

Crime Stoppers USA National Conference

Media Relations 101

THE ABC'S – The Media Tool Box

Media Kit

- News advisory – As a prelude of an event: Provides the who, what, when, etc.
- News release – As a prelude, coverage or post coverage of a news story
- Radio “rip and reads” – Modified news advisory or news release for easier on-air reads
- Fact sheet – Provides media with basic background about the organization, its Mission, etc.
- Bios – Leadership (photos)
- Logos – High resolution
- Past case studies – So media can better understand how you work, and what you do, etc.

Media List(s)

- Database – Preferably a automatically updated service
- Traditional media + traditional media parallel sites (i.e. web version of local newspaper)
- Include social media targets (Twitter, Facebook, Blogs, YouTube, etc.)
- Narrow your targets to right sources
 - Television: News assignment editor
 - Radio: News director
 - Newspaper: Metro editor, crime/courts beat reporter, etc.

News Bureau

- Community calendars
- PSAs
- Briefs – awards, grants, announcements

PITCHING STORIES

- News mining – daily searches to identify story opportunities
- Proactive news stories – keep an eye on calendar for designated weeks/months that parallel your mission (National Night Out et al)
- Customize pitch to news agencies (news release, live interview, phone interview, etc.)

MEDIA INTERVIEW(S)

An effective method of communicating with large and fragmented audiences is through traditional media (television, radio, print) and social media (Facebook, Twitter, Skype, YouTube, etc.). Establishing and maintaining a good relationship with and through all media is also a good way to build a trust bank for your organization. First, sharing positive news builds respect among your target audiences, but a good relationship will also help when trouble is brewing.

In today's society, when news or information can reach your audiences instantly and where everyone has become a "journalist," it is important to prepare for any type of interview or media coverage. The following guide is designed to provide an outline of best practices in working with traditional and social media.

IMPLEMENT A TRADITIONAL MEDIA RESPONSE SYSTEM: Under most circumstances, any media inquiry should be handled by a designated spokesperson. It is also recommended that a standardized process should be put in place within all areas of an organization to field media calls. This process is set up to ensure there is a clear, constant process of managing media inquiries in place at all times. **(See attached)**

1. Determine whether or not an interview is necessary. Prior to fulfilling a request, consider the following:

- Validate an interviewer's request:
 - What do they want to talk about?
 - What message do you want your audience to receive?
 - Is the inquiry from a credible news organization?
- Determine who would be the best person to respond
- Does the reporter understand the content or direction of the possible story?
 - Is the angle negative or positive?
 - If possible, research (Google, et al) interviewer's previous coverage of the subject.
 - Have previous stories been factually correct?
- What is the best format to respond?
 - Grant an interview
 - Request questions in writing
 - Provide a statement or quote

2. Tips to help you prepare for a successful interview:

Recognize that *an interview is an opportunity for you to have your story told.*

- Prepare key talking points
 - Outline the two or three points you want to make in the discussion.
 - Make sure your key points are outlined in key 10-to-15-second sound bytes.
 - Rehearse your points.
- Have information available, ready to send to the interviewer, including: background information on particular topic, news releases, fact sheets, etc.
- Remember, content has the potential to go global.
- Identify the most likely questions you will be asked and have answers prepared for them.

- Remember, a reporter can ask you a question on any topic, not just the initial subject matter of the interview.

Types of interviewers

INFORMED

This refers to the educated interviewer who knows the industry and is reporting based on their knowledge. He/she will already have done their research prior to the interview.

- Just needs clarity and/or quotes.
- Following up on news story that is already running, comments needed.

UNINFORMED

Never assume the interviewer has all the background. It is important to note that many interviewers do not have the opportunity to gain an understanding of the story/issue you are discussing. This is an opportunity to help inform and educate.

