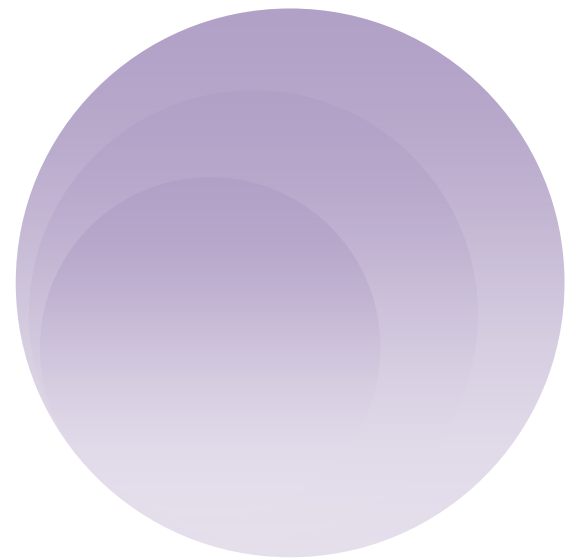
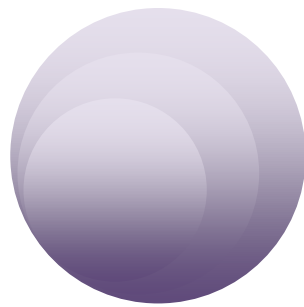
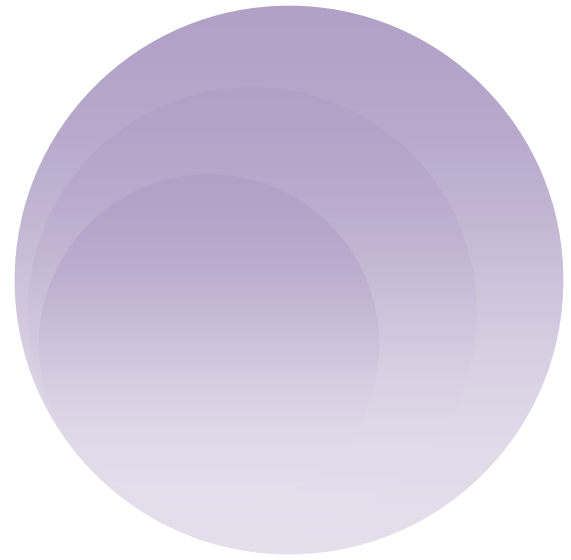


# PUBLIC RELATIONS: ENGAGING THE MEDIA AND YOUR COMMUNITY

A BASIC GUIDE FOR FAMILY VIOLENCE  
ADVOCATES

SUMMER 2009



Over Thirty Years of Building a Safer Texas



Summer 2009

Dear Colleagues:

The Texas Council on Family Violence receives numerous calls from programs asking for best practices for engaging, or responding to media every year.

While each situation will yield a different course of action, understanding the fundamentals of media will assist you to promote an event, bring awareness to the impact of family violence, or repond to media questions after a tragedy in your community.

TCFV presents *Public Relations: Engaging the Media and Your Community; A Basic Guide for Domestic Violence Service Providers* to assist your program develop or maintain a communications plan.

This guide covers basic topics to assist in attracting media to program events, creating press tools such as media releases and media alerts, preparing your staff or clients for interviews, building a media contact list and other information that can be utilized to enhance the visibility of your program.

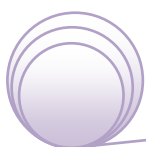
Most of these strategies can be utilized in both rural and urban communities. And even if your program budgets are limited, this toolkit highlights several cost-effective methods to gaining attention or engaging your communities in dialogue about family violence.

Along with this toolkit, TCFV continues to provide customized trainings including *Engaging Media 101*. In fall 2009, TCFV will begin to offer *Topics on Communication: Crisis Situations, Bad Press, and Responding to Tragedy*. In addition, our staff is available to provide assistance if needed.

We hope this toolkit will help you build relationships with key media contacts, attract media to your events, and successfully disseminate messages to your community.

Sincerely,

Gloria A. Terry  
President  
Texas Council on Family Violence



# THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit is designed as a reference for family violence advocates working in the capacity to enhance their programs' visibility in the community. While many programs may not have a staff member whose job is solely devoted to media relations, public dialogue is a part of managing a successful family violence program.

This toolkit reviews media basics, identifies approaches of building relationships with the media, identifies items you should know before you take a media interview, provides options when dealing with bad press or tragedies in your community, among essential components to building an effective communications plan for your program.

This toolkit includes samples and templates of communication pieces such as media releases and alerts. Other media kit components are included for easy formatting and can be customized for your program's needs.

This toolkit also identifies benefits of framing messages that provide information and messages that challenge social behaviors that perpetuate family violence.

This toolkit compiles various components that build the first layer of developing an effective communications plan for your program. Annually, your program's leadership should carry further conversations focusing on communications with the community.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This toolkit was developed by Aaron P. Hernández with assistance by Diana Munoz Meriggi.

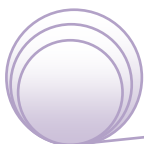
Hernandez worked as the Community Relations Director at the Center Against Family Violence (CAFV) in El Paso for three years after working as a legal advocate and volunteer coordinator for CAFV. Hernandez holds a Bachelor of Arts in English Writing and Rhetoric from St. Edward's University where he completed various public relations projects for Austin nonprofits through service-learning.

Meriggi worked as a bilingual television reporter in the Rio Grande Valley, served as a Legislative Aide and Media Liaison for a Texas State Representative and continued her advocacy work with state agencies and nonprofits. She served as a Communications Coordinator for the Texas Council on Family Violence for three years. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism from the University of Texas at Austin.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Tools for Developing Media Relationships .....	5
Agency Spokespersons.....	7
Survivors as Speakers, Spokespersons and Interviews .....	8
Media at your Awareness Events.....	10
Developing Media Kits .....	13
Editorials and Letters to the Editor .....	19
Pitching and Framing Story Ideas .....	22
Media Interviews .....	24
Bad Press and Tragedies .....	27
Domestic Violence Awareness Month .....	29
Media Kit Templates and Samples .....	31
Template of Media Release.....	32
Template of Media Alert .....	34
Sample of Program Fact Sheet.....	35
Sample of Domestic Violence Statistic Fact Sheet General Statistics.....	37
Sample of Domestic Violence Program Fact Sheet.....	38
Sample of Communications/Marketing Plan.....	38
Sample of Timeline for Communications Plan.....	41
Sample of Program Media Waiver.....	45
Sample of Media Confidentiality Form.....	46
Resources .....	46
Glossary of Terms .....	50



# TOOLS FOR DEVELOPING MEDIA RELATIONSHIPS

Building relationships with your community's media is essential. Reporters for both television and print are looking for stories each week. Your agency is looking for methods to engage the public, brand your organization, and create a dialogue about family violence in your community.

Reporters are the gatekeepers to tapping on a medium that will benefit your organization. Whether you are trying to bring light to current issues in news articles, or tell a story in a feature piece, here are some tips on engaging reporters.

## **Develop a media contact list.**

By creating a media contact list, you will begin to know who these gatekeepers are. You want contact information for *assignment editors at TV news stations*, editors for specific sections of the newspaper (i.e. business section, news section, features and lifestyle section, editorial and opinion page, etc.). Gathering contact information for radio stations that can air *Public Service Announcements (PSAs)* will expose you to local radio personalities. You may also want to include local trade magazines, health magazines, or city magazines.

You can compile this list in stages, but please note that due to high turnover and internal changes the media contact list should be revised approximately every 3-6 months to stay current.

*Feature Article—will cover a specific topic in depth, does not need to be time sensitive, these can be human interest stories.*

*News Article—will be timely, answer the 5 Ws (Who, What, Where, When, Why... and How), be written in inverted pyramid style (from most important to least important information).*

## **Create formatted written pieces that illustrate your announcement is newsworthy.**

*Media alerts* and *media releases* can be effective tools in enticing reporters and assignment editors to cover your event, issue, or other announcement. Send standard formatted media releases and be clear and concise. This toolkit includes samples and templates of media releases and media alerts for your own use.



**Cooperate, when you can.**

Reporters may request an interview, research or statistics for a story they are covering. Making an effort to cooperate and meet their deadlines will begin to establish your relationship.

There are always options for your organization when you are asked to respond to tragic events or any other local controversial topics.

**Meet deadlines.**

Reporters often work on tight deadlines. If reporters ask for information, statistics, or an interview, you should do your best to meet deadlines. If you cannot, inform the reporter.

**Be proactive and collaborate.**

The media will rarely seek you out unless there is a story they want from you. Reporters usually seek out family violence advocates after tragedies occur in your community. Find ways to get your organization's name in the community. Use awareness and fundraising events to draw reporters.

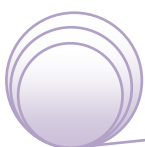
Opportunities to highlight positive steps your community is taking to keep victims safe will need to be created by your program and community partners. Building and working with local coalitions can help increase your visibility in the community.

*Pitching a story is another way of saying "selling a story idea" to a reporter. Story ideas can be pitched in various ways depending on the type of story and its timeliness. Usually, you are pitching a story to a reporter who has a relationship with you.*

**Create a communications plan.**

Mapping out your program's plan and timeline for running advertisements, PSAs, holding awareness and fundraising events, and even possible ideas for stories to pitch to reporters will assist you in tracking efforts to gain visibility and which pitches interest reporters.

Building relationships with media contacts may be difficult at first. As your organization is exposed to media through events, press conferences, story pitches, town or city meetings, you will begin to cultivate relationships that will assist in increasing your visibility in the community. This packet contains a sample communications plan and timeline.



