

# ORAL HEALTH PROMOTION PUBLICITY TIPS

## WHAT DO THE MEDIA LOOK FOR?

The media look for certain things when deciding whether an event or issue is newsworthy and deserves to be printed or aired. A story is more likely to be picked up if it contains these elements:

- ✓ Importance
- ✓ Human Interest
- ✓ Prominence
- ✓ Proximity
- ✓ Timeliness
- ✓ Uniqueness

Key oral health messages you can communicate:

- Your oral health impacts overall health and wellness.
- Periodontal disease has been linked to serious illnesses including lung disease, diabetes and heart disease.
- Dental hygienists are registered health professionals who work in a variety of settings, with people of all ages, to prevent oral disease.
- Dental hygiene is the 7<sup>th</sup> largest registered health profession in Canada.
- Registered dental hygienists in all areas of Canada – except PEI, NWT, YK and NU – are authorized by regulatory authorities to provide services directly to clients, without the supervision of a dentist.
- Steps to good oral health: Brush your teeth at least twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste, floss between your teeth daily, rinse using an antiseptic mouthwash, eliminate tobacco use, eat healthy foods and visit your dental hygienist regularly.

## TIPS TO GET YOU STARTED

**Targeting:** Think carefully about which media to contact based on which ones you believe will provide the most impact.



**Build Contacts:** Use a commercial media list, develop your own or call organizations and individuals that are involved in related activities and ask them to share their media list. Expand and update regularly.



**Make Connections:** When you first make contact with a journalist, verify deadlines for submitting releases and information. Making personal contact with the media gives them a point of reference to you, your group or organization. Your initial call should be short but informative: identify yourself, provide a concise description of your news/event, and offer to provide background information.



**Think about the needs of the media:** Try to develop ideas for visuals for television, photographic opportunities for the print media, and sound bytes for radio.



**Use credible spokespersons:** These people may be faculty experts from dental hygiene programs or other local oral health experts, business or community leaders, or clients who have experienced the benefits of dental hygiene treatment.



**Provide photographs.**



**Always be prepared with facts and information.**

**Deliver your announcements by fax, email, on social media or personally.**



**Follow up with a phone call.**

**Say, "Thank you!"**



## TOOLS FOR REACHING THE MEDIA

Once you have a media contact list, you can plan how to reach those media using one or more of the following tools:

**News releases** inform the media about new activities, programs, and special announcements.



**Backgrounders** are fact sheets that provide current or historical information and statistics which would add depth to information in the news release.

**Profiles** give biographical information on noteworthy individuals related to your news.



**Public Service Announcements (PSAs)** are short free announcements offered by the media.

**Interviews** allow for more in-depth exploration of ideas and concepts. Types can include interviews for background information, prearranged interviews for story coverage or on-the-spot interviews for quick reaction and comment.



**Feature Articles** are usually 500 words or longer that explore a particular theme.



**Notices** convey simple, straightforward information on upcoming events. Notices must include subject, date, time, location, and other basic pertinent information.

**Letters to the Editor** are featured in daily newspapers and can be written by a member of your organization.



**Opinion pieces** appear opposite the editorial page of daily newspapers, usually written by people who are not journalists—opinion leaders, presidents of associations, consumer advocates.

NDHW™ Sponsored by:

