

# Going Public Guide



a program of the Jane Goodall Institute

Stories in the local and national media are great vehicles to celebrate your accomplishments, increase awareness about issues affecting the local environment, animals and the human community and spread the seed of Roots & Shoots.

Dr. Jane is the perfect example of an activist who uses the media to its best advantage. Wherever she goes, Dr. Jane gives interviews and speaks with reporters. Through her staff at the Jane Goodall Institute, she actively pursues newspaper, radio and television opportunities for spreading her message. She is always ready to speak out and has stories, facts, quotes and photos to share at a moment's notice. Most important, she speaks from the heart and from her own experiences—if you do the same, people will listen.

Having a promotion plan to promote your Roots & Shoots group's projects and events allows you to spread your message, familiarize people with Roots & Shoots and your group, recruit new support and make your project or event a success.

## Develop a Media List

Put together a list of contacts for newspaper, television and radio. A comprehensive list will take time to create, and will be refined over time. Start early!

### How To:

- Ask the reference librarians at your public library if they have a book listing media contacts in your area. You can also create a list by searching the Internet and the inside cover of local newspapers and magazines.
- Be sure to make note of names, email addresses, mailing addresses, fax numbers and phone numbers of reporters.
- Learn the preferences of each news company, like what their deadline day or time is (Try not to bother reporters near deadline.) and through what medium they prefer to communicate.

## Press Releases

Do these for your biggest events, the press usually will only cover 2-3 of your events per year. Don't forget to send this to high school and college newspapers, church or religious newsletters and community websites.

### How To:

- Typically a one-page document, your press release should include the words "FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE" and your contact information beneath the Roots & Shoots logo or your local group's letterhead.
- Capture reporters' attention with a catchy headline, and follow with the *who, what, where, when, how* and *why* of your story.
- Fax and email your press release three times—two weeks before, three days before and 24 hours before. Following up with a phone call each time you send the release increases your chance of being published and is a must if you want the paper to send a reporter to the event.
- After the event, send a follow-up release describing the event with pictures, quotes, etc.
- Well-written press releases are simply copied right into the newspaper—perfect!
- Be sure to phone television stations an hour or two before your event. Often news teams are cruising around just looking for a story to cover for the evening news.
- Download a sample press release from the Roots & Shoots Resource Center.

## Letters to the Editor

This is the second most read part of the newspaper. Plus, our elected officials pay close attention to what is printed here. This is a highly effective way to promote your event and issue.

### How To:

- Responding to a recent article or local issue makes your letter more likely to get printed.
- Make it short! Look on the Letter to the Editor page to see rules for length.
- Sample structure: Use the first sentence to state the problem. Then state why it is important to you personally. Next put your call to action/your event. Remember to proofread.

## Public Service Announcements

College or community radio stations are ideal for this; they typically have fewer rules for their Public Service Announcements or "PSAs."

### How To:

- Call the stations first to see if there are any requirements for PSAs.
- They should only be four or five sentences or 20 seconds long.
- Start the PSA with a compelling fact about the problem you are addressing.

## Making Announcements (Public Speaking)

Ask your teacher or a group leader if you can make a brief announcement during class or a meeting. Word of mouth travels fast, and this is an easy way to get all your Roots & Shoots group members involved in the promotion of the event.

### How To:

- Practice on a partner.
- Stand up straight.
- Make eye contact and smile.
- Show passion.
- Share a fact about the problem.
- It's ok to be nervous!
- Pass out flyers for your event.

## Publicity Posters & Flyers

A great and easy way to create a buzz.

### How To:

- Be eye catching (Use the Roots & Shoots logo for example)
- Communicate info in a single glance
- Include all your contact information
- Place in locations with targeted exposure. (i.e. schools, coffee shops, environmentally friendly stores and restaurants and libraries)

Please email or send copies of any news articles or photos to the Roots & Shoots National Office at [roots\\_shoots@janegoodall.ca](mailto:roots_shoots@janegoodall.ca) or PO Box 309, Station P, Toronto ON M5S 2S8.