# AGENCY SPOKESPERSONS

While you may choose one person to be the face of your organization, you may also choose to include board members, program directors and staff members with specific expertise to represent your agency as a team.

*Spokespersons—Selected individuals who represent an agency, company or cause.*

*Speakers Bureau—Pool of presenters It can include survivors, volunteers, board, and staff*

## **Who are your spokespersons?**

You may assign key staff members to represent the agency on general information about family violence and the services your program provides. Family violence program and counseling directors may respond to questions about victims, their obstacles, and the community resources available. If your family violence program operates a Battering Intervention and Prevention Program, you may select your director or coordinator to respond to questions about perpetrators, or related topics.

Board members and executive directors may be the representatives who answer overall questions about the agency. They may also be the faces for promotion of fundraising events.

Whatever structure you choose for external communication, all of your spokespersons should be able to discuss the basic services of the program.

## **What should your spokesperson know?**

Creating fact sheets for your spokespersons will aid you in identifying information that is vital for your spokespersons to know. This will help you develop the program messages you want to disseminate to the community. You can also tailor fact sheets for specific events, interviews, or specific spokespersons.

*Examples of items you may want to include in your fact sheets for spokespersons:*

- Your hotline number.
- Your mission.
- An explanation of your services.
- Number of survivors who can be accommodated at your family violence program.
- Number of victims and children served last year.
- Number of aggressors served last year.
- Other relevant statistics.
- Agency budget and funding sources.



# SURVIVORS AS SPEAKERS, SPOKESPERSONS, AND INTERVIEWS

Reporters want a story that is different, unique, compelling, and of interest to its audience. Reporters may not want to interview anyone on staff or on your board or directors. Instead, they may contact you to put them in touch with a survivor.

At events like *Take Back the Night* rallies or candlelight vigils, it is expected survivors will share their stories. Family violence programs often collaborate with their area universities or colleges, local victim rights coalitions, and sexual assault service providers to host these events. Family violence programs are often asked to make survivors available as speakers.

Survivors may also approach you to become volunteers for your speakers bureau.

*Things to consider when asking survivors to participate in interviews and a speakers bureau*

**Some survivors may not be ready to share their story.**

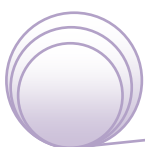
Even if survivors approach you to become speakers, they may not be ready to share their experiences. If the survivors are clients at your program you may ask for a recommendation from the therapist or advocate and work with the survivor so that they may become speakers in the future. Survivors should never feel pressured to assist in a speaking engagement or interview.

**Survivors will be affected by sharing their story.**

There will never be an occasion when survivors are emotionally immune to their story. As they share their stories with reporters and the public, they will go through various emotions. It is vital for a staff member who has a relationship with the survivor to attend public speaking engagements until the survivor feels comfortable on their own. A staff member should always be present for interviews. Survivors participating in a speakers bureau should have regular meetings with an advocate or volunteer coordinator to discuss the speaker's evaluations.

**Some survivors may want to remain anonymous.**

Whether it is an interview for print or television, some survivors will want to remain anonymous. It is up to the program to negotiate the terms with the reporters. At times, reporters will want victims to share their name or go on camera. Other reporters will be amenable to keeping the identity of survivors confidential and anonymous.



**Survivors may need to be prepped for interviews.**

If your program does not have a pool of speakers to ask to share their stories you may want to ask the house manager or family violence program director to recommend a family violence program client who may want to participate in an interview. After clients are identified and agree to the interview, an advocate or communications manager should explain what will happen.

**Survivors may need some assistance shaping their message.**

Survivors may not know where to begin, what details to share, or what messages they would like to share in the community. Working with survivors to develop and convey their message should be part of volunteer training survivors receive. Survivors participating in a speakers bureau should be able to speak about the programs and services of your organization.

**Media Waivers**

*Your program will want to develop a media waiver form for survivors who speak on the program's behalf.*

*You may want to create a form that acknowledges that the survivors are choosing to participate in the event or interview.*

*The form should detail if the release is specific to an interview, event or presentation or if it is a general acknowledgement that does not expire. For family violence program clients who are being asked for an interview, releases specific to interviews and events are recommended. Individuals who are part of the speakers bureau and will have ongoing speaking engagements may want to sign a more general acknowledgement.*

*A sample media waiver is included in this packet.*



# MEDIA AT YOUR AWARENESS EVENTS

Due to confidentiality, hosting events at your family violence program may seem difficult to maneuver. Reporters want video shots of living spaces, support groups, and conduct interviews with survivors. Being agreeable to these requests may not always be in the organization's or survivors' best interest. While you may not have a lot of time to think about the decision to engage the media, you should assess each event or request for interview with care.

## **Hosting an Event at your Family violence program**

Reporters are looking for exclusives—an opportunity to show the public something it does not usually get to see. If you have a confidential family violence program location, your family violence program is typically one of these places. Using the exclusivity of your family violence program you can gain some media attention by hosting ribbon cutting ceremonies for a renovation project, a ceremony to thank community members who organized large donation drives for victims and their children.

However, consider that anytime you expose your family violence program to the media there may be risks in breaches of confidentiality. Your program may consider developing a media confidentiality form that prohibits reporters from:

- Shooting video or taking photos that may cause the location to be recognizable
- Disclosing the location of the family violence program
- Shooting video and/or disclosing names of victims or their children (unless they have signed a media waiver)

Creating a media confidentiality form tailored to your programs needs will assist you in maintaining your clients' safety and confidentiality. This packet includes a sample media-confidentiality form that can be tailored to your program's needs.

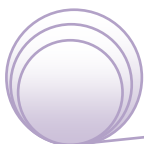
## **Hosting a Press Conference**

At other times, you may hold a press conference in response to an occurrence in your community, to announce changes, new developments, new offices or buildings, to kick-off domestic violence awareness month, celebrate milestones or any other reason for communication with your community.

Press conferences can be very successful to convey messages to the community. In preparation for your conference you should prepare a press kit that includes:

- Media Alert
- Media Release
- Fact Sheet/Statistics
- Other communications pieces related to the topic of the press conference

Samples and templates of these items are included in this packet.



**Media Alerts**—formatted document that answers the who, what, where, when, why, of your event or press conference.

**Media Releases**—formatted document that provide a detailed narrative, including quotes from your spokespersons. Reporters usually lift items directly from this document verbatim.

**Fact and Statistic Sheets**— quick references for reporters to check national, statewide, and local statistics that are related to the event or story.

#### *Collaborating with Other Agencies*

When organizing a press conference, you may want to reach out to local officials or celebrities to help your message be disseminated. This allows your program to build relationships with agencies in your community. Hosting a joint press conference with remarks from your district attorney, chief of police or sheriff, mayor, or other prominent members of the community may also entice reporters to cover your conference. You will need to work with your collaborators to shape your message. By working with various agencies you will illustrate your coordinated community response.

#### *Providing Visuals*

While your line up of speakers at the conference may be impressive, it is always a good idea to make sure survivors are represented. You may choose to do this by: displaying silent witnesses, t-shirts from the *Clothesline Project*, items created in support groups, or items created through the children’s program. By doing this, you will also be providing another visual that reporters and photographers want to enhance their story.

#### **Types of Events**

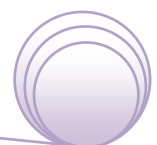
You may want to brainstorm about what type of awareness events would be appropriate for your community.

While vigils and *Take Back the Night* rallies are moving and powerful, they may be too solemn and melancholy for the message you want to send.

You may choose to have an event focusing on positive steps your agency, city, or county is making toward working together to eliminate family violence. You may also choose to hold an event focusing on survivors’ successes.

You may also tie events to holidays, awareness months, anniversaries of movement, milestones, etc. A calendar of potential events is included. You should customize a calendar to include important dates to your program such as:

- When the program opened
- When specific new programs were deployed
- When there is a change in board officers
- Other dates significant to your program



## Calendar of Possible Ties

### January

- Martin Luther King Day

### February

- *Black History Month*
- *Canned Food Month*
- V-Day
- Valentine's Day
- February 21<sup>st</sup>—National Domestic Violence Hotline answers first call

### March

- *National Women's History Month*
- *Social Workers Month*
- March 8<sup>th</sup>—International Women's Day
- 1974: Equal Rights Amendment passed by Congress
- 1988: Congress passes the Civil Rights Restoration Act

### April

- *Sexual Assault Awareness Month*
- 1968: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is Assassinated
- 1992 :Abortion rights advocates march on Washington
- April 8 1978—Texas Council on Family Violence founded

### May

- *Asian Pacific American Heritage Month*
- *National Blood Pressure Month*
- *Older Americans Month*
- May 5<sup>th</sup>—Cinco de Mayo
- Mother's Day
- 1960: FDA approves birth-control pill

### June

- *Gay Pride Month*
- Father's Day
- Filipino Week: Second full week in June
- 1924: The Indian Citizenship Act passed
- Juneteenth
- 1979: Crime Victims Compensation Fund Created
- 1989: Legislation passes creating BIPP in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice

### July

- 1964: Johnson signs Civil Rights Act
- July 4<sup>th</sup>—Independence Day
- 1990: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is enacted

### August

- 1920: Women's Suffrage Amendment ratified
- 1963: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivers his "I have a dream" speech

### September

- *Hispanic Heritage Month*
- 2006: Labor Day
- 2006: Grandparents Day
- 1994: Clinton signs the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)
- 2006: Native American Day Established
- 1979: First state funding appropriation for domestic violence services

### October

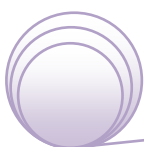
- *Domestic Violence Awareness Month*
- *Breast Cancer Awareness Month*
- *Filipino American History Month*
- International Day for the Elderly
- October 3—1995 O.J. Simpson acquitted
- October 14— 1964 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. wins Nobel Peace Prize
- October 28—Make a Difference Day
- October 31—Halloween

### November

- *National Adoption Awareness Month*
- Veteran's Day

### December

- December 1<sup>st</sup>— World AIDS Day
- December 10<sup>th</sup>—International Children's Day
- December 26<sup>th</sup>—First day of Kwanzaa Holiday



# DEVELOPING MEDIA KITS

Each event or press conference will demand you tailor a press kit. There are several methods to create a media kit. Media kits contain informational documents formatted and written in a specific journalistic style.