- Provide background information for the reporter.
- Outline in writing the issue and how you want to convey it in the interview.
- Regardless of “HOW” the question has been asked, answer the question you think should have been asked. Prepare your answer ahead of time and stick to key points.
- Feel comfortable with fact checking. Offer to review complex details with an interviewer. Be prepared to offer others who can also explain the situation.
- Follow up the interview with an email summarizing the important points you want made.
- Make sure to thank the interviewer for his/her time and attention to detail.

HOSTILE

- Anticipate aggressive questions and practice out loud answering them in advance.
- Have your facts written out. Write short answers in bulleted form.
- Keep calm.
- Respect the interviewer, but know your issue(s).
- Be careful, avoid being defensive.

AMBUSH

- Do not feel obligated to answer the questions on the spot.
- Offer to help the interviewer, respond with “We are busy at the moment, but we would be glad to work with you to help get the information you need.”
- Never do an interview without the opportunity to prepare first.

AMBUSH (continued)

If you follow these steps during an ambush, you will have accomplished the following:

- Interview can now take place in your own environment
 - You will have gained time to gather your thoughts.
 - You will have given an indication that you are willing to cooperate rather than stonewalling the interviewer with a “no comment.”
 - You will be able to anticipate what to expect in the interview because you will likely hear the first question during the ambush. The interviewer’s first question – usually the toughest – provides a clear direction of the interview.
- **Be careful. Do not** threaten or degrade the reporter. Don’t antagonize. Instead, help ensure accurate, responsible reporting.

Interview tips

Image is important

Wear something comfortable. Dress professionally. Represent the work you do in your appearance.

A few on-camera tips:

- Display your brand naturally and subtlety (monogrammed logo et al).
- Wear clothes with solid, neutral colors.
- Try to avoid bright red or white and clothes with a lot of patterns.
- Avoid loud, flashy jewelry or ties, etc. They cause the viewer to focus on what you’re wearing instead of what you’re saying.
- Maintain good posture and sit up straight, on the front of your seat. Keep feet comfortably apart when standing.
- Try to avoid shifting back and forth on your feet.

What to do and say before and during your interview:

- Select a comfortable environment for the interview.
- Natural light is best, but avoid areas where there is a lot of traffic.
- Read over your prepared bullets for content and focus.
- Take a series of deep breaths before you begin.
- Talk directly to your interviewer. Do not look around. Instead, maintain eye contact with the interviewer.
- Be friendly and conversational, but stick to the topic.

Interview tips (continued)

- Get comfortable ahead of time with your key messages (practice them out loud prior to the interview) you want to convey. This helps to keep you on message, regardless of the direction the interviewer may take.
- If there is a question you don't want to answer, redirect the interview back to your key points, beginning with "what I really want to talk about today..."
- Never repeat an interviewer's negative question; instead redirect with "what the real issue here is..."
- Don't let a false statement by the interviewer stand; correct it immediately.
- Don't let an interviewer put words in your mouth – respond with "let me restate my position."
- Don't speculate or answer hypothetical questions.
- Feel free to share with the reporter you will get back to them with additional information if you don't have an answer. Simply tell the reporter that you need to get additional time and will be happy to get back to them with a response.
- Practice your thoughts and comments out loud before the interview. Try to avoid saying ahhh or umm. Feel free to pause to think of answers or gain additional time by restating the question.
- If you don't immediately understand, always ask to have a question repeated or clarified.
- Be careful of what you say. Don't ramble. Stay to quick, specific answers. Never offer more than what's asked. The best way to avoid rambling is to practice.
- Always assume that your entire conversation is being recorded.
- Never share off-the-record information.

Media Inquiry Response Form

When fielding a phone inquiry from a media representative, use this form. Forward the completed form to the designated media spokesperson.

Time/Date of Call: _____

Caller's Name: _____

Name of Organization: _____

Phone Number(s): _____
(Office/Cell)

Deadline to Respond: _____

Called For: _____
(Who is being asked to do the interview?)

Subject: What is the subject of the story and what is the interviewer looking for comment on?

