

# MAY MONTH PUBLICITY TIPS

## Key Messages you can Communicate

- Most Canadians take communication for granted. Millions of Canadians have a speech, language, or hearing disorder which hinders their capacity to communicate.
- Early identification and rehabilitation of speech and hearing disorders can often prevent communication difficulties in school, on the job, and in social situations.
- Speech-language pathologists and audiologists “Care About Communication!” Whether working with an autistic child, or a person recovering from a stroke, speech-language pathologists and audiologists strive tirelessly to help improve the quality of life and health of the people they serve.
- Speech-language pathologists and audiologists work with Canadians of all ages, within the school, healthcare, or private sectors.

## What Do the Media Look For?

The media look for certain characteristics to determine whether or not a particular event or situation is *newsworthy*, that is whether or not it deserves to be printed or aired. A story is more likely to be used if it contains several of these elements:

- ✓ Importance
- ✓ Prominence
- ✓ Timeliness
- ✓ Human Interest
- ✓ Proximity
- ✓ Unusualness



## Tools for Reaching the Media

Once you have a media contact list, you can plan how to reach those media using one or more of the following tools:

### News releases

News releases inform the media about new activities, programmes, and special announcements.

### Backgrounders

A backgrounder is a fact sheet that provides current or historical information and statistics which would add depth to information in the news release.

### Profiles

Profiles give biographical information on noteworthy individuals in the Association, or on people who have led successful lives with speech, language, and/or hearing disorders.

### Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

PSAs are free announcements offered by the media.

### Interviews

Allows for exploration of ideas and concepts. It includes interviews for background information, prearranged interviews for story coverage, and on-the-spot interviews for quick reaction and comment.

### Feature Articles

Usually are 500 words or longer and explore a particular theme.

### Notices

Use this tool to convey simple, straightforward information on upcoming events. Notices must include subject, date, time, location, and other basic pertinent information.

### Letters to the Editor

Letters are featured in every issue of the daily newspaper and can be written by a member of your organization.

### Opinion pieces

Articles that appear opposite the editorial page of daily newspapers, usually written by people who are not journalists — opinion leaders, presidents of associations, consumer advocates.

## Developing your Media Contact List

Building a media contact list takes time and effort. Media directories, such as *Cision Canada Ltd.* or *Marketwire*, are good sources of media information. They can be found in the reference section of most libraries. If you don't have access to a media directory, go through the Yellow Pages under the main headings of newspapers, radio, television, etc., and draw out the major media outlets. Then call each one to get contact information and the names of particular editors, reporters, columnists, or producers.

## Tips to Get You Started

**Targeting** Make some thoughtful choices about which media to contact based on which ones you believe will provide the most impact.

**Build Contacts** Use a commercial media list as above or call organizations and individuals which are involved in related activities and ask for a copy of their media list. Then update, check, and expand on it.

**Make Contact** When you make the first contact with a journalist, ask about and note deadlines for submitting releases and information. News deadlines vary between radio, television, and the press. Making personal contact with the media gives them a point of reference to you, your group, or organization. Your initial call should be short but informative: identify yourself, provide a concise description of your news/event, and offer to provide background information.

**Always be prepared with accurate facts and information.**

**Think about the needs of the media.** Try to develop ideas for visuals for television, photographic opportunities for the print media, and ambient sounds for radio.

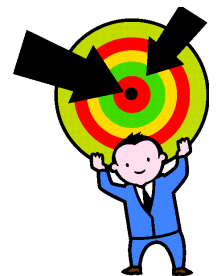
**Use credible spokespersons.** These people may be experts from the local college or university, local hearing/speech care experts, business and community leaders, programme specialists or those who “have been there.” For example, these are the people who may have experienced the benefits of treatment for speech, language, or hearing disorders.

**Provide photographs.**

**Mail, fax, e-mail, or deliver news releases and announcements.**

**Follow up with a phone call.**

**Say thank you!**



CASLPA members may download the Media Relations Guide for free from the 'Members Only' section of the website