



Media Action Toolkit



One Voice for Volusia
Connecting Our Community

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Introduction



What is the purpose of a “Media Action Toolkit?”

Why Good Communications Matter for Nonprofits

For decades, many nonprofit organizations followed the dictum: "Do Good, Maintain a Low Profile and Others Will Provide." "Others" often included clients, public supporters, charitable donors and even the organization's staff and board members. It was viewed as self-serving, even taboo, for nonprofits to allocate time and resources to promote understanding, goodwill and support for their mission and objectives.

Today, Americans are a bit cynical about rhetoric. They tend to believe leaders and organizations that lead by example. When our actions fail to support our words, we lose credibility and authority. And, even successful, well-led organizations can have trouble communicating with the public if they fail to present a compelling message about who they are and what they contribute to society.

As nonprofits, we focus most of our attention on the issues and clientele we were created to serve. Too often, we underestimate the value of what we've learned from our work—the human stories, research findings and best professional practices. Yet this field-tested knowledge can be invaluable when placed in the hands of the public, policymakers and other nonprofit and government agencies. Improving your group's ability to communicate can have twofold benefits: **It can inform policies that will help advance your mission, and by increasing your visibility, make your organization more attractive to new members and donors.**

Karen E. Lake

Director of Marketing and Communications

W. K. Kellogg Foundation

www.wkkf.org/Toolkits/Communication/

This toolkit
outlines the
essential
elements for
building an
effective
communications
and media
relations
program.

Develop a PLAN

2

Why develop a communications plan?

Make communications part of your overall work plan

Like any important element of your organization, effective use of the media must be properly and carefully planned in order to produce the most effective results. The media is essentially your lifeline for sharing the successes and strategies of your organization.

The first step in developing a communications plan is not to write a press release and start developing better relationships with local media, but to integrate your media work into your overall work and strategies. Media should not be an afterthought.

Media should be integrated in your annual and even five-year strategic plan. Media should be a line item in your budget, no matter how much or little money you plan to spend.

For smaller nonprofits, the executive director's media skills will be instrumental in establishing the public's perception of the entire organization.

Once media and communications have been incorporated into the long-term plans of your organization, you can begin planning your short-term or immediate media action steps: **define your target audience and determine the objectives of your communications program.**

Define your target audience

Prior to taking any action, you need to have a good idea of who you want to receive your message.

Possible target audiences include:

- decision makers
- influential individuals
- opinion leaders
- multipliers
- the general public

Define your target audience & determine the objectives of your communications program.

Determine the objectives of your communications program.

Possible objectives include:

identify and promote understanding of social issues relevant to the organization

launch new projects supporting the organization's mission

stimulate interest in events or activities

change perceptions or attitudes toward the organization and its work

gain access to key policy-makers or opinion leaders

attract quality staff, volunteers, and donors

Clarify the MESSAGE

3

How do I
communicate my
message?

Creating Your Message

After you have defined your target audience and determined the objectives of your communications program, you need to create the message that you want conveyed.

1. The message must be clear and simple.
2. Use plain language.
3. Your message should include the following components:
 - ① Key message
 - ② Highlights
 - ③ Data
 - ④ Citations

If you are using the media to **advocate change**, answer the questions as you develop your message:

What is the problem or issue?

What do you want to happen? This question is crucial in your planning. It will help identify who and what your targets are, who the best messengers are and how to reach them.

What is the solution or policy that will reach this goal? Sometimes you will be using the media to get someone to change their behavior and thoughts about your issue. In that case, your solution may be a changed behavior.

Who can make it happen?

Who are our allies/ opponents? This will help you figure out who's on what side of your issue and who might be able to be swayed either way.

What would they need to hear to make it happen?

How do we frame our message best?

What themes work well with this audience? This could be a business concern, public health issue, legal or liability concern, etc.

What makes news?

The more newsworthy elements a story contains, the broader the audience, thus the more likely it will be covered by the media.

Conflict & Controversy: Is there any physical or emotional drama involved? If a prominent person is involved the conflict will increase news value.

Timelines: Is your news happening right now? Possibly tie in your news to another current event or an anniversary of a historic event.

Proximity: Is your news nearby? If the event takes place elsewhere, "bring the story home" with a local angle. Could it happen here? Are any locals related to someone in the event?

Human Interest: Does it elicit strong feelings, either for or against? Emotions can be inherent in the story or experienced by the reader. Possibilities include love, hate, compassion, sympathy, curiosity, grief, sadness, anger, joy and humor.

Injustice & Hypocrisy: Are the circumstances unfair? Are children or others with little social or economic power involved?

