



Tips For Working With the Media

There are 5,000 American Cancer Society Relay For Life events nationwide which are frequently publicized in local newspapers as well as on television and radio. Publicity and community-based marketing go a long way in spreading the word about Relay For Life and the difference American Cancer Society volunteers are making in the fight against cancer.

Show Us Your HOPE is a great opportunity to engage the local media in activities that can visually demonstrate how Relay For Life brings hope to cancer survivors and caregivers in your community.

Be sure to engage your Relay For Life volunteer publicity chair and local American Cancer Society staff partner for additional information about making the media aware of your **Show Us Your HOPE** activity. Listed below are some basic tips to keep in mind when working with the reporters and your local media.

- You'll be most successful if you call reporters you know or have worked with in the past. If they can't cover the story, they'll likely refer you to someone who might.
- Send your information to the media 6-8 weeks in advance for weekly and daily print, radio and TV community calendars. Monthly publications require at least three months lead time.
- Send information to TV and radio stations 1 -2 weeks in advance of your event. You can send it again 1 -2 days before your activity as well.
- Whenever possible, know how and when a reporter wants to be contacted. If you know the reporter already, send your information via email. If you do not have a relationship, pick up the phone, but have a follow-up e-mail ready. If you can't get through on the phone, try e-mail.
- Do not call reporters when you know they are on deadline. Mid-morning and early afternoon are good times to make pitches. If the reporter sounds rushed, offer to call back later. If you get voicemail, leave the basics and call back at a better time.
- Get to the point as quickly as you can.
- Don't overload a reporter with too many numbers and statistics. Personal, visual stories are more interesting.
- Don't tell a reporter what to write; simply offer your activity as a story idea.
- Do your research. It helps to know the reporter and the outlet before picking up the phone so that you can make educated suggestions about why he/she might want to cover your activity/event.