

# How to Work with the Media—Radio, TV, Print



Reporters, editors, and other members of the media play an important role in expanding your SIDS outreach message. Good media contacts increase opportunities for communicating your message to the right audiences.

- ◆ Use every available channel of communication (television, radio, print) to get your message out to the community.
- ◆ Let your passion and concern about SIDS guide your ambition.
- ◆ Always look for new angles and story ideas to increase exposure for your message.

## Find a Contact Person

- ◆ Obtain a current media directory from your public library, or ask a local SIDS organization to share its press lists.
- ◆ Make phone calls to find out the names of health, feature, or city writers and editors at your local newspaper, and anyone else who may be interested in your story. Locate assignment editors. These are the people who make decisions about which stories will be published.

## Spend Some Time Educating the Media

- ◆ Let reporters and assignment editors know that SIDS is a major public health problem and that African American babies are twice as likely to die of SIDS as white babies.
- ◆ Offer statistics about the number of babies who die of SIDS each year. Be knowledgeable and professional.
- ◆ Position yourself as a reliable source of information to build a good relationship with reporters.
- ◆ Anticipate reporters' needs and have information available when requested.

## Take the Initiative and Introduce Your Story to Local Media Outlets

- ◆ Before you call, make sure you are prepared to present your story idea clearly and precisely.
- ◆ Prepare an outline to help guide you through your presentation.

## How to Work with the Media—Radio, TV, Print (continued)



- ◆ When you get the reporter or editor on the phone, introduce yourself and your organization and its concern about SIDS.
- ◆ Before discussing your idea, ask if the reporter has time to talk. If not, ask whether you can arrange to call back at a better time.
- ◆ When approaching health reporters, let them know that you understand the limits on their time and that you are prepared to do as much as possible to help get the story printed or produced.
- ◆ Offer a press release, current and available research or statistics, and whatever else might be helpful in getting the job done. Be sure to include a name and contact number so interested reporters know who to call for more information.

# Sample Media Release



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:** [Name of person within your organization who is available to answer questions from the press. Be sure to add the contact's phone number.]

**[Name of your organization]  
Spearheading Local Outreach Effort  
To Reduce Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)  
in African American Communities**

The [Insert the name of your organization] has kicked off a community education campaign to help parents and other caregivers reduce the high incidence of death from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) in African American communities. National research has revealed that African American babies are twice as likely to die of SIDS as white babies. Overall, SIDS is the leading cause of death in all infants under 1 year of age, and most SIDS deaths occur between the ages of 2 and 4 months.

Research has shown that placing babies to sleep on their backs dramatically reduces the incidence of SIDS.

“SIDS is a community problem. We must come together to help educate one another about the steps we can take to reduce the number of babies who will die from this syndrome,” said [insert name of spokesperson] of [insert your organization name]. This campaign is designed to bring together parents, grandparents, caregivers, and everyone concerned about the health of infants. This effort is part of the national “Back to Sleep” campaign, sponsored by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, American Academy of Pediatrics, SIDS Alliance, and Association of SIDS and Infant Mortality Programs.

The National Black Child Development Institute, along with other partner organizations and their local affiliates, is working to reduce the risk of SIDS in African American communities. Representatives of organizations interested in joining this community-based effort are encouraged to contact [insert contact name and phone number].

# Sample Radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs)



## **:30-SECOND RADIO PSA**

Did you know that the safest way for babies to sleep is on their backs? This small change in the way you care for your baby is the best protection against Sudden Infant Death Syndrome—SIDS, sometimes called “crib death.” African American babies are 2 times more likely to die of SIDS as white babies. Remember, back sleeping is safest. To find out more about SIDS, call 1-800-505-CRIB. That’s 1-800-505-2742.

A public service of this station and the **[insert name of your organization]**.

## **:15-SECOND RADIO PSA**

Help protect African American babies from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome—SIDS, sometimes called “crib death.” All babies should sleep on their backs. To learn more about SIDS, call 1-800-505-CRIB.

A public service of this station and the **[insert name of your organization]**.

## **:30-SECOND RADIO PSA**

Placing babies to sleep on their backs is the most important thing you can do to reduce the chance that your baby will die from SIDS—Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, sometimes called “crib death.” Nearly 3,000 babies die from SIDS each year. African American babies are 2 times more likely to die of SIDS as white babies. Remember, back sleeping is safest. To find out more about SIDS, call 1-800-505-CRIB. That’s 1-800-505-2742.

A public service of this station and the **[insert name of your organization]**.

## **:15-SECOND RADIO PSA**

Reduce the risk of SIDS—Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, sometimes called “crib death,” by placing babies on their backs to sleep. To learn more about SIDS, call 1-800-505-CRIB.

A public service of this station and the **[insert name of your organization]**.