Number of People Involved or Affected: How many people are involved in or affected?

Possible Future Impact: Can something happening today potentially affect many people or impact a geographic area or organization in the future?

Prominence: Are prominent people involved in your news in some way? Is there someone who could help your story?

Unusual: Is the story usual, unexpected, unique or ironic?

Suspense: Does your news have an uncertain ending?

Progress: Does your news involve progress, breakthroughs or something new and improved?

Great Visuals: Is there a visual that highlights any of the above elements?

Prepare the MESSENGER



What does the messenger need to know?

Make sure the messenger fits the message—use youth and adults as appropriate

Preparing the messenger begins with your agency developing a solid relationship with the media.

1. **Take the time before a crisis strikes to get to know key reporters.**
2. **Limit your messengers to a few people who have been trained**
3. **Make sure all of your messengers know and stick with the same message**

Other useful ideas:

Don't just wait for reporters to call you, because it rarely happens. Identify someone whose work has impressed you - call their office and congratulate them. This is such a rare occurrence that they are certain to be pleased that you have taken the first step to get in touch. If you have a story to tell them, even better.

Establish and maintain regular communications. Give them story ideas and help them cover the stories.

Show interest in their work. Ask about the deadlines of the publications or programs on which they work. Don't view your media relations job as the task of getting something from the editors and reporters; your function is actually to help them do their jobs.

Help them frame your issues in a way they can convince their editors that your story is important. Even though you and the journalist think the story is interesting, there is a lot of news to compete with! Keep an eye on what is going on in the media, be able to relate your issue with other ongoing discussions and stories.

Answer their questions immediately. Journalists have deadlines and they will most probably call you half an hour before they pass the deadline. If you are not prepared to answer to their questions in the moment, ask for few minutes to organize yourself and call them back with ready information.

Select the METHOD **5** How do I choose the most effective method(s)?

What method will be most effective to further your goals?

- **Editorial Board Meeting**
- **Interview**
- **Letter to the Editor**
- **Media Advisory**
- **News Conference**
- **News Event**
- **Press Release**
- **Op-Ed**

**Reiterate your main point.
Be repetitive.
Be repetitive.
Be repetitive.
Keep coming back to your
main point!**

Editorial Board Meeting

One of the most powerful ways to reach the public is by having the press on your side of an issue.

Before

- Read their newspaper
- Know where they stand on your issue
- Write down key facts
- List your main points

During

- Know what you want to ask them and ASK

After

- Leave printed, supporting material
 - Follow up with a thank you note
-

Interview

These can be very effective, BUT require careful planning and preparation.

Before

- ◆ Determine your message
- ◆ Know who your audience is and speak to their ability to understand
- ◆ Develop “sound bites” – short, memorable phrases that are easily quotable that explain your basic message
- ◆ Make sure the interviewer has plenty of background information
- ◆ Be clear of the “ground rules”
- ◆ Prepare visual aids, if needed
- ◆ Practice

During

Nonverbal

- ◆ Always look the interviewer in the eye
- ◆ Maintain good posture
- ◆ Be yourself and smile
- ◆ Look alert

Verbal

- ◆ Speak in clear, short, declarative sentences
- ◆ Always use complete sentences
- ◆ Use relevant facts and data when appropriate
- ◆ Speak from personal experience as much as possible
- ◆ If you don’t know the answer, admit it!
- ◆ If you are uncomfortable, use the “bridge” (see section 9)

After

- ◆ Thank the reporter
 - ◆ Offer to be available so the reporter can double check your quotes
 - ◆ Always be professional and courteous
-

Letter to the Editor

- ◆ Keep it short and focused on one main point
 - ◆ Make your letter timely to a specific event or local activity of interest
 - ◆ Support your facts with documentation
 - ◆ Familiarize yourself with the coverage and editorial position of the paper
 - ◆ Check the letter specifications of the newspaper. Follow these guidelines, particularly the length requirement
 - ◆ Keep your letter brief--Shorter letters are more likely to be published
 - ◆ Monitor the paper for your letter
-

Op-Ed

An op-ed is a guest column found in the editorial section of the newspaper.

Op-eds are longer than letters to the editor, and there is more competition for space (usually 600-800 words).

- Try to think of a catchy title
 - Tie it to something specific
 - When possible, personalize it with experience
 - Be brief and to the point
 - Start and end with a bang
 - Avoid excessive rhetoric
 - Sometimes it helps to have “an expert”
-

Focus on the
-Who
-What
-When
-Where
-Why

Press Release

A press release is intended to gain journalists' interest.