## Media Alerts

Media alerts inform reporters about your news. They are concise, one-page, documents inviting reporters to cover an event or press conference or notify them of your news. They contain the “who, what, where, when and why and how” of the news, including contact information and other critical facts. Media advisories are sent before an event or news is made public. A sample and templates are included in this packet.

### *Top Five Things to Remember When Sending Media Alerts*

1. Send media alerts three to five days prior to the event or press conference.
2. Send alerts through the reporters or assignment editor’s preferred method. Email is quickly becoming the preferred method; fax is acceptable.
3. Follow up your media alert with a phone call to the assignment editor or reporter one to two days before the event.
4. Pitch your event/news to the reporter or assignment editor. Tell them why your event needs to be covered.
5. If the reporter or assignment editor seems disinterested, tell them you will send a media kit in case they want background for the story later.

Reporters may not always be responsive to your media alerts. You should also make sure that the news you are pitching is, in fact, newsworthy. The last thing you want to do is pitch a story and watch it fall through. That is not a good way of building relationships with your media contacts.

**Reporters** are the gatekeepers to getting your stories covered. They will interview key people and gather facts to write a story. Building a relationship with reporters will help you in **pitching**, or selling, your story idea.

**Assignment editors** are managers who brainstorm story ideas, assign stories to reporters, and help reporters shape their stories.



## Elements of a Media Alert

**Media Alert** in large letters to draw attention

### UPDATE -- MEDIA ALERT -- UPDATE "BREAK THE SILENCE – MAKE THE CALL"

#### Attorney General and Texas Council on Family Violence to Announce Second Phase of Statewide Public Awareness Campaign, Helping Victims' Friends and Family Save Lives *TCFV to Release 2003 Data on Number of Women Murdered by Husbands or Partners*

Stacked headlines provide **frames**.

Use attention grabbing **headlines** in larger font.

Answers:  
Who?  
What?  
When?  
Where?  
Why?  
How?

**WHEN:** Monday, June 28<sup>th</sup>; 10 a.m.

**WHERE:** 3rd Court of Appeals, Lobby, Price Daniel Building, 1st Floor 209 West 14th Street

**WHO:** Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV), state coalition of the Battered Women's Movement in Texas and a national leader in the work to end domestic violence, which also operates the National Domestic Violence Hotline (800-799-SAFE).

- **Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott**
- **Sheryl Cates**- Executive Director of TCFV
- **Thomasina Olaniyi-Oke**- domestic violence survivor
- **Jackie Bolden** - Mother of domestic violence homicide victim

**WHAT:** **More than two women are killed by acts of domestic violence each week in Texas**, with the total number of women killed growing in each of the past three years. To counter this tragic trend, TCFV and Texas Attorney General Gregg Abbott will kick-off the second phase of its highly effective public awareness campaign, "Break the Silence – Make the Call" in the state of Texas. This phase of the campaign will focus on educating friends and family of domestic violence victims about available safety and family violence program assistance options and will encourage them to act by getting more information themselves or referring the victims in their lives to local domestic violence programs and services. In late 2002, TCFV launched the 16-month, bilingual public awareness campaign, empowering domestic violence survivors with the information they need to seek and obtain help. Phase one of the campaign resulted in a 69 percent increase in English-language calls to the National Domestic Violence Hotline and a staggering 93 percent increase in Spanish-language calls in its inaugural month. The bilingual campaign will ensure that the awareness efforts of the first phase have the basis and longevity needed to have a significant impact on victim safety, and will extend awareness efforts and education to friends and family.

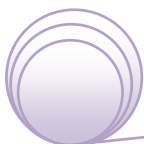
**WHAT ELSE:** **Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott and others will be available for interviews immediately following the press conference.**

- Media will be provided copies of broadcast PSAs being used for the campaign

Include a photo-op and list interview opportunities.

Indicate contact and include cell phone number

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SCHEDULE AN INTERVIEW, CONTACT ALISON ESHELMAN  
AT 512/472-3515 OR [ALISON@VOLLMERPR.COM](mailto:ALISON@VOLLMERPR.COM)**



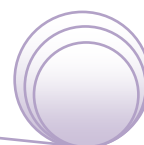
## Media Releases

Media releases provide more information about your event or news. It is written as a news reporter would write a story. It includes a headline, lead and quotes. Media releases have specific formatting features. A sample and templates are included in this packet (pg.34).

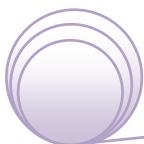
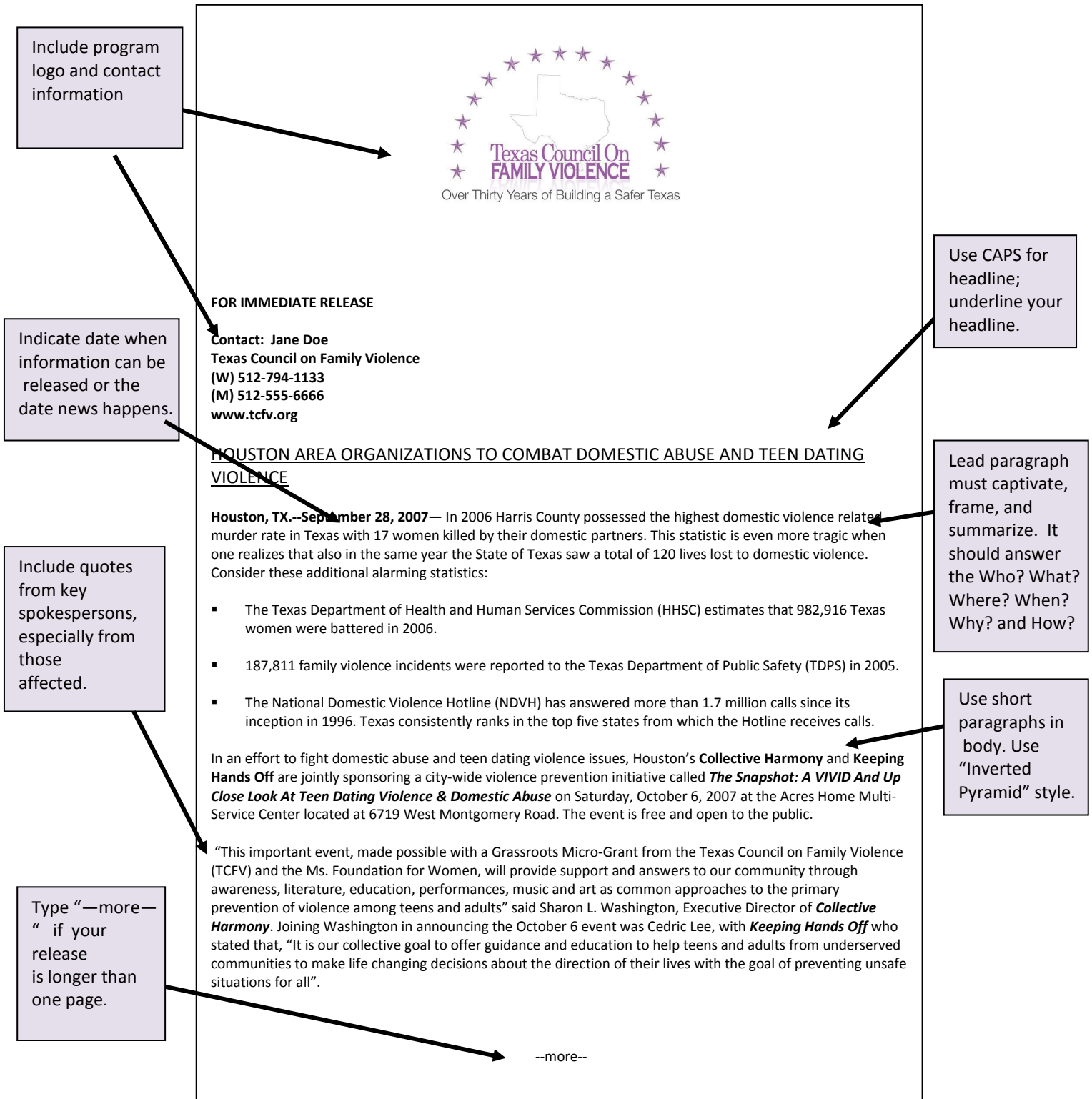
**Media releases should not be more than one or two pages long.**

**Lead**—*The first sentence of news story, or media release. It should answer the five w's (who, what, where, when, and why) of the news.*

**Quotations** *should be used in your media release. They should pertain to the information discussed and expand on an important detail or feature.*



## Elements of a Media Release



## Elements of a Media Release (Continued)

Houston Organizations—2

The special grant from the **Ms. Foundation for Women** allows TCFV to support grassroots organizations and domestic violence initiatives like **The Snapshot**. Sean Tate with TCFV stated that “We are fortunate to be a part of this significant event in Houston and are hopeful that the occasion will further enhance the local community’s awareness of domestic and teen violence issues. We applaud the collaboration of Collective Harmony and Keeping Hands Off in sponsoring such a worthwhile activity

For more detailed information on **The Snapshot** initiative contact:  
Sharon Washington at 281.667.4088 ([www.collectiveharmony.org](http://www.collectiveharmony.org)) or Cedric Lee at 382.439.1440 ([keepinghandsoff@yahoo.com](mailto:keepinghandsoff@yahoo.com)).

