

# PROMOTING YOUR SERVICE PROJECT



Now that you are ready to begin your project, you should promote it throughout your school and community. Raising awareness of your project can help you garner resources and support for your work.

## WHY PROMOTE YOUR PROJECT?

There are many reasons why you should use the news media to get the word out about your project. Raising community awareness about your project can:

- Help recruit volunteers
- Help raise resources for the project
- Promote the cause to a larger audience
- Help you network and meet others who are working on similar issues, or who can benefit from your project
- Give your project credibility
- Show your community that young people are making a difference



## TIPS FOR PROMOTING YOUR PROJECT

One of the best ways to promote your project is through television, radio, newspapers, magazines, or the Internet. In order to get attention in the news media, your project must be newsworthy (about a new development that people are interested in). To convince an editor or journalist that your project is newsworthy, you may need to explain why your story is both unique and focused on an issue that people care about. To effectively communicate with the news media about your project, you should follow the steps below.

1. Develop a quick and clear message about your project. The message should entail:
  - What you care about
  - Arguments that support your message
  - A catchy phrase or “sound bite” that the news media can use
  - Facts and statistics that tell why your project is necessary
  - A short, personalized story about the impact the project will have or is already having on people in the community
2. Research news media outlets and develop a media contact list.
3. Build relationships with reporters.
  - Find out which journalists report on the issues that relate to your project.
  - Begin to develop a relationship with the journalists on your media list.
4. Examine your project plan and determine appropriate media strategies.
  - Think about what you want to achieve when contacting the media. (Do you want to ask for resources, inform the audience of something, recruit supporters, or publicize an event?)
5. Organize and document your media coverage.
  - Consider appointing a member of your team to be the official record keeper of your media coverage. The record keeper will be responsible for obtaining copies of all the coverage you receive.
6. Practice and prepare for project promotion.
  - Choose group spokespersons, or train the whole team to work with the media.
  - Practice interviews, speeches, and presentations.

These tips will help your project get media coverage. You can also write letters to newspaper editors, create public service announcements, distribute news releases, or compile and distribute press kits of project information to put your project in the media spotlight. Good luck promoting your project!