

# Hearts N' Parks

A Joint Program of the  
National Recreation and  
Park Association and  
the National Heart, Lung,  
and Blood Institute

## Quick and Easy Tips for Working with the Media

### What do you need?

- A media advisory—A one-page fact sheet inviting reporters to cover an event. It contains the traditional who, what, when, where, why information of a press release and lists a contact name and phone number for the purpose of scheduling interviews, either on-site at the event or before the event.
- Press release (see sample release in your Hearts N' Parks media kit)
- Background information on the Hearts N' Parks Y2K Program
- Fact sheets on physical activity and heart healthy eating from the NHLBI
- Local spokespersons (2)
  1. An event coordinator or sponsor who can discuss the Hearts N' Parks Y2K Program, the event that you're promoting, and the schedule of upcoming activities.
  2. A community member or event participant who can provide a personal perspective on why they have come to the event, what they hope to learn...

Be sure to provide all spokespersons with a few key talking points about the Hearts N' Parks Y2K Program and make sure that they understand they may be called upon to do media interviews.

### What do you do first?

#### 4 weeks prior to the event:

*Explore community calendar opportunities.*

Find out if any of the newspapers on your list print weekly community calendars and confirm with them the deadline for submissions. Be sure to get your advisory to them in time to make their calendar.

#### 2-3 weeks prior to the event:

*Develop your media list.*

Include all local network and cable TV and radio stations, newspapers and magazines. List reporters who cover: health and medicine, features, city/community news, as well as assignment desk editors.



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**Ten days prior to the event:**

*Send media advisory to your media list.* If you have fax numbers, that is a good way to reach reporters quickly. Begin calling the key papers and stations to make sure they received the advisory and to encourage them to cover the event.

*NOTE:* Don't be shy. Keep calling. Try to speak directly to a reporter. Be prepared to re-send to them several times if need be so that the materials end up in the right person's hands.

*If the reporter says yes.* Work with him or her to arrange an interview with your spokesperson. Ask if there's anything special they need from you to complete their story—for example, a camera crew may need access to an electrical source or to a "mult box" that will provide them with sound directly from any microphones you might be using for an awards ceremony, for instance, or if a local celebrity is scheduled to speak.

*If the reporter says maybe,* then put him/her on your call back list and call again in the final days before the event to encourage him/her to attend.

*If the reporter says no,* ask if he/she can suggest someone else on the staff who might be interested.

**A day or two prior to the event:**

*Re-send the advisory to your entire list.*

*Keep calling your media targets.*

*Keep a running sheet of your expected media attendance* with notes on when they will be there; who they are sending, etc.

**At the event:**

*Greet media when they arrive.*

*Make sure to introduce media to your spokespersons for interviews.*

*Give every media person who attends a press kit to take back to their office.* It will help them round out the story.

**After the event:**

*Send press kits to reporters who expressed interest* but did not attend, because it may still result in coverage, or they may come to your next event.

*Start checking the newspapers and watching TV to see your story.*

*Send a thank you note to the reporters* who attended. Tell them that you enjoyed working with them and that you hope to continue to serve as a resource for their reporting.

*Send a letter to the editor of your daily newspaper* to publicly thank your volunteers for making the event a success and ask the editor to consider it for publication.

**Congratulations on a job well done. Now on to the next event**