The Texas Council on Family Violence promotes safe and healthy relationships by supporting service providers, facilitating strategic prevention efforts, and creating opportunities for freedom from domestic violence.

Since 1978, the Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) has been a nationally recognized leader in the efforts to end family violence. TCFV’s membership is comprised of family violence service providers, supportive organizations, survivors of domestic violence, businesses and professionals, communities of faith and other concerned citizens.

###

Name and number additional pages.

You could include a signature description of your organization.

Type “###” to indicate the end of the release.

### Media Kits

Media kit components are usually placed in a folder with pockets. They must contain a news release and, a business card for a contact person. Other pieces you may choose to include in your press kits are:

- Fact or statistics sheets
- Biographies and headshots of key speakers
- Brochures or other publications (such as newsletters, annual reports, already-printed brochures or flyers)



### *Fact or Statistics Sheets*

Fact or statistics sheets are informational documents that contain facts—nothing more. It should add to the media release, but not repeat the same information in the media alert and release.

### *Biographies and headshots of key speakers*

If your event, press conference, or news involves prominent speakers, your media packet should include a 50-75 word biography and a color headshot of speakers.

### *Other brochures or publications*

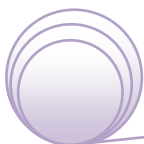
Already printed materials informing reporters about new developments, milestones, or other information may give reporters ideas for stories. There may be an issue you highlight in your newsletter, annual report, or other program brochure that will lead to a story idea from a reporter.

You may also keep your media contacts in the loop by including them on mailing lists for your newsletters or annual reports.

### ***Treating Members of Media as VIPs***

*Another way of getting attention from the media is to treat them as VIPs at each event. Below are some examples of how to pull out the red carpet for reporters who cover your events or press conferences.*

- *Deliver teaser press kits along with promotional items for your event (t-shirt, etc.) to the reporters' offices*
- *Rope off an area for press parking (television photographers will appreciate the gesture)*
- *Greet members of the media and show them to appropriate set up areas.*
- *Introduce members of the media to key speakers*
- *Provide refreshments at press events*



# EDITORIALS AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

While news stories are objectively written, editorials and letters to the editors are opinion pieces making an argument about a topic. The topic may be a current issue or an issue that is always timely. *Family Violence* is always a current issue.

Editorials and letters to the editors in local newspapers or trade magazines, or publications targeted to specific audiences or focused on a specific topic, will assist your program draw attention to current issues affecting family violence survivors.

## Editorials

Typically, there are two types of authors for these editorials: the publication's editor/editorial board or guest writers.

Developing a relationship with the editor of the opinion page could assist getting your editorial to print. But there is nothing wrong with picking up the phone and making a call, especially if a topic has recently been in the news. You can also pitch editorials for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, V-Day, Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Awareness Week, Crime Victims' Rights Week, or other related holiday or awareness event.

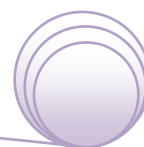
Generally, editorials traditionally have a formal structure:

- An **Introduction** stating the problem or thesis
- A **Body** section expressing an opinion and supporting facts
- A **Solution** offering alternatives to the problem
- A **Call for Action** encouraging readers to take action
- A **Conclusion** reviewing the main points and thesis

## ***Guest Editorials***

*Guest writers can follow the traditional structure for an editorial. However, guest writers have more freedom to write creatively and explore an issue. You may not be necessarily arguing a point, but giving your opinions on a specific topic, these types of pieces may also be referred to as **op-eds**.*

*You may want to collaborate with another agency or organization depending on the specific topic.*



## Sample Editorial:

### **Working Together for a Violence Free Texas** **By (Name of Executive Director)**

Did you know that in 2007 alone, 189,439 Texas fell victim to family violence? Family violence program programs in Texas housed 16,968 children and 12,356 adults, yet 10,407 adult victims in need of emergency family violence program were turned away. **(Name of organization)** and the Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) join to advocate for a violence free Texas. TCFV is a nationally recognized leader in efforts to end family violence through partnerships, advocacy and direct services for women, children, and men. As one of the largest domestic violence coalitions in the country, TCFV's membership is comprised of family violence service providers, like **(Name of organization)**, other supportive organizations, survivors of domestic violence, businesses and professionals, communities of faith and concerned citizens. We know domestic violence is an intolerable, serious crime, and must be eliminated. Working together, **(Name of organization)** and TCFV are firmly committed to providing valuable services to victims of domestic violence and their families.

With the start of the 2009 Texas Legislative Session on January 13, **(Name of organization)** will be actively involved with TCFV in supporting legislation important to Texas families, women and children. One of the principal legislative activities in which we will be involved is TCFV's **Purple Postcard Campaign**. By signing the Purple Postcard, Texans can send the message to their state legislators, that they unequivocally support full funding of Texas domestic violence programs. Complete one at **[www.tcfv.org/purplepostcard](http://www.tcfv.org/purplepostcard)**.

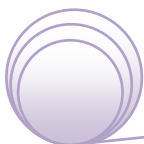
Moreover, we strongly support TCFV's Legislative Agenda, which includes:

**Full funding for family violence programs across Texas.** Keeping families safe in Texas can be accomplished through the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) request of \$50.9 million for Texas family violence programs, and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) call for \$2.5 million for Battering Intervention and Prevention Programs (BIPP).

**Mandatory probation fees to family violence centers.** Holding offenders accountable to the community can be achieved by making changes to the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure to require all defendants placed on probation for family violence offenses to pay \$100 to their local family violence center as defined by the Human Resource Code.

**Strangulation as an enhance-able third degree felony.** Saving lives is possible by adding a section to the current assault statute increasing the punishment for strangulation from a Class "A" misdemeanor. Incidents of intimate partner strangulation indicate both a progressing nature of abuse and a higher degree of danger for victims.

The 2009 Texas Legislative Session will address many issues of great import to Texans. **(Name of organization)** firmly believes the actions detailed above are vital and merit our solid support. Because these issues are central to the creation of a violence-free environment for families in **(Name of local community/city)**, we ask Texans to join us in calling on legislators to adopt the requests. For additional information on the TCFV Legislative Agenda and how to get actively involved in supporting the agenda, please contact us at **(Telephone number and/or website address of organization)** or go to: **[www.tcfv.org/purplepostcard](http://www.tcfv.org/purplepostcard)**.



### **Letters to the Editor**

Letters to the editor are usually a response to an editorial, news story, or other event that has gained attention. Letters should be timely responses to events or other news articles. Publications will not feature letters that cover outdated topics.

Letters to the editor are short opinion pieces, ranging from 150-250 words. Every publication will have its own word count and format specifications.

#### ***Tips for Writing Letters to the Editor***

- ***Be clear and concise.*** Get your message across in tight, simple language.
- ***Identify the problem.*** Explain the issue.
- ***Offer a solution and/or make a call to action.***



# PITCHING AND FRAMING STORY IDEAS

As an advocate, part of your job is improving the visibility of your program and engaging the community in discussions about family violence. While this is not an easy task, **developing skills of framing or pitching stories to the media is essential**. This will make or break the opportunity of getting your story in print. And, again, building relationships with reporters will only help make your pitches successful.

Reporters are always looking for stories, but *just not any old story*. Reporters are looking for new angles, slants, and to expose a story that has never been told or needs to be retold in a different way. Reporters will usually assess the *newsworthiness* of a story or topic and then make a decision about following through.

**Newsworthy**—importance of a topic or story to a reporter or assignment editor.

**Pitching a story**—another way of saying “selling a story idea” to a reporter. Story ideas can be pitched in various ways depending on the type of story and its timeliness. Usually, you are pitching a story to a reporter who has a relationship with you.

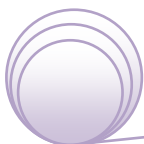
**Framing a story**—pitching a story with a specific slant or angle in mind.

## Pitching a Story

News stories usually pitch themselves. Reporters will often contact you in response to a situation that is currently happening in your community. Organizations should evaluate each media request to make sure it is in the best interest of the clients and the program. Options for responding to the media are covered later in this packet.

## Framing a Story

Apart from being called for a response to a story, your program should pitch news and feature stories to reporters. Maybe your program wants to highlight a new initiative or draw attention to improvement of services. Whatever your pitch is, you need to make it exciting, by finding interest points.



Some questions you may ask yourself about your story idea:

- Is this story controversial?
- Is it a situation that the community should care about?
- Does it have a human interest slant? (stories of real people, their triumphs, tragedies, adventures and anecdotes)
- Does it tie into any calendar item or time of the year? (Mother's Day, Women's History Month, V-Day)
- Is there a national story that has local angle? (high-profile dating or domestic violence case)
- Does the message empower people to act?

### ***Framing Primary Prevention Messages***

*Framing messages focusing on the primary prevention of domestic violence is an approach concentrating on preventing violence before it starts. This type of messaging uses comprehensive, community-based approaches to change societal factors that perpetuate violence in society. These messages should be long-term, consistent and strategic.*

*When a family violence incident occurs in a community, victim advocates usually respond with following messages:*

- *Victims are not to blame for the violence.*
- *No one deserves abuse.*
- *Publicly recognized victims should role model behavior and leave their abusive relationships.*
- *Victims should not be judged for their choices.*
- *Victims often need to make complicated choices.*

*While some of these messages are necessary to disseminate information to victims in your community who need assistance and to bring attention to the fatal consequences of family violence, these messages do not focus on preventing violence from occurring in the first place.*

*Messages focusing on the prevention family violence draws attention by:*

- *Distinguishing incidents as opportunities for discussion of approaches to avoid future occurrences.*
- *Encouraging the community to keep one another accountable for behavior that perpetuates family violence.*
- *Encouraging behaviors that promote healthy and equal relationships.*
- *Challenging traditional gender roles.*
- *Highlighting specific actions reinforcing that violence is never appropriate and there are always alternatives.*



# MEDIA INTERVIEWS

Most people find getting interviewed by the media intimidating and nerve-wracking. However, with a few helpful tips you can prepare your organization's spokespersons for responding to reporters' questions and make a good first impression on your audience.