Press releases generally follow a **standard format**.

The format is designed to give the reporter or editor all the information needed quickly.

May be emailed, faxed or mailed with or without a cover letter.

Release statement

Usually one or two days before the event

Organization's name

Contact information

Headline and dateline

Lead paragraph

This where you should tell the most important information of the release

Body copy

Use quotes here if possible in order to put a human face on your news

Final paragraph boilerplate

End your press release with a final standard paragraph (not more than 3 sentences) about your organization.

Keep your issue on their desk and eventually you will break through

News Event

This is an event used to generate news interest with the goal to **achieve coverage**.

News events also help **spread awareness, raise funds and build media campaigns**.

Consider:

Choice of Topic and Speaker

- ◆ Topic should be clear
- ◆ Choose speaker with stature and influence in the community

Size of Audience

- ◆ Know your target audience
- ◆ Arrange seating accordingly, so the site won't appear too crowded or too empty

Choice of Location and Timing

- ◆ Location should be easily accessible
- ◆ Location visually appealing, but prepare an alternative if the site is outside
- ◆ Time should be early enough in the day for TV reporters to put coverage on the evening news

Publicity

- ◆ Allow two to three weeks of publicity prior to the event
-

Media Advisory

(same as Press Advisory or Media Alert)

- Quickly becoming the preferred document for media
 - Clearly and concisely outline **WHO, WHAT, WHERE and WHEN** of an upcoming news event
 - Provide basic **facts** only
 - Use an interesting **headline**
 - Include information on directions to an event site, interview opportunities, or visual for TV cameras
 - Should be sent at least a week ahead of time
 - Include contact name and number
-

News Conference

(or Press Conference)

A news conference is a **type** of news event. Careful **PLANNING** is required!

- ◆ Determine the participants and confirm their involvement
- ◆ Develop talking points for each speaker
- ◆ If location is indoors, confirm number of electrical outlets
- ◆ Send out a news advisory one week before the conference
- ◆ Prepare a news release to hand out on the day of the conference

The day of the conference:

- ◆ Send another round of news advisories in the morning
 - ◆ Limit the total speaking time to 30 minutes or less
-

Always EVALUATE **6** Another evaluation?

What have you accomplished?

The Value of Evaluation

Evaluation seeks to determine whether activities worked and to what extent they achieved their outcomes, and if not, why not.

This is important for two main reasons:

1. Accountability

Accountability is not possible, unless the results of expenditures are measured and reported.

Communication activities are no different in this regard to any other kind of activity, except that communications outcomes can be more difficult to measure than other types of programs.

2. Continuous Improvement

Evaluation is good management practice. In recent years agencies at all levels have moved from a focus on inputs and processes to a much greater emphasis on **program outcomes**.

Analyzing Results

Did it work?

Did it accomplish the objects determined for each defined group?

Spend a good amount of time analyzing outcomes. Usually results are mixed and every time a communications campaign is conducted, the organization will learn more about each audience and will become more successful in future campaigns.

Key principles

The following principles should guide evaluation activities:

1. Evaluation involves assessment of the degree to which an activity's objectives have been met as a result of the activity. Evaluations are only as valuable as the objectives they are based on are appropriate.
2. Evaluation is an integral part of all communications projects, not an optional extra.
3. Evaluation should be planned at the outset of a communications project, not left until the end.
4. Evaluation must be properly budgeted for. As a rule of thumb, ten percent of a project's budget should be allocated to evaluation.
5. A good test of the usefulness of an evaluation is to ask the following questions:
 - Does it effectively identify the *success/failure* of the project?
 - Does it effectively identify *the reasons for success/failure* of the project?
 - Does it effectively identify the *cost-effectiveness* of the project?

Know the LINGO

7

What terminology is needed to be “Media Savvy?”

Donated Print Space – Advertising space available in print media (newspapers and magazines) for *pro bono* placement of public service advertising.

Editorial Board Meeting – A meeting with the editor or editorial staff of a periodical.

Interview – A pre-planned one-on-one formal conversation between a journalist and a newsworthy person or a representative of a group.

Letter to the Editor – A letter written by an individual who wants to express a point of view on current issues. The letter is submitted to a newspaper and published in one of the most widely read sections. Tend to create a public forum.

Media Advocacy – The use of any form of media to help promote an organization's or a company's objectives or goals, which come from the group's vision and mission.

Media Outlet – A specific media company (WNBC-TV, WROD-AM, The New York Times, etc.).

