format and theme. It helps to watch several different episodes of the show. This gives you information on the style, philosophy, psyche and 'feeling' of the program as well as the interviewer or host. It can be insulting to the host if you appear completely unfamiliar with the show and may come across in the interview.

### Preparing For Talk Shows And Interview Programs

Be there early - even if it is a taped program. Studios are heavily booked and timing is essential. Being early also may give you a chance to talk to the reporter or host about what you want to talk about and to get a feel for his/her mood and probable questions. Both will prepare you to do well.

#### Television:

- Watch what you wear. No black, no white, no fine patterns that crawl. No clothes, jewelry or hair styles that draw extra attention.
- Dress equal to your host. (Men: no open collar if host wears suit and tie).
- Think about props for TV interviews.
- Offer something free to the audience (ask for self-addressed-stamped envelope)
- Take a cassette with you (station engineer can usually record for you during an interview although not all news bureaus will allow taping)
- Avoid one-word answers
- No scripting
- Don't get commercial or pushy.
- Know what's most interesting to the public/audience of the show.
- Don't be afraid to be different or controversial.
- Be calm, do not let anything get you hostile.
- Call the host by name.
- Have a phone number or address for viewers to get more information.
- Always have appropriate humor points in mind - no matter how serious the topic.
- Remember to mention your company or organization.
- Get your enthusiasm level up before you go on the air.
- Know two or three key points you want to get across.

## Answering News Media Interview Questions

- Be relaxed, confident and honest.
- Maintain a neutral attitude.
- Use pitch and speed for variety.
- Build in a "cut-off" with your answer if you wish to drop the subject.
- Discuss only activities and policies within your area of responsibility.
- Admit you don't know the answer if that's the case. If you promise to provide more information, deliver.
- Don't use jargon, acronyms and technical terms.
- Don't use speech mannerisms such as "er-ah"
- Don't be curt, even with the dumbest questions.
- Don't answer more than one question at a time.
- Don't restate the question.
- Don't begin with trite phrases such as "I'm glad you asked that." Instead say "That's an important question I'm frequently asked. ...."
- Don't give a 'no comment' response – if you're unsure of the answer or can't discuss it, say so.
- Don't get into a verbal fencing match if it's proprietary information; say so and move on.
- Don't volunteer information unless it supports a positive point you want to make.
- Don't be defensive - make all your responses positive.
- Don't ever assume anything is "off the record"; there is no such thing unless you're certain the reporter will honor the agreement.
- Don't let anyone put words in your mouth; only agree if the facts and figures are the truth.

## TYPES OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND HOW TO RESPOND

### Puffballs - The Easy Questions:

- Acknowledge question
- Take the opportunity to communicate a positive point
- Don't let the chance pass by without talking about one of your key points

### Hypothetical Questions:

- No one has the ability to see into the future

- Don't answer "what if" type questions
- Discount the hypothetical statement
- Bridge into a key positive point

### False Facts or False Assumptions Questions or Comment:

- Do not repeat the false information
- Discount false facts or assumptions by bridging to a positive point
- If the interviewer returns to the false information use the same technique

### Leading or Loaded Questions:

- Don't repeat the information
- Set the record straight, but don't dwell on the interviewer's leading or loaded question
- Bridge into key positive point

### Factual Questions:

- Affirm and bridge to a positive point if the information is correct
- Disagree (tactfully) and give the real facts
- End with a positive point

### Questions That Put Words in Your Mouth:

- Don't let it happen!
- Never repeat what the interviewer has said if it's not true or you don't agree
- Be sure not to repeat key negative words the interviewer used
- Give a positive answer by using a key point

### Forced Choice Questions:

- Do not agree if both choices are incorrect
- Tell the "real story"
- Make the information as positive as possible

## After the Interview

- Never, never complain if the story does not run as you wanted it.
- Say "thank you" when a story is good - write the reporter's boss. Send a letter even if the story was only adequate
- Never ask to clear a story as a requirement of its use. Instead, offer to be a resource to the reporter to clarify any confusing ideas, data or concepts
- Never get into a position of having to kill a story once it has been submitted

## Do's and Don'ts During Media Interviews

Ask 10 questions when accepting an interview:

- 1.Topic?
- 2.When?
- 3.Where?
- 4.Interviewer?
- 5.Why me?
- 6.How long?
- 7.Alone or panel?
- 8.Live or taped?
- 9.When on the air?
- 10.Source of inquiry?

