

**Administration on Development Disabilities
Technical Assistance Institute – Presentation Summary
Media Advocacy: Using the Media to Accomplish Your Policy Goals
Friday, August 11, 2006, 11:00 a.m.**

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You will find a detailed media advocacy kit located at:

www.addfamilysupport360.org/3_10/advocacy.asp

One of the most important things that can be said in this presentation is that Media Advocacy, Self-advocacy and Self Determination are all part of the same process. Youth with developmental disabilities need to set goals and have the skills to achieve them whether they are personal or as a group.

All of you are social reformers. Social reform comes from people who had to face difficulties to solve their own problems and teach others what to do.

We are going to learn about the art and form of media advocacy. Tobacco control has been an important issue in the presenter’s career because by using the media they have diminished the use of tobacco products by 30%.

Media advocacy is applied, pick up the phone; make a call. Media advocacy is a movement-building, strategic use of media and community advocacy to advance change.

Those who advocate for the needs people with disabilities are naturally good advocates because they have passion, are persistent and are experts in the field. Think about not changing individual minds of people, but rather why are such ideas formulated in the first place? Media Advocacy is the strategic, thoughtful use of mass media and community advocacy to advance specific social or public policy goals.

Traditional Media is sometimes called Public Relations (PR)

Professional Message Development

Reinforces individual responsibility

Focus on shaping public attitudes

Media Advocacy shifts focus from defining a problem at the individual level to defining the problem at the social level.

PR or traditional media presumes that problems are caused by lack of information.

Media advocacy presumes that problems are caused by individual’s lack of power to change policy. It’s about getting people to behave in a way that empowers your goal.

What do you want people to get up and do?

Media Advocacy – sitting down with partners to develop a message within the group

Collaborative message development

Reinforces social responsibility

Focuses on policy

Gives people a voice

Trains the community in media skills

You can hire a lobbyist to advocate for you, but when you get out there and do it yourself it's taken more seriously because you're a volunteer and not getting paid to tell people about the issues.

Compared to PR, Media Advocacy Is

More concrete

More focused on a particular policy goal

Community-based, and community-owned

More flexible and opportunistic and

More credible

What Does Media Advocacy Do?

Changes (reframes) the way decision-makers look at community issues or problems

Creates a reliable, consistent stream of publicity

Explains how these problems could and should be solved

Motivates community members and policymakers to get involved.

When you interact with the media, you create a relationship.

Never complain about a problem without giving the solution.

Do the work for the media. Provide the media with information.

Use the media; do not let it use you.

Begin with the end in mind.

Framing for Action – Define goals – Goals must be specific, achievable and measurable (time).

What kinds of things happen every year that you can use or anticipate to try and get media coverage of it?

Disability campaigns

The Anniversary of the American's with Disabilities Act

Tie-in larger events to your youth events.

Soft News Days are days when the media is looking for items for news coverage, be strategic in thinking about those.

Flexible or opportunistic – be aware of what's happening and what kind of news is coming along.

Six questions you must ask for Media Strategies:

1. What is the goal, in clear and realistic terms?
2. What is the message, in clear, and simple terms?
3. Who is the target audience? Who do you want to hit? Sometimes it's one person, the chairman, the president, etc.
4. What outlets are best to disseminate the message and reach the target? Radio, print, advertising, a public service announcement (depends on time and target audience).
5. What should the audience do when they have heard the message, e.g. give money, change policy, make a decision, etc.?
6. What help will you need, e.g. volunteers, youth, etc.?

Developing Your Message

K.I.S.S. (Keep It Short and Simple) Make it one page in length – Your message in 30 seconds

Begin with research - Ask questions –who has the biggest audience of the morning drive for a radio show? You might want to place an advertisement or public service announcement there.

Maximizing Your Media Coverage

Know the beats

Understand your media markets

Respond quickly to requests for information

Some news outlets such as the Washington Post will not allow anyone to buy their reporters lunch. Better than lunch, invite them to an annual meeting, write letters to the editor – which do get read.

Be responsive – monitor and write them

If they do any kind of coverage, DO NOT FORGET to thank them

Cite any newspapers or other information that you have been featured in, in the past.

Collect past clips and package them all together to send it to policy makers.

RESOURCES

On-line Media Resource Kit

www.addfamilysupport360.org/3_10/advocacy.asp

This entire presentation and supplemental handout materials can be found at the following links:

Media Advocacy Power Point presentation - http://www.ent-s-t.com/ADD_0806/08-11-06%20-%20007%20-%20Media%20Advocacy%20-%20A_M_O'Keefe.pdf

Media Advocacy Planning Checklist - http://www.ent-s-t.com/ADD_0806/08-11-06%20-%20008%20-%20Media%20Advocacy%20-%20A_M_O'Keefe.pdf

On-line Media Advocacy Tool Kit – http://www.addfamilysupport360.org/3_10/advocacy.asp