## *In Preparation for the Interview*

### **Get the details.**

The first thing you will want to do when responding to the media is to find out about the details of the interview. You may consider asking the following inquiries about your interview.

- What is the specific topic of the interview?
- Is there a deadline for the interview?
- How much time will be allotted?
- If it is a radio or television interview, will the interview be live or taped?
- If it is a radio or television interview, will listeners be able to call in with questions?
- If it is a print media interview, will a photographer be accompanying the reporter?

### ***Conducting Research***

*Before participating in an interview, be prepared with the most correct and current information.*

*Research your subject. This packet includes some resources to aid you in obtaining information on certain topics.*

### **Develop messages.**

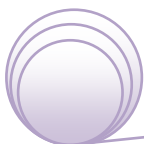
Develop a few messages related to the specific topic. Anticipate reporters' questions and develop appropriate responses. By anticipating reporters' questions, you will begin to brainstorm ideas for messages you want the audience to have about the specific topic being discussed. This packet includes information about developing messages specifically related to primary prevention (pg. 23).

### **Choose your attire carefully.**

You may choose to keep your dress conservative and formal. Typically, solid pastel or neutral colors work best. Television cameras have difficulty responding to high contrast or vivid colors such as black and white or bright red, or small repeated patterns such as checks, pinstripes or herringbone.

### **Get there early and relax.**

Get to the location at least 15 minutes early. Try to relax and focus. Remember, you are the expert on the subject.



*For the Interview*

**Keep your answers brief.**

Begin each response with the most important points. Respond to the questions with relevant key messages, and repeat them at every opportunity. For television and radio interviews, remember the average sound bite is 10 seconds. Print media will only use brief quotes from your interview.

After making your point, pause and wait for the next question. Do not feel nervous by pauses or silence. Reporters often try to get their subjects to disclose information by letting the conversation stray from the original question.

**Assume everything is on the record.**

Whether the camera is rolling, or the reporter has put away his notebook, you should assume that all your statements are part of the interview. If you do not want to see a comment made public, do not say it.

**Choose your language carefully.**

Do not rush to respond. Organize your thoughts first. Also, try not to use jargon, acronyms or technical language. Avoid terms or concepts that the general public does not know. Simplify your explanations and use analogies to help explain difficult concepts.

**What have you agreed to?**

As the subject of an interview, you are not required to do anything you do not want to do. You have the right to be treated fairly and be comfortable.

Do not agree to be interviewed anywhere you do not feel comfortable. If you are going to be on a talk show, ask who else will appear on the program with you; you may also ask about the interview style of the talk show host.

**Be aware of your body language.**

Maintaining eye contact holds a reporter's attention and makes you look confident to your audience. During television interviews, never look at the camera or lower your head to speak into the microphone. In addition, be conscious of nodding your head. You may imply that you agree with reporters' questions. Try not to make dramatic gestures or wave your hands and arms while you speak.

**Never say "No comment."**

Avoiding questions in this manner may give the audience appearance of guilt, deception, and untrustworthiness. If you cannot respond to a question, focus on your developed messages and what you can share. Try not to repeat negative words or inaccurate facts that reporters use in a question. Simply correct the discrepancies and move on to your message.

*After the Interview*

**Follow up.**

Promptly provide reporters with any additional information you promised. Ask reporters when the story will appear. Thank the reporter for featuring your program or topic. Depending on the relationship you have with reporters, they may be able to provide a copy of the story.



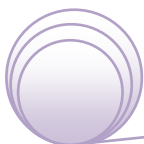
## **Confidentiality Issues**

*While you will likely want your program's telephone number or hotline publicized, you may not want your street address made public. Explain this to the reporter or producer from the outset. Let them know that publicizing the address or location of your family violence program poses a serious danger to the women you are serving. Although you can trust the vast majority of journalists to respect and understand the need to keep your address confidential, you also should make sure that they understand that outdoor shots (TV camera or still photographs) of the family violence program are off-limits. The risk is too great that abusers might notice a street sign or landmark that would help them identify or locate the family violence program.*

*However, consider that anytime you expose your family violence program to the media there may be risks in breaches of confidentiality. Your program may consider developing a media confidentiality form that prohibits reporters from:*

- *Shooting video or taking photos that may cause the location to be recognizable*
- *Disclosing the location of the family violence program*
- *Shooting video and/or disclosing names of victims or their children (unless they have signed a media release)*

*Creating a media confidentiality form tailored to your program's needs will assist you maintain your clients' safety and confidentiality. This packet includes a sample media confidentiality form that can be tailored to your program's needs (pg. 46).*



# BAD PRESS & TRAGEDIES

It is possible that your organization is faced with bad press. All organizations, even non profit organizations, need to prepare to face bad press or crisis situations involving external and internal communication.

While these situations are not the most comfortable, remember journalists should have no interest in presenting false or misleading information because their reporting is based on piecing together facts and gathering direct and indirect quotes about the topic.

Each situation will merit a different response and course of action. Also, planning ahead by recognizing your options for dealing with bad press you can limit the damage of the media attention and redirect them to your developed messages.

## *Items to Consider*

*In dealing with the media, each situation will be different. You may consider:*

- 1. Consulting your program's attorney as needed, including before any public comments are made.*
- 2. Acknowledging the impact for victims, survivors and their families.*
- 3. Emphasizing the public's best interest when making public statements.*
- 4. Acknowledging opposing viewpoints, even if you disagree with them.*
- 5. Offering clear solutions when addressing your program's or community's problems.*

## **Navigating Through Bad Press**

### **Choose your spokespersons.**

Depending on the situation, the program should choose the appropriate spokespersons.

### **Consider releasing the information yourself.**

It is possible to take control of positive messaging before it becomes news if your program confronts the issue, takes responsibility for informing the public and proactively works to fix the issue as soon as you became aware.

### **Consider releasing information on how your organization works.**

You may also want to consider making members of your organization available for interviews. Discuss responses with them and your spokesperson beforehand. Transparency will make it easier for the community to trust your side of the story.

### **Develop a consistent message and repeat it often.**

Develop one message related to the situation. Anticipate reporters' questions and develop appropriate responses. By anticipating reporters' questions, you will prepare yourself for difficult questions and responses. You may also want to disseminate a media release that reiterates your position and your resolution to the situation.



**Increase Frequency of External Communications.**

Recovering from bad press may mean that your program will need to increase efforts to pitch follow up stories to the media. These stories should focus on the positive steps you have taken to repair the damage and encourage your program’s good standing in the community.

Depending on the intensity of the situation, you may consider other options such as advertising your service in your community. You may choose to hire a public relations firm, set up a public forum to listen to public option, or brainstorm options that engage the community to get involved and be part of the conversation.

**If all else fails, rebrand.**

Should extremely negative associations still exist after a long period of time, you may choose to attempt to rebrand your program: change the logo or even the name.

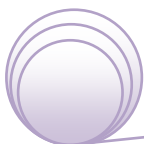
***Tragedies***

*Your program will no doubt be inundated with calls after a tragedy affects your community. Responses to crisis situations and tragedies may be handled by implementing some of the same tactics used to responding to bad press.*

*Above all, your program should not disclose any information about your clients.*

*When responding to specific tragedies talk about similar types of cases, situations, or related circumstances. Your responses should be focused generalities, in lieu of speaking to the specific assault, homicide, murder-suicide or other situation.*

*Focus your message on how the community can prevent future tragedies.*



# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

While Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) is a great opportunity to reach out to the community and begin a dialogue about family violence and its effects on the community, DVAM is also a great opportunity to encourage healthy relationships and celebrate the successes of the movement.

Whatever messages you choose to disseminate, you should use DVAM as a way to break in and establish relationships with reporters. You should pitch stories and promote on the successes that your program has achieved and your community as a whole.

## **What is Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM)?**

According to the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, DVAM evolved from the *Day of Unity* in October 1981 conceived by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV). The intent was to connect advocates working to end violence against women and their children. The *Day of Unity* soon became an entire week devoted to a range of activities conducted at the local, state, and national levels.

The activities conducted were as varied and diverse as the program sponsors but had common themes: mourning those who have died because of domestic violence, celebrating those who have survived, and connecting those who work to end violence.

In October 1987, the first Domestic Violence Awareness Month was observed. That same year marked the initiation of the first national domestic violence toll-free hotline. In 1989 the U.S. Congress passed Public Law 101-112 designating October of that year as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Such legislation has passed every year and NCADV provides key leadership in this effort. Each year, the Day of Unity is celebrated the first Monday of Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

## ***DVAM Resource Packets***

*The Domestic Violence Awareness Month Project is coordinated by the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, a project of the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence.*

*The National Resource Center on Domestic Violence develops an annual Domestic Violence Awareness Month Resource Packet that shares communication templates, event ideas, logos, and graphics among other options for developing a calendar of awareness projects.*

*The packet can be accessed at: <http://dvam.vawnet.org>.*



### DVAM Ideas to Consider

- Press Conferences
- Candlelight Vigils
- Open Mic Nights and Poetry Readings featuring survivors' work
- Art shows featuring survivors work
- Proclamations and Resolutions by local governments
- Editorials and Letters to the Editor
- Focused education to the community
- Plays, film screenings, or other multi-media performances
- Targeted outreach to local elected officials (judges, district or county attorney)
- Lectures
- Marches/Rallies
- Clothesline Project\* Displays
- Take Back the Night\* Rallies
- Silent Witness\* Displays

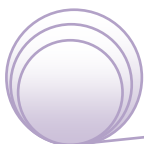
\*Denotes Nationally Recognized Awareness Events

### ***About the Purple Ribbon***


*From The Domestic Violence Awareness Project*

*Over the years, a number of sources have been credited with originating the use of purple ribbon as a unifying symbol of courage, survival, honor and dedication to ending domestic violence.*

*Although the exact history of the purple ribbon is difficult to pinpoint, across the country, families and friends of victims have adopted the purple ribbon to remember and honor their loved ones who have lost their lives at the hands of a person they once loved and trusted. Family violence programs and local battered women's programs use the purple ribbon to raise awareness about the crime of domestic violence in their communities.*



# MEDIA KIT TEMPLATES AND SAMPLES



The following documents are a mixture of samples and templates your program can use to help develop customized media pieces discussed in this packet.