- Have 3 positive points with examples you want to make.
- Watch or listen to show or read articles by reporter to become familiar with style and format.
- Check yourself in the mirror before going on TV.
- Practice Q and A with colleague before interview.
- State name, spell last name, position and subject instead of "Testing 1,2,3."
- Be honest, sincere, non-defensive, proud.
- Be brief: get message across in 20 seconds or less
- Emotional, Energetic, Enthusiastic, Exciting, Entertaining
- Be positive: get in your Positive Points using positive words.
- Give stats, examples, illustrations, stories, anecdotes, or analogies.
- If you don't know, say so but promise to get info and do.
- Maintain eye contact with interviewer.
- Be friendly: use interviewer's name once or twice.
- Talk conversationally and simply, like talking to your mother; no jargon or acronyms.
- Audiotape interviews when feasible (pocket recorder) so you can review and learn from them
- Use bridges to get to your positive points: Ex: The real issue is...Let me add...A common concern is...I'm often asked...
- Sit forward to show authority and interest.
- Leave hands free to gesture. This adds variety to your voice.
- Correct misinformation quickly and state positive points.
- Replace percents with real numbers but keep numbers to a minimum
- Visualize a good interview and you will give one.
- Look at every interview as a glorious opportunity. SMILE ☺

## Don't:

- Let the interview end without getting in your three points.
- Volunteer or repeat negative or inaccurate information.
- Get angry with the reporter.
- Say "No Comment" or anything you don't want to hear on the air or read in print.
- Go "off the record."
- Use jargon, acronyms, initials, or technical terms.
- Ever lie.
- Guess or speculate or answer hypothetical questions.
- Wear anything distracting – white, black, brown, yellow, bright green, red, or chunky, noisy jewelry.
- Do an interview with tabloids or inappropriate TV shows, or if you've had one drink or are taking medication that makes you drowsy.
- Be afraid to ask for a question again, or to stop and start over again.
- Get frazzled if interrupted. Just continue as if you hadn't been interrupted. If you must, say "let me finish," and continue.

## "Connections"

Phrase you can use between the answer to a question you don't really want and the answer you want to give [one of your positive points].

The real issue is....

But just as important is...

Let me explain...

But equally important...

But more important...

It's important to tell your viewers (readers, listeners)

It's important to understand...

You know, I think it's equally important to know...

I'm also frequently asked...

A question I'm frequently asked is....

Let me add...

Another question I'm asked is...

We might be overlooking...

A common concern is...

You can go a step further...

For instance...

I'm proud to be able to tell you ...

For example...

Let me give you the facts...

You should also know that...



## Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America

901 North Pitt Street, Suite 300 \* Alexandria, VA 22314

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www.CADCA.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Betsy Glick ~ (703) 706-0560 x246

March 27, 2001

### NEW STUDY REVEALS ATTITUDES TOWARDS U.S. DRUG PROBLEM

*Awareness of local progress grows favorably while media paints a broad picture of failure*

Alexandria, VA - A recent study conducted by the Pew Research Center shows that while public opinion about the nation's drug problem hasn't changed much in some areas, views about local successes are more optimistic today than they were in 1994.

"It is unfortunate that the media slant has been so negative. To say that public opinion hasn't changed is a great disservice to the thousands of tireless, concerned citizens who devote countless hours in an effort to make their communities safe, healthy and drug-free places to live," said Arthur T. Dean, chairman and CEO of Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA).

He points to the data in the survey that shed a more positive light on the progress made over the last several years:

- Between 1994 and 2000, there was a 43% increase in the percentage of Americans who felt we are making progress on the war on drugs at the community level.
- The percentage of those who felt we lost ground in the war on drugs on a community level fell by more than a quarter, from 51% in 1994 to 37% in 2000.
- Younger Americans are also more optimistic about the effectiveness of drug education. Nearly one-in-five of respondents under 50 years of age cite educating people about the dangers of using drugs as the most effective action.