Medium – The singular term for a media type (radio, television, newspaper, magazines, cable systems, outdoor companies, etc.). Plural = media

News Advisory (or Media Advisory or Media Alert) – One-page document that lists the basics – logistics, purpose, background information. Generally used to notify the media of a news event at least one week ahead of time.

News Conference (or Press Conference) – A media event designed for a speaker or representative of a group to present a statement, answer question, or make announcements to a roomful of people who represent different media outlets.

News Event – An event that generates news interest with an intention to create visual coverage and sound bites. A news conference is a type of news event.

News Media – Television, newspaper, and radio journalism. Provide the broadest and most in-depth coverage.

News Release (or Press Release) – “Conversational” one- or two-page document that gives details about a certain event, initiative, study, contact information and often includes quotes.

Op-Ed – An opinion editorial gives an individual an opportunity to communicate their perspective on the topic of interest for the week in greater detail than a letter to the editor.

Public Service Announcement (PSA) – A non-commercial message that is broadcasted or inserted at no charge to the non-profit responsible for the campaign.

Video News Release (VNR) – Requires script development, interviews and tapings, editing and production, satellite time, station notification and placement and tracking.

Contact the MEDIA How to get in touch with media resources?

Daily Newspapers

Daytona Beach News-Journal

Department	Contact	Email	Phone/Fax
Accent	David Wersinger, Editor	David.wersinger@news-jrnl.com	Main Phone 386-252-1511
Business	Cecil Brumley, Editor	Cecil.brumley@news-jrnl.com	
Cops	John Gallas, Team Leader	John.gallas@news-jrnl.com	Main Fax 386-258-1577
Editorial	David Wiggins, Editor	David.wiggins@news-jrnl.com	
Features	Kathy Kelly, Team Leader	Kathy.kelly@news-jrnl.com	Newsroom: 386-681-2220 ext. 2291
Flagler County	Aaron London, Editor	Aaron.london@news-jrnl.com	
Government	Jim Witters, Team Leader	Jim.witters@news-jrnl.com	Newsroom Email: metro@news- jrnl.com
Education	Linda Trimble, education K-12	Linda.trimble@news-jrnl.com	
Health & Medical	Anne Geggis, Staff Writer	Anne.eggis@news-jrnl.com	Newsroom Email: metro@news- jrnl.com
Metro	Laura Williams, Assistant Editor	Laura.williams@news-jrnl.com	
Metro	Barry Gear, Senior Night Editor	Barry.gear@news-jrnl.com	Newsroom Email: metro@news- jrnl.com
News	Cory Lancaster, Managing Editor	Cory.lancaster@news-jrnl.com	
Photo		njphoto@news-jrnl.com	Newsroom Email: metro@news- jrnl.com
Social Services	Deborah Circelli, Staff Writer	deborah.circelli@news-jrnl.com	

Orlando Sentinel

Volusia County Section	Contact	Email	Phone	Fax
News Releases		volusia@orlandosentinel.com	386-851-7920	386-851-7919
Event News		communityevents@orlandosentinel.com		
West Volusia Bureau	Kevin Connolly, Editor	kconnolly@orlandosentinel.com	386-851-7934	
Daytona Beach Bureau	Ludi Lelis	llellis@orlandosentinel.com	386-253-0964	
Education	Susan Jacobson	sjacobson@orlandosentinel.com	386-851-7903	
Deltona, General Assignment	Denise Balona	dbalona@orlandosentinel.com	386-851-7916	
Growth, Transportation, Business	Rachael Jackson	rjackson@orlandosentinel.com	386-851-7923	
Cops	Gary Taylor	gtaylor@orlandosentinel.com	386-851-7910	

Weekly Newspapers

Newspaper	Editor	Email	Phone	Fax
Daytona Times	Karsceal Turner	cinco_klub@hotmail.com	877-352-4455	
DeLand Beacon	Barbara Shepherd	barb@beacononlinenews.com	386-734-4622	386-734-4641
Hometown News	Jeannine Gage	gage@hometownnewsol.com	386-322-5900	386-322-5901

