



Grassroots Marketing With a little Help from Your Friends

Communications Toolkit



If the circus is coming to town and you paint a sign saying "Circus Coming to the fairground Saturday," that's advertising. If you put the sign on the back of an elephant and walk it into town, that's promotion. If the elephant walks through the mayor's flower bed, that's publicity. And if you get the mayor to laugh about it, that's public relations.

- Unknown

Credits: First 5 San Bernardino, California Children and Families Commission, First 5 LA and Cause Communications, Ridgewood Associates Public Relations

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Media Overview

Marketing Challenges

What marketing challenges are you facing today? Identify three challenges that are keeping you from promoting your organization in the way you would like.

1.

2.

3.

To advertise or not to advertise...

Why Is It?

A man wakes up after sleeping under an advertised blanket,
on an advertised mattress,
pulls off advertised pajamas,
bathes in an advertised shower,
shaves with an advertised razor,
brushes his teeth with advertised toothpaste,
washes with advertised soap,
puts on advertised clothes,
drinks a cup of advertised coffee,
drives to work in an advertised car,
and then, refuses to advertise, believing it doesn't pay.

Later when business is poor,
he advertises the business for sale.

Why is it?

Background

Proposition 10 is an unprecedented investment in California's youngest children. This year alone, tax revenues from Proposition 10 will generate approximately \$600 million to help provide children prenatal through age five a foundation for healthy, productive and positive lives.

Even though First 5 makes a positive difference for millions of children, it is not without its critics. Therefore, it is crucial that First 5 California and County Commissions educate the public about the positive progress we are all making in order to:

- Show taxpayers where their money is going
- Bring visibility to the critical importance of early childhood development

One of the most effective ways to reach the public on a large scale is through mass media. For a more local approach, grassroots marketing is best.

Grassroots marketing is crucial to the success of community-based organizations and vital to its services and programs. It takes time and effort to build relationships within the community. Fortunately, this is one of the best and most personally rewarding aspects of working in the helping professions.

Why Communications?

In the corporate world, not being visible eventually means going out of business. Now, more non-profit organizations are beginning to understand that the same is true for them.

Research and Evaluate Communications

Research is one of the most important and valuable steps in the development of any communications planning. Here are a few low-cost ideas for conducting research on your communications strategies:

- For less than \$50 in stamps and stationary, you can send a survey to 100 people asking for their feedback on a particular publication, brochure or other communications strategy.
- Gather up a dozen of your most important participants for an informal focus group for input on your organization's new logo, slogan or tagline, publication or event. Provide simple refreshments such as coffee, juice and a snack. Conduct separate focus groups for staff and participants. Questions should be open-ended.
- Invest a few hours of staff time to call a targeted group of audience members to answer a brief phone survey about your communications efforts.
- Use an e-mail or internet survey service such as www.zoomerang.com or www.surveymonkey.com.



Message Development

Before you plan your communications strategies, consider what success physically looks like and then work backwards to develop a plan of action to get you there.

What do you want to say and how do you want to say it?

Identify and learn all you can about your target audience.

Ask these questions:

- Who are they? List all, and then prioritize.
- What is their age, gender, income level, education level, geographic location, occupation, family size, and ethnicity?
- What do they like? What motivates them? What offends them?
- Where do they get their information? What media do they watch, read, and listen to? What are their other sources of information?
- Why should they care about your message? What's the WIIFM?

What do you want people to know about your organization? When people talk about your organization, what do you want them to say?

People don't want to be "marketed TO";
they want to be "communicated WITH."
- Flint McGlaughlin

Create **three main points**. Keep your messages simple. Avoid using jargon. Make your messages quotable. Keep them short and repeat them often. These core messages should relate to who you are and why you exist as an organization.

The Elevator Pitch

An "Elevator Pitch" is a concise, carefully planned, and well-practiced description about your company that your mother should be able to understand in the time it would take to ride up an elevator.

Pre-work: Refine your “elevator pitch”

A recent government publication on the marketing of cabbage contains, according to one report, 26,941 words. It is noteworthy in this regard that the Gettysburg Address contains a mere 279 words while the Lord's Prayer comprises but 67.
- Norman R. Augustine

The statement should be free of acronyms and make sense to people who know nothing about your business. All staff members should be able to recite your organization's elevator pitch verbatim AND be able to put it into their own words.

The elevator pitch should be interesting and make the listener want to learn more. Most importantly, the listener should be able to hear the passion in your voice about what it is that you do.

Name of Organization:

What does your organization **DO***?

Who does your organization do this for?

Where does your organization do this?

Why does your organization do this?

What do you do at your organization? (May differ from a job title)

Your Elevator Pitch

Communicating Your Message

Communications Plan

In writing your communications plan, avoid generic goals such as “raise awareness” or “increase media coverage”. If you run a movie theater and your goal is to boost attendance, state how many people you want to attract. If you want more clients to enroll in your program, state how many and by what date.

Elements of a Communications Plan:

- Summary/Overview of plan
- Goals and objectives – tied to organization’s mission and vision
- Target audiences – Be specific / demographics
- Key messages
- Strategies and approaches / Tactics and tools
- Budget
- Implementation plan with accountabilities, priorities and timetable
- Evaluation methods. Identify what success would look like.