"Clearly, people see the difference that education and prevention is making on a local level and that is good news," said Dean.

"When businesses, parents, media, law enforcement, schools, religious organizations, health providers, social service agencies and the government come together to teach kids refusal skills and positive life skills, everybody wins," he added. "Let's not take away that success by overdramatizing the survey results and glossing over the glimmer of hope that anti-drug coalitions have given to their communities."

# # #

*Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) is the premier national membership organization providing training, information and support to anti-drug coalitions across the country. Community anti-drug coalitions are local partnerships between parents, teachers, young people, law enforcement, health providers, the faith community, business and civic leaders, elected officials and concerned citizens who unite and mobilize to make their communities safe, healthy and drug-free -- one community at a time.*



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
October 22, 2001

CONTACT: Betsy Glick ~ (703) 706-0560 x246  
CONTACT: Kay Green ~ (703) 706-0560 x224

### National Leadership Forum XII Advisory

#### What?

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America's (CADCA) annual National Leadership Forum is the largest meeting of grass-roots and professional community coalition leaders in the country. Last year more than 1,200 participants gathered at the Forum to network and learn about the programs, products, and services related to reducing youth substance abuse in communities across the country. This year's conference will have tracks that focus on six prevention strategies: Community-Based Processes, Policy/Environmental Change, Information Dissemination, Education, Alternative Activities, and Problem Identification/Referral.

#### Where & When?

National Leadership Forum XII will be held December 12-14, 2001, at The Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C.

#### How?

Visit [www.CADCA.org](http://www.CADCA.org) for more information, or e-mail [forum@cadca.org](mailto:forum@cadca.org). Register by November 2 to save up to \$100!

#### Who Should Attend?

If you are a community coalition leader, prevention specialist, educator, administrator, counselor, law enforcement officer, treatment provider, drug court member, policy maker, business leader, coalition volunteer, drug demand reduction coordinator, concerned parent, criminal justice professional, youth coalition worker/volunteer or member of the religious community, you should attend the National Leadership Forum.

#### Why?

The goals of Forum XII are:

1. To advance a national dialogue on the importance of the community anti-drug coalition movement
2. To offer technical assistance and training that introduces innovations and promising practices
3. To present and promote science-based strategies
4. To connect coalition leaders with decision-makers to influence policy
5. To foster inclusion, diversity and respect for all cultures and population groups
6. To energize and motivate coalition leaders
7. To recognize and celebrate the work of coalition leaders
8. To provide opportunities for planning, networking and collaboration

#### Why should you attend Forum XII?

CADCA's National Leadership Forum is the premier substance abuse prevention/treatment conference in the nation. Five reasons this conference is invaluable:

1. Comprehensive Content - Virtually every topic relevant to building and sustaining a coalition will be covered in one of our workshop tracks.
2. Value - No other meeting in the field offers you so much - The value of the speakers' handout materials alone are worth the registration fee!
3. Practical Information - Leave the Forum with messages, skills, and tools to assist you in your work locally.
4. Political Connections - The opportunity to meet and listen political leaders working closely with the substance abuse prevention and treatment field.
5. Networking Opportunities - Extensive peer-to-peer interaction will provide you with new ideas and solutions, as well as the beginning of many valuable relationships that will continue far beyond the Forum.

###

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March 14, 2001

Colbert I. King  
Editorial page deputy editor  
The Washington Post  
1150 15th Street Northwest  
Washington, DC 20071

Dear Colbert:

Tuesday's op-ed piece, "A Turning Point on Drugs," written by my good friend and colleague, Joseph A. Califano Jr., accurately alluded to the changing direction in anti-drug efforts and the opportunities afforded by a new administration and continued bipartisan support in Congress.

The recent popular film, "Traffic," left audiences asking, "What can we do now?"

I would like to point out that there is an infrastructure in place to capitalize on the commitment to reduce the demand for alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs. There is a resource ready to lead this charge and take advantage of a strengthened emphasis on research, prevention, treatment and law enforcement. The resource I refer to is the community anti-drug coalition movement.