Television Stations

Station	Contact	Email	Phone	Fax
WCEU-TV (PBS)			407-273-2300	
WFTV-TV (ABC)				
News Director	Bob Jordan	bob.jordan@wftv.com	407-822-8300	407-481-2891
Volusia Reporter	Jason Allen	Jason.allen@wftv.com	386-527-1474	386-255-9388
WKMG-TV (CBS)				
News Director	Susan Forbes	sforbes@wkmg.com	407-521-1302	407-298-2122
Volusia Reporter	Tarik Minor	tminor@wkmg.com	407-701-9819	407-298-2122
WESH-TV (NBC)				
Daytona Beach	Newsroom	desk@wesh.com	386-226-2114	386-226-2222
News Director	Barbara Mauschard	bmauschard@hearst.com	800-493-7488	407- 539-7948
Volusia Reporter	Claire Metz	cmetz@hearst.com	386-214-1591	386-226-2222
PSA's	Lenora Boutte	lboutte@hearst.com	407-645-2222	407-539-7948
WCEU (Channel 15)	Information	Channel15@DaytonaState.edu	386-506-4415	386-506-4427
General Manager	Bruce E. Dunn	dunnb@daytonastate.edu	386-212-3632	
Calendar	Tom Smithers	smithet@daytonastate.edu	386-506-3936	
PSA	Jim Johnson	johnsonji@daytonastate.edu		

Radio Stations

Daytona Beach

Station	Type	News Director/Manager Or Contact Person	Phone	Fax
WKNG-FM 95.7	Classic Rock	Mark Williams	386-238-9605	
WKRO-FM 93.1	Country	Mark Williams	386-255-6071	
WNDB-AM 1150	News, Talk	Mark Williams	386- 257-1150	386-872-2225
WVYB-FM 103.3	Contemporary Hits	Mark Williams	386-226-9892	
WROD-AM 1340	Easy Listening	George Winslow	386-253-0000	386-253-3178
WPUL-AM 1590	Urban	Charles Cherry II	813-620-1300 ext. 20	
WYND-AM 1310	Religious		386-734-1310	
WSBB-AM 1230	Easy Listening	George Winslow	386-253-0000	386-253-3178
WAPN-FM 91.5	Religious	Machelle Vallance	386-677-4272	386-673-3715
WMFJ-AM 1450	Religious	Bill Powell	386-767-9094	386-760-7107

Orlando

Station	Type	News Director	Phone	Fax
WCFB-FM 94.5	R & B and Classical Soul	Kevin Gardner	386-238-3330	407-290-1076
WJHM-FM 101.9	Urban	Dawn Blackstock	407-919-1000	407-919-1329

Plan for PITFALLS **9** What problems might I run into?

Common Media Opportunity Pitfalls

Unfortunately, no one can guarantee that if you include every element suggested you will be assured a perfect media campaign. However, if you recognize some common pitfalls, you can prevent your advocacy efforts from becoming a lost opportunity. Here is a list of common pitfalls when working with the media:

“Column inches envy” All too often, staff or volunteers within an organization, or in allied organizations, resent the success of a spokesperson who is called upon time and again to speak for the cause. While it may be inevitable that the media will continue to turn to the most informed and most persuasive, resist the pressures to subdue an effective voice simply because others are envious.

Wrong Spokesperson Your best spokesperson may or may not be you — or the boss. Your organizational culture may encourage volunteers to speak for the organization while professional staff members are expected to remain in the background. That may be a fine practice for many occasions — but not necessarily for handling a professionally trained adversarial spokesperson. The head of your organization may be the right name on a press release, or the named author of an op-ed article, but not an effective broadcast presence. Of course, choosing the right spokesperson sometimes requires exquisite tact, and considerable courage.

Isolating media responsibility within your organization It is not uncommon for organizations to relegate media work to the press or public affairs office. Because media advocacy is critical to the goals of the entire organization, those responsibilities should be spread more broadly within the organization.

Debating (even winning) the wrong fight Alcohol industry advocates can be maddeningly provocative. Their claims and accusations may sting so sharply that the alcohol policy advocate is drawn into elaborate denials or quibbling over tangential issues. Ignore the attacks and return to your strong themes and high ground.

Passivity Don't be intimidated by a famous host or a sweet talking industry spokesperson. Don't mistake passivity for civility. If you don't like the way a question is framed, restate the issue, and proceed to answer the question that should have been asked.

Wordiness/jargon/mouthfuls You're trying to persuade a general audience, not impress a group of experts. Don't ramble. Stay with one or two clear points at a time. Speak simple, plain English (or the language of the show). Use short, recognizable words. Don't filibuster; come up for air. Let your opponent get a few words in edgewise, but don't allow him or her to pass off misleading information as truth. Challenge falsehood tactfully.

Wasting opportunities/getting drawn off track There's a danger in getting too comfortable with a charming and gracious host and being drawn off into an interesting side issue that does not advance your policy goals. You may think you've got all the time in the world, but even an hour-long talk show can pass by so quickly (if you're having fun) that you lose the opportunity to hammer home your main points. Don't allow the show to stray far from your program goals, if you can help it.