- Is this directly/indirectly related to our organization?
- Are the questions related to the organization or someone in the organization?
- Is this regarding a current issue?
- Is this a request for a response to story?
- Is this a request for a response to remarks from someone not in our organization?
- Can they email a list of questions?



MERCY HEALTH PARTNERS

News Advisory

Contact: Michael Zalewski

Phone : 800.435.9539

Mercy Health Partners' Program Identifies Serious Heart Condition in High School Athlete *Three-sport athlete had undetected, potentially fatal heart condition*

(Muskegon, MI; July 18, 2011) – Mercy Health Partners' (MHP) Heart & Vascular Institute along with West Shore Cardiology, will host a news conference to introduce a high school athlete who had a serious heart condition, Wolff-Parkinson-White Syndrome, discovered through a new high school heart screening program.

The senior at Muskegon Catholic Central High School is a three-sport athlete (football, basketball and track) who recently attended a Student Athlete Heart Screening session hosted by MHP and West Shore Cardiology.

Wolff-Parkinson-White syndrome is a heart condition in which there is an extra electrical pathway (circuit) in the heart. The condition can lead to episodes of rapid heart rate. The most severe form of a rapid heart beat is atrial fibrillation, which could rapidly lead to shock and requires emergency treatment.

EDITOR'S NOTE: THE ATHLETE AND HIS PARENTS WILL BE AVAILABLE TO DISCUSS HIS HEART CONDITION AND THE IMPACT OF THE HEART SCREENING PROGRAM

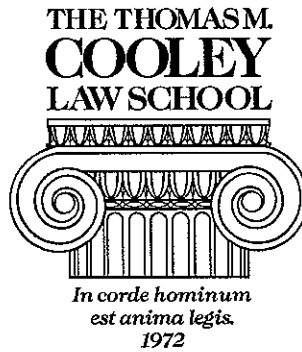
What: News conference to discuss the importance of cardiovascular screening for high school athletes

When: 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 20

Where: Mercy Health Partners – Hackley Campus
Room 1503
1700 Clinton Street
Muskegon

Interviews: Dr. Dan West, cardiologist at West Shore Cardiology
High school athlete with heart condition – and his parents

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**COOLEY LAW SCHOOL RELEASES SERIES OF SHORT VIDEOS ON
CYBERCRIMES INVOLVING CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS**

LANSING, MICH. (Feb. 10, 2011) – The Thomas M. Cooley Law School today released a series of short videos about cybercrimes such as cyber bullying, identity theft, video voyeurism and child sexually abusive activity. The videos, developed by Cooley Law School Professor Patrick Corbett, are available on YouTube and cooley.edu. The videos explore how Michigan’s criminal laws can protect individuals, especially teens, who use high-tech devices like cell phones and social networking sites.

“Nearly everyone is online – from young kids to senior citizens,” said Corbett. “Unfortunately, that increased activity also means that more and more crimes are being committed over the Internet. My hope is that young people and adults will view these videos and gain a better understanding of how the law protects individuals and governs the use of high-tech devices and activity on the Internet. I’ve spoken about cybercrimes to a number of students, community members and attorneys. Regardless of the audience, its message of protection seems to resonate well.”

Prior to joining Cooley, Corbett launched and served as the deputy chief for the Michigan Attorney General’s High Tech Crime Unit. Corbett teaches criminal law, criminal procedure and computer crimes at Cooley. He also teaches classes to community and law-related groups, explaining how laws can protect those using the Internet.

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About Cooley Law School:

Cooley Law School is the largest law school in the nation. Founded in 1972, the private, non-profit law school operates J.D. programs across Michigan in Lansing, Auburn Hills, Grand Rapids and Ann Arbor. Today, Cooley Law School has more than 15,000 graduates across the nation and worldwide and also offers joint degree and master of laws programs. Cooley offers enrollment three times a year; in January, May and September. Additional information about Cooley can be found at cooley.edu.