Community anti-drug coalitions, more than 5,000 strong in our national network alone, are local organizations comprised of tireless, concerned citizens who devote countless hours in an effort to make their communities safe, healthy and drug-free places to live. They are parents and educators who are teaching our youth refusal skills to help them say "no" to peer pressure. They are law enforcement officers and business people joining together to ensure alcohol and tobacco laws protecting minors are strictly enforced. They are faith leaders and elected officials reaching out to the community to warn about the dangers of addiction and the terrible social costs everyone pays as a result.

At a time when those at the forefront of the anti-drug movement agree we must increase our effort to reduce demand, community anti-drug coalitions are leading the collaborative approach to public education about demand reduction.

When Census reports are painting a picture of an increasingly diverse population, community anti-drug coalitions are making the most of this diversity and the wealth of ideas and energy it provides. When many are wondering, "What do we do now?" community anti-drug coalitions are providing the answers.

Sincerely,

xxxx  
Executive Director,  
Organization Name

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March 23, 2001

Pg. 13A; Hype & Glory

HEADLINE: Nation waits for insanity to stop in the drug war by Walter Shapiro

WASHINGTON -- The drug war is stuck in heavy traffic.

The Oscar marathon may showcase the scene from Traffic in which Michael Douglas, playing the nation's drug czar, begs his staff for "some new ideas" -- and is rewarded with the sounds of silence.

This fatalism about drugs is not just a creation of Hollywood. A new poll finds that 74% of Americans believe "we are losing the drug war." Similarly, nearly three-quarters of respondents to the survey, conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, agree that "demand is so high we will never stop drug use."

Yet when asked about anti-drug strategies, the public still clings to the hard-line nostrums of the late 1980s such as "stopping drug importation" (a priority for 52%) and "arresting drug dealers" (49%).

"What comes through is the frustration of it all," says Andrew Kohut, the director of the Pew research center. "People don't think what's happening now is working, but they pick the same strategy and tactics when they're asked what to do."

A small note of moderation was added to the drug debate Wednesday, when the Supreme Court ruled in a 6-3 decision that a Charleston, S.C., hospital could not test pregnant women for drug abuse without their consent and then hand positive results over to the police. Before the public hospital ended this draconian program in 1994, women were dragged off to jail in handcuffs right after giving birth.

"Why wasn't the Supreme Court decision a unanimous 9-0?" asks Garrett Epps, a constitutional law professor at the University of Oregon. "When you go to your doctor and the cops then arrest you for using drugs, it doesn't seem a hard issue that your Fourth Amendment rights were violated."

Epps is the author of a new book on a 1990 Supreme Court decision that banned the use of peyote in the rituals of the Native American Church, *To an Unknown God: Religious Freedom on Trial*. He argues, "This push toward a 'naked society' suggests that there's no social norm that won't be trumped by the drug war. We think of ourselves occupying a free society, but the sphere of personal freedom is constantly dwindling."

Next Wednesday, the Supreme Court will hear oral

arguments in its first medical-marijuana case, *The United States vs. Oakland Cannabis Buyers' Cooperative*. Even though nine states have legalized the use of marijuana for medical purposes since 1996, the status of those who supply the drug to patients remains in limbo.

The Oakland case grows out of a law-enforcement effort, coordinated by Clinton administration drug czar Barry McCaffrey, to go after the cooperative after voters in California approved medical marijuana in a referendum in 1996.

"If the court treats this as a drug case, we may have a problem," says Robert Raich, one of the lawyers for the co-op. "That's why we see this as a states' rights case."

The Supreme Court has become increasingly sympathetic to states' rights arguments, especially in cases involving the federal government's regulatory powers. But for all its attraction to state sovereignty, the politicized high court in the medical-marijuana case may find it hard to look beyond the passions aroused by the drug war.

A semicomical definition of insanity is continuing to do the same thing and expecting a different result. By that standard, the nation's drug war may be operating on the fringes of lunacy.

About the only other arena in which the federal government has so dramatically and so stubbornly maintained an ineffective policy is the 4-decade-old economic embargo against Cuba.

It is telling that Bill Clinton developed the moxie to discuss the inequities of mandatory sentences for drug crimes and the disparity between the penalties for possession of cocaine and crack only after the 2000 election. In fact, the rigid drug policies of his administration seemed motivated primarily by political calculation and Clinton's fear of reminding the nation that he was the first president to admit to smoking marijuana, although, of course, he "didn't inhale."