Losing with your face and body language what you win with your hands Scowling doesn't win many friends, nor does looking bored and distracted when you're not talking but remain on camera. Tension and anger can also be conveyed by your unconscious body language. A small, sad smile and a gently but clearly noticeable shaking of the head can effectively convey to an audience that you know what they

know — that this fellow is a paid mouthpiece and is talking nonsense. A subtle gesture may be much more effective than a scowl or a laugh — and more effective than interrupting.

Being Unprepared Needs no explanation.

Being Overprepared If your words and mannerisms sound memorized or rehearsed, they lose much of their punch. Your arguments and main points should be thoroughly and comfortably worked out in advance but not rigid formulas committed to memory.

Relying on one's status or credentials If you think that a skeptical host or an industry spokesperson will treat you respectfully because you have impressive curriculum vitae or are a high-ranking executive of a prestigious organization, think again. Television and radio programming does not favor status or credentials alone.

Bullying, lecturing Don't lecture or appear to speak down to you host or adversary. It makes the audience feel that you're lecturing or attacking them, and that is no way to win friends and influence people.

Mistaking cuteness and cleverness for wit and humor Wit and humor are wonderful weapons to disarm a skeptical host or hostile adversary, but not every would-be humorist is good at it. Don't reach for humor or sardonic slogans or labels, unless unbiased friends or colleagues confirm that you're good at it. Otherwise, be serious and straight. It's safer.

Excerpted from www.alcoholpolicysolutions.net, original source: The Advocacy Institute, Washington, DC

One of the Most Common Pitfalls in interviews or talking with a reporter is being asked a question you can't or don't want to answer. Here are some tips for getting out of a tough situation:

- I can't tell you that. What I can tell you is....
- The REAL issue is.....
- That brings me back to my most important point.....
- The critical issue that I mentioned earlier is.....
- The most important point to remember is.....
- Let's go back to the point you need to keep in mind....
- As I stated earlier.....

Refer to EXAMPLES **10** What works and what doesn't work?

Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 13, 2004

Contact: Carrie Garnett, Executive Director

386-947-8301 (office), 386-295-1112 (cell)

carrie@ovfv.org

Local Task Force Ready to Implement Community Strategies to Reduce Youth Access to Alcohol

Work Plan Approved by State and Federal Agencies

DAYTONA BEACH – A local Task Force has received the “green light” to stop – or at least actively work to reduce – youth access to alcohol in Daytona Beach.

The Florida Office of Drug Control, the Pacific Institute of Research and Evaluation, and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Programs recently reviewed and approved a local plan involving enforcement activities to include routine compliance checks and DWI/DUI safety checks; the creation of a visible media campaign targeting parents and other adults; and, the improvement and/or adoption of a new policy related to underage drinking.

The project is part of a national research initiative being evaluated by Wake Forest University School of Medicine. Daytona Beach was selected as one of seven communities in Florida to participate over a 30-month period, ending December 30, 2006.

Led by One Voice for Volusia, which is a nonprofit planning coalition, the task force has been meeting since July to identify and develop community strategies proven to be nationally effective in reducing alcohol use among youth.

“One Voice for Volusia has worked closely with the Office of Drug Control in the effort to reduce underage drinking,” states Director Jim McDonough, Florida Office of Drug Control. “Their coalition’s outstanding participation and hard work has made them a leader in this initiative.”

Task force membership represents, but is not limited to, the following sectors: local government, law enforcement, judicial branch, education, health care, business, youth/youth organizations and other community groups and interested individuals.

The next Task Force meeting will be held Wednesday, October 20th at 3:30 p.m. at the City of Daytona Beach Teen Center, which is located at 108 E. Orange Avenue in Daytona Beach (right across the street from the Daytona Cubs). There is parking to the east, west and south of the building.

The meeting will feature a presentation regarding the process and impact of compliance checks. All interested individuals, especially youth, are welcome to attend.

For more information, please call 386-947-8301 or visit on the web at www.onevoiceforvolusia.org.

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Sample Media Advisory

(Courtesy of Indiana Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 23, 2003

Contact: Angi Taylor, Borshoff Johnson Matthews
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Some 200 youth gather for release of underage drinking data,

Alcohol Awareness Month and Orange Ribbon Week celebration

Orange Ribbon Week 20-foot banner to be signed, 500 orange balloons to be released

What Some 200 local and statewide youth members of the Indiana Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking and Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) will assemble to learn the results of the “Youth Access to Alcohol” survey and celebrate Alcohol Awareness Month and Orange Ribbon Week, an education/awareness campaign developed by the Indiana Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking. Special presentations by the youth will be made during the program.