Templates can be reformatted and filled in electronically using Microsoft Word. Samples are meant to give your program starting points.

Sample forms are used with permission by the Center Against Family Violence, El Paso, Texas.

Organizational Name  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip Code  
Contact: Name of Media Liason  
Daytime Phone:  
Mobile:  
Fax Number:  
Email Address:  
Web Address:



Template for Media Release

For Immediate Release

YOUR HEADLINE SHOULD BE WRITTEN IN CAPS AND UNDERLINED. THE HEADLINE SHOULD BE CLEAR AND CONCISE

Insert Date of Release— Your lead should answer the 5 W's. The Who? What? Where? When? Why?

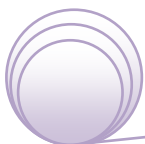
Insert a direct quote from the appropriate staff member or additional information. Use clear and concise language. When using quotes begin your statement with (") Insert your message and then close with." All punctuation should be contained within the.(")

Insert details about the release's focus. You want to use an inverted pyramid-style when writing media releases. Pyramid-style writing arranges the most important information first followed by the least important information.

You do not need to indent these paragraphs as long as you skip a line and start a new paragraph.

Insert more details here.

--more--



You can also use indirect quotes. These are quotes that paraphrase another's direct quotes. You should be accurate when paraphrasing direct quotes from others. Because the messages are originating from your organization, this should be easily done.

Insert additional information about the topic.

At the end of the media release, you may insert your program's mission statement and a brief synopsis of your services. Also, you should include the program's hotline number.

###



Organizational Name  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip Code  
Contact: Name of Media Liason  
Daytime Phone:  
Mobile:  
Fax Number:  
Email Address:  
Web Address:



**For Immediate Release**

### TEMPLATE MEDIA ALERT

**What:** Insert Name or Concise Description of Event

**Who:** Insert Organizations Participating in Event

**When:** Insert Date

**Time:** Insert time

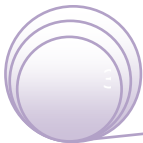
**Where:** Insert Location

**Visuals:** List a Description of Opportunities for Photo and video opportunities

Give a brief description of the event. You want to sell your event as something that should be covered by the media. Framing messages is important for the media alert. You want reporters to see news and want to cover a story.

If there is a history of the event, you may want to highlight a short background on the event.

###





### Sample Program Fact Sheet 2005-2006

#### **CAFV Crisis Hotline**

CAFV remains unique in that it provides the only 24-hour Crisis Hotline in the region that addresses domestic violence issues. In the 2005-2006 program year, 6,506 callers received some form of assistance, ranging from referrals to local agencies, counseling, and assistance on safety planning in needs of emergency.

#### **CAFV Emergency Family violence program**

The Family violence program for Battered Women is an emergency housing refuge that has the capacity to serve 103 people. While victims stay in the family violence program as long as they need to assure safety, they are offered services including, individual counseling, group therapy, children's play therapy, child care activities for children that are not of school age and after school activities and tutoring for those children in school.

Family violence program Statistics for 2005-2006 include:

- 855 residents, of which there were 299 adults and 556 children

#### **CAFV Family Resource Center**

The Family Resource Center (FRC) is a non-residential facility that provides programs and services for families referred by the Family violence program and anyone in the region facing domestic violence issues through a "continuum of care" approach. The FRC refers families to the many established partnerships and is a one-stop service center that addresses clients' mental and physical needs in one location.

FRC Statistics for 2005-2006

- 1,434 survivors were provided with 12,041 hours of service
- 1,740 hours of therapy were provided

—more—



### **CAFV Battering Intervention and Prevention Program**

The Battering Intervention and Prevention Program (BIPP) is designed to work with the perpetrators of violence in an effort to keep family members safe. Participants are referred primarily by the Court System and some are self-referrals. Participants pay a nominal fee of \$25.00 per session for 26 sessions. At the end of 26 sessions, if participants have not met all requirements, they can continue the program without charge until all elements are complete. BIPP is located at a separate facility in order to protect victims.

#### BIPP Statistics for 2005-2006

- 372 participants attended the program

### **CAFV Community Education and Outreach**

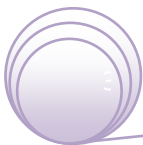
CAFV conducts community education and outreach activities throughout El Paso, Culberson, and Hudspeth Counties in the form of counseling support groups, training, presentations and workshops. Community Education and Outreach also coordinates volunteers who are utilized in all areas of CAFV's work. Volunteer Services also coordinates health fairs, a monthly newsletter, and special projects for the Center.

#### CAFV Education/Outreach Statistics

- 709 educational presentations conducted
- 10,964 people reached
- 12,016 hours of service were volunteered

### **Ritzy Raggs Resale Store**

Ritzy Raggs sells gently used items for resale and also provides clients with clothing and miscellaneous house wares and furniture through the use of vouchers. Surplus items are sold to the public to generate funds for CAFV's operations and maintenance. Ritzy Raggs Thrift Store adds over \$100,000 to the operating budget annually in support of the Center Against Family Violence services.





## Sample Domestic Violence Statistic Fact Sheet

### General Statistics

- A 2005 study by the U.S. Department of Justice reports two in five incidents go unreported to authorities.
- A 1998, National Violence Against Women Survey found that women are 7 to 14 times more likely than men to report suffering severe physical assaults from an intimate partner.

### Domestic Violence in Texas\*

- A million Hispanic Texans are personally affected by domestic violence. 1 in 4 people know someone who is a victim of domestic violence.
- In 2003, 153 women were killed by their intimate partners.

### El Paso City Limits Statistics\*\*

- El Paso Police Department receives 2500 domestic violence calls per month.
- In 2004, 29,045 domestic violence related calls were dispatched.
- In 2004, 113 arrests were made for violations of a protective order.
- In 2004, 3 adult homicides were domestic violence related.

### Domestic Violence and Pregnancy

- A 2006 study in Maternal and Child Health Journal estimated about 324,000 pregnant women in this country are battered by their partners each year.
- A 2004, time and point survey by the El Paso Coalition of the Homeless reports that 50% of pregnant women being housed by homeless family violence programs are victims of domestic violence.

### Child Abuse and Domestic Violence

- In a national survey of more than 50,000 Americans families, 50% of men who frequently assaulted their wives also frequently assaulted their children.

\*Statistics provided by the Texas Council on Family Violence

\*\*Statistics provided by the El Paso Police Department

###



**Sample Domestic Violence Program  
Communications/Marketing Plan  
2010-2011**

**SWOT Analysis**

Strengths	
Weaknesses	
Opportunities	
Threats	

**Messages**

- Develop a set of messages/information we regularly drill to the public (Services and Programs, Website Address, Mission information on donating whether items or monetary)
- Develop consistency in delivery of messages for purposes of fund development and agency image.
- Develop manual on consistency of program image (logo, external messages)

**Branding/Image**

Messages should enforce program image as leader in domestic violence advocacy and community education

**Targeting Messages for Constituents**

- Develop detailed audience analysis
- Reflect materials for targeted audience (providing bilingual material, age appropriate material, etc.)
- Need to develop system for dissemination

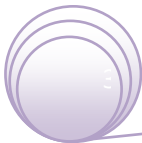
**Recipients of Messages**

- Develop a comprehensive media list (complete with phone, fax and e-mails, with the ability to sort by area of expertise) For example, all local writers that promote volunteer activities, or all business writers.
- Develop on going relationships with media consider inviting media to tour the family violence program
- Continue to develop relationships with area agencies so referrals are provided
- Develop system of assigning media coverage to spokespeople with Community Relations Manager as first point of contact

**Vehicles for Messages**

**Social Marketing:**

- Community organizing, mobilization and advocacy
- Schedule editorials for Executive Director in the two primary newspapers. Smaller editorial pieces should be submitted to smaller news organizations, be posted online by spokespeople on each messages
- Consider developing articles for social service publications and scholarly journals should be annually.
- Pitch articles for small publication/trade magazines that tie-in domestic violence impact (ex: Business Magazine—story about Domestic Violence in the Workplace)
- Develop stories to submit to *The River* TCFV's newsletter



**Public Services/programming:**

- Utilize public forums to spread message (Community Bulletins, etc)
- Schedule agency representative at city council district meetings
- Schedule public access TV
- Produce PSA's

**Internal vehicles:**

- Revamp print newsletter and distribute on a quarterly basis
- Develop volunteer e-newsletter distributed on monthly basis or as needed
- Develop one page e-newsletter and e-mail on a monthly basis. Need to develop distribution list for e-newsletter.
- Develop an Executive Director newsletter for distribution at least 3 times per year. Target audience for ED newsletter is donors and business community.
- Revamp website to generate more traffic. Website should be updated on a regular basis. Site should include sales at resale store. Need to promote online donating..
- Review all in-house publications for consistency in message and look, especially with regard to use of program names, logo, etc.
- Complete and determine who should receive Annual Report. (Minimally report should be distributed to donors (\$100 and above), partner agencies, United Way agencies, all locally elected officials (city, county, state, federal), board, local VIPS, granting agencies. Annual report should be posted on website.
- Create stump speeches that are used regularly. This includes community presentations and PowerPoint.
- Revamp current community presentations and create library of presentations accessible to all presenters

**Print, television, radio, electronic advertising:**

- Radio/TV spots- revamp radio spots, develop TV PSAs.
- Investigate recorded messages while people are on hold (MUSAK)
- Print ads during selected months (include thrift stores advertisements)
- Consider billboards

**Results**-Presented to board, staff, and volunteers

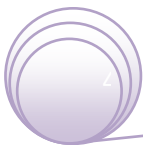
- Generate monthly news about thrift store
- Generate quarterly news about employee accomplishment and promotions
- Generate quarterly information about volunteers/volunteer program
- Every month a story should be featured about some specific program (should develop 12 story lines that can be pitched)
- Need a month-by-month planning calendar for all communications/marketing efforts to address public awareness, advocacy, services, and policies regarding domestic violence.