In theory, George W. Bush has the freedom to bring to the anti-drug effort the same innovative conservative thinking that he has demonstrated in education policy and in trying to mobilize religious institutions to deliver social services. But aside from a few stray comments by Attorney General John Ashcroft about "reinvigorating the war on drugs," the administration has been strange-

ly silent on the issue and has yet to appoint a drug czar.

The St. Petersburg Times reported Thursday that Florida Gov. Jeb Bush has been pushing his own drug coordinator, Jim McDonough, for the White House post. While not confirming any discussions with the White House, McDonough, a former aide to McCaffrey, took pains in a lengthy phone interview Thursday to sketch out his philosophy of the drug war.

McDonough reflects the no-surrender school of fighting drugs when he says, "Making drugs legal is the most ridiculous idea since they said that the Titanic was unsinkable." But he also takes a more moderate stance in emphasizing that "the immediate crying need is on treatment." He advances a welcome proposal for "an annual system that should review the egregious cases where sentencing is all out of proportion to the crime." But, in the next breath, he reiterates his chilling Florida proposal to provide state tax breaks to companies that agree to mandatory drug testing of all employees.

The creators of Traffic are right: There has to be a better way of reducing drug abuse without further jeopardizing personal freedom. But when it comes to new ideas, the nation is waiting. The Bush administration is in charge.

\*\*\*

March 24, 2001

Mr. Brian Gallagher  
Editorial Page Editor  
USA Today  
1000 Wilson Boulevard  
Arlington, VA 22229

Dear Mr. Gallagher:

America's attitude toward the drug epidemic is not a result of Hollywood hype. It's fueled by news media coverage and a failure to tell the complete story. Yesterday's "Nation Waits for Insanity to Stop in the Drug War" by Walter Shapiro is a case in point.

First, he failed to find the positive news in the Pew study. It shows that since 1994, there was a 43% increase in those who felt that on a community level, we are making progress. Likely this is because there are at least 5,000 community anti-drug coalitions who are not waiting for a national solution to the drug epidemic – they're taking matters into their own hands and making a difference.

Second, many news stories highlight dramatic drug busts, sting operations or unspeakable crimes. The stories about thousands of kids who live in communities where businesses, parents, media, law enforcement, schools, religious organizations, health providers, social service agencies and the government have come together to teach kids refusal skills and positive life skills to help them stay drug free are buried or never told because they aren't sensational enough.

True, insanity means doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. But if what you do again and again brings positive results, that should be called success, and we need to encourage others to follow. Unlike "Traffic," community coalitions do not see a roadblock in our drug epidemic – they see building blocks. And they are building a drug-free America, one community at a time.

Sincerely,

Arthur T. Dean  
Major General, U.S. Army, Retired  
CEO and Chairman  
Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America  
Alexandria, VA  
703-706-0560 ext.223

**Jan:** National Birth Defects Prevention Month

**Feb:** National Children of Alcoholics Week (NCOA)

**Mar:** National Brain Awareness Week  
Safe Spring Break Month  
National Inhalants and Poison Awareness Week

**Apr:** Alcohol Awareness Month  
4: Kick Butts Day  
5: National Alcohol Screening Day  
6: Alcohol Free Weekend  
13: National D.A.R.E. Day  
20: National Youth Service Day

**May:** National Mental Health Month  
5: National Safe Kids Week  
6: National Suicide Awareness Week  
13: National Alcohol & Other Drug Related Birth Defects Week  
13: Safe Senior Week/Graduation

**Jun:** Pharmacists Declare War on Alcoholism Month  
National Safety Month  
4: PRIDE Week  
10: Capitol PRIDE Festival

**Aug:**  
7: National Night Out

**Sep:** National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month  
9: Fetal Alcohol Awareness Day  
16: National Rehabilitation Week  
(3rd Mon): Family Day, A Day to Eat Dinner with your Children (CASA)

**Oct:** National Crime Prevention Month  
National Depression Education and Awareness Month  
Prescription Awareness Month  
Child Health Month  
  
23: National Red Ribbon Week

**Nov:** Great American Smokeout

**Dec:** National Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month





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