Indiana’s SADD Student of the Year will be named during this ceremony. Plus, youth will sign a 20-foot banner and release 500 orange balloons to show their commitment to being alcohol free.

The “Youth Access to Alcohol” survey, conducted by the Mathematica Policy Research Institute, Inc. and analyzed by the University of Minnesota Division of Epidemiology, assessed the knowledge of, attitudes towards, and level of public support for alcohol policies. The results of this survey are expected to support the Coalition’s backing of an increase in the state’s alcohol tax.

When Friday, April 25, 2003 – 1:30 p.m.

Where Front steps of the RCA Dome (off of Capitol Avenue), downtown Indianapolis.

Weather Note In case of rain, this event will be held in the 500 Ballroom on the first floor of the Convention Center. In either case, several photo opportunities will be available.

Another Activity of Interest Immediately following the event, students will participate in the Quick Click Challenge. Teams of students will race against the clock to see how quickly they can get in and out of a car – each time making sure they buckle their seat belts for safety. This fast-paced activity will take place in the 500 Ballroom in the Convention Center.

This event is part of the Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD)/Orange Ribbon Celebration conference.

Sample Op-Ed

(Courtesy of Indiana Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking)

Sad Reality

Ironically, the newest reality movie, “The Real Cancun” from New Line Cinemas, will be released in April – Alcohol Awareness Month. This movie, a by-product of the reality television craze, features 16 “cast members” on Spring Break in Cancun, eight of them under the legal drinking age in the United States. The camera crew follows them around 24/7, filming everything they do – including getting drunk, pairing off and even stripping.

The reality is that underage drinking is neither funny nor entertaining. Alcohol is the most widely used drug by teens, with 44 percent of all college students reporting to be binge drinkers. In reality, more than 70,000 students are victims annually of alcohol-related date rape or sexual assault; more than 150,000 students develop an alcohol-related health problem, with 31 percent meeting the clinical diagnosis for alcohol abuse each year; 25 percent of college students report negative academic consequences as a result of their drinking; and 1,400 college-aged students die every year as a result of alcohol use.

The cast of this movie may have only been filmed during one week, but the decisions they made while filming may last a lifetime and affect the decisions of others. Get real...underage drinking is a serious problem that negatively affects everyone. It's time to give Hollywood a dose of reality – let's send this movie to the discounted video bin where it belongs.

Lisa Hutcheson
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Sample Letter to the Editor

(Courtesy of Indiana Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking)

Underage drinking is a society-wide problem

September 10, 2003

Dear editor,

The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) and Institute of Medicine (IOM) this week released the *Reducing Underage Drinking – A Collective Responsibility* study, exposing the \$53 billion national public health epidemic of underage drinking. To address this problem, NAS and IOM recommend increasing alcohol taxes, implementing mandatory server training, and requiring the registration of beer kegs in order to track purchasers, which already is implemented in Indiana. The Indiana Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking supports the findings in this study and encourages our state legislators to take notice. To reduce the influence of alcohol on Indiana's youth, we must curb access and availability to alcohol by raising the price through increased taxes and training employees who serve alcohol.

The study found that even small changes in alcohol taxes can lead to a decline in drinking by youths, who tend to have limited income. Because youth are especially price-sensitive, increasing alcohol taxes is an effective way to keep alcohol out of reach. Alcohol taxes have not been raised in Indiana since 1981, resulting in a loss of revenue for the state, as well as increased health risks for all Hoosiers – including an increase in alcohol-related traffic crashes, violent crimes and cases of liver cirrhosis.

Another effective way to curtail access and availability is to require responsible alcohol service training for everyone who serves alcohol. This training would provide the information and skills necessary for people who serve alcohol to do so responsibly by correctly checking identification, recognizing signs of intoxication, and understanding the alcohol laws and penalties for breaking those laws.

The underage drinking epidemic must be addressed in the Statehouse by raising the alcohol tax and requiring mandatory alcohol service training. It is not the sole job of a parent, school system, minister or law enforcement officer to ensure our youth can't get alcohol. It is our collective and shared responsibility as a concerned community to address the problem of underage drinking.

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Successful Local Submission: Op-Ed

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Call for help to draft blueprint for local health, human services

By **ALAN ABRAMOWITZ and SAM WILLET**
COMMUNITY VOICES

Have you ever wanted to make a difference? Here's your chance! Tell your neighbors, tell your friends, call your mom. Numerous individuals committed to making our community stronger, healthier and more productive are embarking on a new quest, what we're calling the Community Agenda project.

