

Media Events: Sample Timeline

The following outlines some of the key elements for generating press coverage for your Foster Care Month events. We recommend you develop your own, more comprehensive timeline starting six months out from the event date.

January/February

- > Draft the core messages to be highlighted in all campaign materials.
- > Send a letter to governor (or local elected official) asking for Foster Care Month proclamation.
- > Identify 3-5 spokespeople to participate in the event. Include experts, alumni and people making a difference such as foster parents, social workers and mentors.
- > Begin planning your May event(s) for National Foster Care Month.

March

- > Finalize the core messages to be highlighted in all campaign materials.
- > Compile a list of reporters/editors/producers in your community.
- > Draft pitch materials such as: newsletter articles, press releases and advisories.
- > Continue planning your May event(s) for National Foster Care Month.
- > Send out a Save the Date card to your press list.

April

- > Begin sending newsletter articles to local community newspapers, businesses, faith-based groups and other organizations.
- > Finalize details of your National Foster Care Month event(s). If the public is invited to attend, send out an announcement to local radio, TV, and newspaper calendar editors.
- > Finalize your list of spokespeople. Distribute and review the core messages (or talking points).
- > Finalize pitch materials. Be sure to include who, what, where, when and why information in event-related pitches and news releases. Also include a contact name and phone number for more information.
- > Send an event announcement approximately four weeks prior to the event.

May

- > Send out a press advisory one week before the event.
- > Develop and compile press kits one week before the event.
- > The day before the event, call all reporters/editors/producers to see if they have event information and to determine who might be planning to attend. You will probably have to re-send information to several outlets.

Post-Event

- > After the event, send out photos and news releases to all media outlets that did not attend. Highlight the most newsworthy or compelling aspects of the event (notable speakers, large attendance, testimonial quote from a foster care alum, etc.)
- > Monitor all media outlets and collect clippings and tapes of shows. Share these with funders, board members, volunteers and other key stakeholders.
- > Maintain relationships with reporters/editors/producers who attended the event or wrote stories.