### Assignment of Messages

Develop the many “faces” of program by training and preparing staff, board, and volunteers to be spokespeople on an array of issues

Person	Program Expertise	Point of Contact
Staff Member A	All programs, general domestic violence issues	Crisis management, from the leadership perspective, primary spokesperson for the agency in all matters
Staff Member B	All programs, general domestic violence issues with specific expertise on volunteers, special events	Secondary spokesperson for the agency. Media’s first point of contact, responsible for assigning story, coverage.
Staff Member C	Capital campaign, special events, fundraising, grants	Fill in for Staff Member B during absences, vacation
Staff Member D	Family violence program, victim advocacy, survivor perspective, general domestic violence issues	Interviews to be assigned
Staff Member E	BIPP, aggressor accountability, male perspective on domestic violence	Interviews to be assigned
Staff Member F	All programs, general domestic violence issues, survivor perspective with expertise on court proceedings	Interviews to be assigned
Staff Member G	Family Resource Center with expertise in therapy, continuum of care model	Interviews to be assigned, specific language, specify, interviews only
Board Member A	Funding, special events, Board of Directors proceedings	Interviews to be assigned
Board Member B	Funding, special events, Board of Directors proceedings	Interviews to be assigned
Survivor A	Victim Impact	Interviews to be assigned



## Sample Timeline for Program Marketing/Communications Plan

May-Jan 2005

Month	Due/Publish Date	Cost
<b>May 2005</b>		
Develop detailed audience analysis for targeted audience perspective clients, perspective donors, volunteers, etc.)	May 15, 2005	
Develop glossary of messages for CAFV	May 15, 2005	
Develop and implement manual on consistency of CAFV image	May 20, 2005	
Media Release for <i>Scene</i> Roundup	May 16, 2005	
Photo Shoot for promotional photos	May 23, 24 2005	
Set date for staff training on marketing campaign and messages	May 17, 2005	
Develop list of recipients of Annual Report	May 26, 2005	
Final template for newsletter	May 31, 2005	
Executive Director Newsletter Distribution	May 31, 2005	
Final copy of annual report due	May 31, 2005	
<b>June 2005</b>		
Advertisement in Magazine	June Issue	1/2 page ad: 130.00
Family violence program Art Gallery Opening	June 22, 2005	
Complete press packet	June 5, 2005	
Revamp Dynamics of Domestic Violence Presentation	June 11, 2005	
Advertisement for thrift store in <i>What's Up</i>	Ad due to paper on June 13. Invoice will be sent.	1/4 page ad: 231.00
Media Release for <i>Scene</i> Roundup	June 20, 2005	
Train staff on marketing campaign and messages	Staff Meeting/ June 30	
Invite two media organizations for family violence program tour	TBA	
Newsletter Distribution	TBA	

Month	Due/Publish Date	Cost
<b>July 2005</b>		
Executive Director Newsletter Distribution	July 1, 2005	
Article for GF Magazine	July 22, 2005	
Invite two media organizations for family violence program tour	TBA	
Begin setting up for billboard for October	TBA	
Volunteer Newsletter Distribution	July 11, 2005	
Pitch story about for fall issue	July 1, 2005	
Revamp Teen and Relationship Violence Presentation	July 16, 2005	
Media Release for <i>Scene</i> Roundup	July 18, 2005	
Advertisement in <i>Advocate</i>	Ad due to paper on July 19. Paper published July 21	2x5 (10 column inch.) 65.00
Revamp Medical Response to D.V. Presentation	July 30, 2005	
Radio Spot Scripts completed	July 30, 2005	
<b>August 2005</b>		
Invite two media organization for family violence program tour	TBA	
Pitch story for Winter issue of <i>The River</i> newsletter	August 10, 2005	
Media Release for <i>Scene</i>	August 15, 2005	
Advertisement for Ritzy Raggs in Senior Magazine	Ad due to Paper Aug 22. Paper published Sept 1	1/4 Page Ad: 200.00
Advertisement in <i>Sun City Woman</i>	Mid-September	Cost not available at time
Develop Workplace Response to D.V. Presentation	August 20, 2005	

<b>September 2005</b>		
Invite two media organizations for family violence program tour		
Executive Director Newsletter	September 10, 2005	
University's "Take Back the Night"	September 13, 2005	
Advertisement in University <i>Prospector</i>	Mid-September Issue	3x5 in. Page Ad: 112.50
Advertisement in Community College <i>Conquistador</i>	Ad due to paper on Sept 8. Paper published Sept 15.	1/4 Page Ad: 105.00
Media Release for <i>Scene</i>	September 19, 2005	
Times Editorial	September 28, 2005	
<b>October 2005</b>		
Civic Organization presentations	October	
Story time at Barnes and Noble	October 8,15,22,29	
Billboard "Building a Community without D.V"	Early October	
Newsletter Distribution	October 5, 2005	
Electric Company <i>Connections</i> mailing	TBA	
Advertisement for thrift store in <i>Scene</i>	Ad due to paper Sept 21 <sup>st</sup> .	1/4 Page Ad 256.00
Advertisement in <i>Inc.</i>	Ad due to paper Sept 26. Paper published on Oct 2.	(2) 1/2 Page Ad 636.00
Advertisement in <i>Advocate</i>	Ad due to paper on Oct 4. Paper published Oct 6.	2x5 (10 column inch.) 65.00
Advertisement in <i>Eastside Reporter</i> (two weeks)	October 3-8 Issue/ October 18-22	(2) 1/4 Page Ads-345.00
Week without Violence	October 16-22, 2005	
Media Release for <i>Scene</i> Roundup	October 19, 2005	
Radio Spots on domestic violence	TBA	3,200.00
Bus Promo? It could be sponsored	TBA	
Art Show/Poetry reading	TBA	
Live Radio Promo @ thrift store	TBA	

<b>November 2005</b>		
Volunteer Newsletter Distribution	November 8, 2005	
Executive Director Newsletter Distribution	November 15, 2005	
Advertisement for thrift store in <i>Scene</i>	Ad due to paper on Oct 19. No Contract. Paper published on (Thanksgiving sale)	1/4 Page Ad 256.00
Media Release for <i>Scene</i> Roundup	November 21, 2005	
Special Holiday Mailing	November 28, 2005	
<b>December 2005</b>		
<b>January 2005</b>		
Newsletter Distribution	January 10, 2006	
Executive Director Newsletter Distribution	January 14, 2006	
Volunteer Newsletter Distribution	January 20, 2006	
	<b>Thrift Store Advertisement Expenditure</b>	<b>\$943.00</b>
	<b>Program Advertisement Expenditure</b>	<b>\$1413.50</b>

\*Newsletter and postage expenditures not obtained by review date.

\* Radio Spots estimated to \$3,200



**Sample Program Media Waiver**

I, Insert Interviewee’s Full Name agree to be interviewed by Insert Interviewer’s Name and/or Company. I have voluntarily agreed to respond to questions without coercion from the Insert Family Violence Program Name .

My name can be used in the publicized story. Intial: \_\_\_\_\_

My image can be used in the publicized story. Intial: \_\_\_\_\_

I want to remain anonymous in the interview. Intial: \_\_\_\_\_

Insert Family Violence Program Name discussed the purpose of the interview, informed me about my options with questions, informed me about interviews, offered to accompany me for the interview, and explained the possible consequences of making public statements about my victimization.

As the subject of an interview, I am not required to do anything I do not want to do. I have the right to be comfortable and to be treated fairly.

This waiver will expire Insert Date or Other Details

Interviewee’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Member’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witnesses’ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_





Media Confidentiality Form

I, Media Representative's Full Name understand the policies and procedures for interviewing and taking photos or shooting video of the clients, staff and board members. I also understand the following actions are prohibited:

- Shooting video or taking photos causing the confidential location of the family violence program to be recognizable
- Disclosing the location of the family violence program
- Shooting video and/or taking photos of victims and their children without their knowledge or consent
- Disclosing names of victims or their children without a media waiver

I also understand that even after my visit to Insert Family Violence Program Name is complete, I am not to share the names of victims, the address of the family violence program or other prohibited information.

Media Organization:

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number:

\_\_\_\_\_

Reporter's Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Photographer's/Camera Person's Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness' Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ \



# RESOURCES

This list of resources and their descriptions were compiled from the resources respective website.

## **Event Ideas and Domestic Violence Awareness Month**

*Domestic Violence Awareness Project*

<http://dvam.vawnet.org>

The Domestic Violence Awareness Project collaborates to collect, develop and distribute resources and ideas relevant to advocates' ongoing public and prevention awareness and education efforts not only in preparation for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, but also throughout the year.