The Community Agenda is intended to become the blueprint for health and human services in Flagler and Volusia counties through a visioning process specific to this community, but based on data.

It is an opportunity for volunteers to decide just what is important to them. And all that is requested is time – a commitment to attend just three meetings of a work group that interests you. So if you are interested in services related to children and youth, families and neighborhoods, the elderly and disabled, personal crisis and disaster, or wellness and health – we're asking that you participate.

Why is this being done? Our community appears to be rich in resources and services by the number of agencies working and making positive strides in the lives of others. But funding, time and human resources are becoming limited. Therefore, it is necessary to take a second look at how effective we are and would like to be in the areas of health and community services for children, families and all individuals.

Given the level of technology and data that is available to us, it is timely for a community like ours to coordinate a project like the Community Agenda. Communities across the country – and as close as Jacksonville, which implemented the model we are following – are refining progress and ultimately improving quality of life issues.

The great news is that a potential hurdle for such an effort has already been achieved by the commitment of key leaders to use the project outcomes to guide funding, planning and policy decisions in the future.

By working collectively to define our community's priorities, we will ensure that our health and human service systems function with the utmost of efficiency.

Of particular importance is that the workgroups are diverse and composed of a balance of individuals from all sectors of Flagler and Volusia counties. The workgroups are: Creating a Brighter Future for Our Children & Youth; Building Stronger Families and Neighborhoods; Creating Independence for Elderly & Disabled; Responding to Personal Crisis and Disaster; and, Promoting Wellness and Protecting Our Health.

Each workgroup will essentially start by creating a vision about what this community should look like in each of the five areas. Each workgroup is tasked with identifying a set of key indicators that will allow the community to set priorities in critical issues and determine benchmarks for measuring the future successes of services in the community.

The ability of our community to meet the needs of children, families and individuals directly impacts all of us – our families, jobs, lifestyles and future. So we encourage each resident to get involved by visiting www.onevoiceforvolusia.org/CA.htm to sign up for a workgroup or call One Voice for Volusia, 386-947-8301, for more information. Registration ends September 23rd.

Successful Local Submission: Letter to the Editor

Reprinted with permission from Elaine Dunlap. Appeared in the Daytona Beach News Journal on April 6, 2003. Reproduction does not imply endorsement.

Teen alcohol abuse

After reading the article "Local teens sop up more suds, state says" (March 20), I feel I must respond. As a substance abuse prevention specialist and director of the East Central Florida Regional Prevention Center at Stewart-Marchman Center, I found it disturbing to read an article in which some people question the prevalence of underage drinking in our community.

Too often, parents and other members of our community try to diminish the very real facts about substance abuse.

Stewart-Marchman Center treats more than 6,800 people annually for alcohol and other drug-dependence problems. More often than not, these people report that their alcohol use began in their adolescent years. As a community, we need to take responsibility for our young people by keeping them away from drugs and alcohol. As a prevention professional, I would like to emphasize three things:

- It is a proven fact that the longer we can delay substance exposure and use by young people, the less likely they will be to have long-term abuse issues.
- It is not OK to let your children try alcohol, even in small quantities, even if you are present. It is illegal, but, more important; it is a much stronger message if you, as a parent, say that drinking is not OK until they are 21 years old. Period. Research has shown that when parents are clear that drinking, smoking and using drugs are not OK, children are less likely to do those things.

One of the reasons alcohol is illegal for people under the age of 21 is because until that time, the brain is still developing. Alcohol use in people under 21 can cause very real damage to a young person's developing brain.

Alcohol use and special events are a part of the culture in Daytona Beach. As a community, however, we need to engage in the discussion of how we keep alcohol out of the hands of teenagers and promote responsible choices about the use of alcohol in general.

ELAINE DUNLAP, Ormond Beach

Sources and Resources

Alcohol Policies Solutions

Check out their media advocacy section: <http://www.alcoholpolicysolutions.net>

American Public Health Association

Download their media advocacy manual:

http://www.apha.org/news/Media_Advocacy_Manual.pdf

Centers for Community Change

Check out their Media Advocacy Section: <http://www.communitychange.org/media.htm>

Community Toolbox, University of Kansas

Check out Chapters 6 and 34 in the Tools Section: <http://ctb.ku.edu/tools/>

Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting: <http://www.fair.org/>

“Marketing Your Organization” Training Manual from the Ad Council. August 20, 2003

The Marin Institute

Check out their media advocacy section: <http://www.marininstitute.org>

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Check out their Communications Toolkit at:

<http://www.wkkf.org/Toolkits/Communication/Default.aspx>