*The Silent Witness National Initiative*

[www.silentwitness.net](http://www.silentwitness.net)

Silent Witness began promoting an end to domestic violence in 1990. Our message is one of hope, help and healing for the victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. In this site you will find out more about Silent Witness's efforts to end the silence about domestic violence and bring successful programs to every state.

*The Clothesline Project*

[www.clotheslineproject.org](http://www.clotheslineproject.org)

The Clotheslines Project is a visual display that bears witness to the violence against women and children. The Clothesline Project collects t-shirts designed by survivors of abuse and those who have lost loved ones to it. The shirts are hung on a clothesline display to honor survivors and memorialize victims, help with the healing process for survivors and those who have lost a loved one to violence, educate, document, and raise society's awareness of about the crimes of violence against women and children.

*Take Back the Night*

[www.takebackthenight.org](http://www.takebackthenight.org)

This site explores Take Back the Night, sometimes known as Reclaim the Night. The event is an internationally held march and rally intended as a protest and direct action against rape and other forms of violence against women, originated by the feminist movement.

## **Domestic Violence Statistics—State and National**

*Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV)*

[www.tcfv.org](http://www.tcfv.org)

As one of the largest domestic violence coalitions in the nation, TCFV's membership is comprised of family violence service providers, supportive organizations, survivors of domestic violence, businesses and professionals, communities of faith and other concerned citizens. The Texas Council on Family Violence promotes safe and healthy relationships by supporting service providers, facilitating strategic prevention efforts, and creating opportunities for freedom from domestic violence.



### *National Domestic Violence Hotline*

[www.ndvh.org](http://www.ndvh.org)

The National Domestic Violence Hotline (NDVH) was established in 1996 as a component of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) passed by Congress, NDVH is a nonprofit organization that provides crisis intervention, information and referral to victims of domestic violence, perpetrators, friends and families. The Hotline answers a variety of calls and is a resource for domestic violence advocates government officials, law enforcement agencies and the general public.

### *The Family Violence Prevention Fund*

<http://endabuse.org>

The Family Violence Prevention Fund (FVPF) has worked to end violence against women and children around the world. Instrumental in developing the landmark Violence Against Women Act passed by Congress in 1994, the FVPF has continued to break new ground by reaching new audiences including men and youth, promoting leadership within communities to ensure that violence prevention efforts become self-sustaining, and transforming the way health care providers, police, judges, employers and others address violence.

### *Office for Victims of Crime*

[www.ovc.gov/researchandstatistics.htm](http://www.ovc.gov/researchandstatistics.htm)

Research and statistics about victims of crime are provided by several of the other agencies within the Office of Justice Programs, including the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP); as well as from other federal sources and related sites.

### *United States Department of Justice--Bureau of Justice Statistics*

[www.ojp.usdoj.gov](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov)

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is the primary statistical agency of the U.S. Department of Justice. BJS collects, analyzes, publishes, and disseminates information on crime, criminal offenders, victims of crime, and the operation of justice systems at all levels of government. Impartial, timely, and accurate statistical data are essential to guide and inform federal, state, and local policymaking on crime and the administration of justice and to improve the quality of and access to information used for decision making. The BJS Web site provides every publication released by BJS since 1995, with downloadable datasets and spreadsheets, online analytic capabilities, and graphical presentations.

### *National Coalition Against Family Violence (NCADV)*

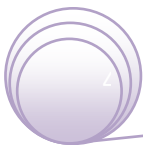
[www.ncadv.org](http://www.ncadv.org)

NCADV's work includes coalition building at the local, state, regional and national levels; support for the provision of community-based, non-violent alternatives - such as safe home and family violence program programs - for battered women and their children; public education and technical assistance; policy development and innovative legislation; focus on the leadership of NCADV's caucuses developed to represent the concerns of organizationally under represented groups; and efforts to eradicate social conditions which contribute to violence against women and children.

### *National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV)*

[www.nnedv.org](http://www.nnedv.org)

The National Network to End Domestic Violence incorporated in 1995, after five years of service under the organizational name of Domestic Violence Coalition on Public Policy. NNEDV serves as the leading voice for domestic violence issues in Congress, the Executive Branch and the Federal Courts. NNEDV Fund, was established in 1995 in order to provide training and technical assistance to state domestic violence coalitions and further public awareness of domestic violence issues.



## **Public Relations**

*The Public Relations Handbook for Nonprofits: A Comprehensive and Practical Guide*

by Art Feinglass

Many a board meeting of a non-profit organization ends with the words "Go and get the word out." Although said with gusto and the best of intentions, most listeners have no experience in conducting a public relations campaign.

Practitioner and academic Feinglass gives step-by-step directions for starting a campaign, using the public relations toolkit, and monitoring the campaign. He describes how to identify target markets, set goals and create a plan, how to choose spokespersons, write and release news releases and alternate press tools, prepare brochures, make the most of newsletters and annual reports, handle direct mail, and negotiate for advertising and air time.

*Effective Public Relations*

by Cutlip, Scott / Center, Allen / Broom, Glen Cutlip, Scott / Center, Allen / Broom, Glen

The most authoritative and comprehensive reference available on public relations, this "bible" of the field explores both the theory and practice of contemporary public relations. KEY TOPICS: Covers the full range of topics -- practitioners; organizational setting; historical origins; ethics and professionalism; legal considerations; communication and public opinion; media and media relations; the management process (problem definition, planning and programming, taking action and communicating, and evaluating the program); business and industry; government and military; non-profits, health care and education; trade associations, professional societies, and labor unions.

*You'd Better Have a Hose If You Want to Put out the Fire: The Complete Guide to Crisis Communications*

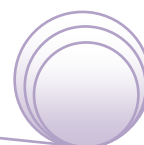
by Rene A. Henry

Communicating risks and communicating crises have become one of the hottest topics for senior managers and professionals in the practice of public relations, public affairs and community relations. Crises have no boundaries and they occur in business and industry, sports, higher education, non-profit organizations, military and government, and unfortunately, our schools and workplaces.

*Spin Works*

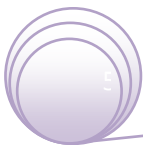
by Robert Bray

A media guidebook for non profits and community activists designed to give an overview of effective public relations and media activism.

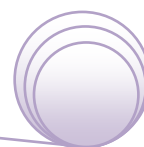


# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>Assignment Editors</b>	managers who brainstorm story ideas, assign stories to reporters, and help reporters shape their stories
<b>Branding</b>	strategically developing a consistent image of a program, business or product
<b>Body</b>	the paragraphs following the lead, making up the bulk of an article
<b>Call for Action</b>	encourages readers to take action; usually is included in editorials; they may also be included in letters to the editor.
<b>Communications Plan</b>	comprehensive document that compiles various information about a program's goals for communication in the community and identifies approaches to engaging the media and community
<b>Editorial</b>	also referred to as op-ed newspaper or magazine that expresses opinion or commentary on a specific topic
<b>Feature Story</b>	covers specific topic in depth, does not need to be time sensitive, these can be human interest stories
<b>Fact Sheet</b>	quick reference for reporters to check national, statewide, and local statistics, or other information about a specific topic
<b>Framing</b>	the specific story angle that is pitched so a specific message is disseminated
<b>Inverted Pyramid Style</b>	begins with lead, expands on the lead, and proceeds to present information in decreasing order of importance; this is also known as news style
<b>Lead</b>	The first sentence of news story, or media release. It should answer the five w's (who, what, where, when, and why) of the news
<b>Letter to the Editor</b>	is a letter sent to a publication about issues of concern to readers; letters are intended for publication
<b>Media Alert</b>	formatted document that answers the who, what where, when, why of your event
<b>Media Kit</b>	packet of materials prepared to disseminate information about specific topics, events, or other messages you want to inform the public about; these should be custom-prepared for each event



<b>Media Release</b>	formatted document that provides a detailed narrative, written in inverted pyramid style, includes quotes from your spokesperson. Reporters usually lift items from the document verbatim
<b>Media Waiver</b>	document protecting programs from liabilities as it pertains to survivors speaking to reporters
<b>News Story</b>	covers specific topic in depth, will be timely; written in inverted-pyramid style.
<b>Newsworthy</b>	importance or significance of a topic or story to a reporter or assignment editor
<b>Pitch</b>	selling a story idea
<b>Press Conference</b>	event held with the purpose of disseminating important information to the community
<b>Primary Prevention</b>	long-term, comprehensive and strategic process of stopping violence before it starts using comprehensive, community-based approaches to change societal factors that allow violence to occur in the first place
<b>Public Relations</b>	also referred to as PR, is the practice of managing the flow of information between an organization and its public. Public relations gains an organization exposure to their audience using topics of public interest and news items that do not require payment
<b>Public Service Announcement</b>	also referred to as a PSA, is a radio or television spot aimed at providing an important message to its target audience. PSAs are reserved for organizations that qualify as nonprofit under federal tax laws. PSAs are to be aired at no cost.
<b>Spokesperson</b>	selected individual or individuals who communicates a program's interest to the community
<b>Trade Magazine</b>	a magazine published for and read by members of a particular trade group





The Texas Council on Family Violence promotes safe and healthy relationships by supporting service providers, facilitating strategic prevention efforts, and creating opportunities for freedom from domestic violence.

Since 1978, the Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) has been a nationally recognized leader in the efforts to end family violence through partnerships, advocacy and direct services for women, children and men.

As one of the largest domestic violence coalitions in the nation, TCFV's membership is comprised of family violence service providers, supportive organizations, survivors of domestic violence, businesses and professionals, communities of faith and other concerned citizens. A membership-focused organization, TCFV is firmly committed to serving its members, communities in Texas and thousands of victims of domestic violence and their families.

Texas Council on Family Violence

P.O. Box 161810

Austin, Texas 78716

1(800) 525-1978

[www.tcfv.org](http://www.tcfv.org)