Communications Budget

- In order to stretch dollars, consider recruiting volunteers to design publications, print posters, update the website and attend meetings.
- Add communications budget items into all grant requests.



Branding



"The right name is an advertisement in itself." - Claude Hopkins

Whether you know it or not, your organization already has a brand identity. It's everything the community sees and hears about you. It's how your phones are answered, how staff presents themselves, how your materials look, how your website works and how your facility looks.

One of the most important ways in which you differentiate yourself from other organizations is through your branding efforts. Make sure your logo is distinct, unique, memorable, appropriate and used consistently.

Try this exercise to determine how consistent your identity is. Cover up the logo on all of your publications. Would you recognize them as coming from the same organization? You should see a consistent use of color, type and images.

Make sure everyone in your organization knows exactly how to use your logo, colors and other components of your visual identity. Train your staff on guidelines for the use of your logo and issues relating to capitalization, punctuation and abbreviations.

Advertising is a lot more than just television commercials -it includes branding, packaging, celebrity spokespeople, sponsorships, publicity, customer service, the way you treat your employees, and even the way your secretary answers the phone.

Sergio Zyman, ex-vice president of Coca-Cola



Media Relations

There is an emphasis on human interest stories and “news you can use”. The media is very open to personal stories about the needs of young children and the challenges facing today’s families.

Move quickly.

- Respond to reporters’ calls as soon as possible. A call from a reporter is a priority. They often only give you one chance to build a relationship.
- Reporters may not wait for you to return their call. They will run with a story with whatever information they have. Provide the information they request well before their deadline. Make sure your information is accurate – they may not check it.
- Provide reporters with as many easy-to-use resources as possible. Make their jobs easy! Reporters may not put in the time to research the story on their own. Be a good source of information about Proposition 10 and First 5 San Bernardino.

For example:

How many children under five are there in the county?

What is the demographic breakdown?

How much does child care cost the average family?

What percentage of women smoke during their pregnancy?

Keep in mind the criteria that the media use to judge the newsworthiness of your information:

Impact - How many people does this story affect? Is this information useful to their audience?

Locality - How local is the news story?

Prominence - Is there a well-known person or institution involved?

Novelty/Drama – The unusual and first-time happenings make news.

Entertainment value – Is it interesting? Will it keep the attention of readers, listeners and viewers? Do you have visuals to support the story?

The following actions guarantee a bad relationship with the media:

- Don't respond quickly, or at all, to their inquiries
- Fail to respect their deadlines
- Provide inaccurate or incomplete information
- Send them irrelevant news or "fluff"
- Call them repeatedly about your event or story

Media Strategies

Next to doing the right thing, the most important thing is to let people know you are doing the right thing.

John D. Rockefeller

Compiling a Media List

A first step in conducting media relations is putting together a list of media outlets in your area. A comprehensive list will have the following:

- Name of contact, title, name of publication or media outlet, address, fax number, phone number, e-mail address
- Include non-traditional media, such as your local chamber of commerce, community service organizations, parent teacher associations and non-English-speaking media outlets.

Contacting the Media

The most common correspondence with members of the media are media advisories or alerts, news releases and press kits.

- **Media Advisory or Alert:** The purpose of a media advisory or alert is to invite reporters to attend your press conference or media event. Send this out at least four to five days before an event.
- **News release:** The purpose of a news release is to generate media coverage of an event, announcement or new development and to provide some information about it. Send this out as soon as possible before an event and then two weeks and one week prior to an event.

- **Press Kit:** Press kits are packets of information that can be given to a reporter or media source. Press kits should be professional-looking and can include the following:
 - Recent news release(s)
 - Fact sheets, brochures or other printed program materials on the organization, event or program
 - Biographies of appropriate individuals
 - Color photographs with descriptive captions
 - Supportive statistics or data
 - Business card
- **Calendar Advisory:** A calendar advisory is a request for the media outlet to list your event or meeting in the calendar or community events listing. Send this out as soon as possible before an event and then two weeks and one week prior to an event.
- **Op-Ed and Letters to the Editor:** This is a letter-style commentary or reply to a story you can send to a media outlet when you have a point of view to express. It's important to limit the number of ideas covered and state your position in a clear, concise and logical manner. Do not get emotional or preachy. Submissions should be to one media outlet, exclusively.

Handling calls from reporters

When you get a call from a reporter working on a story, it can be tempting to answer his or her questions immediately. However, even seasoned media spokespeople can run into trouble then trying to do an interview "cold".

Instead, when a reporter calls, get as much information from the reporter as possible about the news outlet (only if you are not familiar with it), the topic/angle of the story and who else has been interviewed. Tell the reporter that you want to find out as much as possible so that you can give the most accurate information. In some cases, you may decide that you are not the best person to be interviewed for the topic or that another person should join you for the phone interview.

Most importantly, find out the reporter's deadline and call him or her back well before the deadline with the information they requested.

General Interviewing Tips

- Before returning the call, take time to organize your key messages and practice saying them out loud.
- Make sure you have all the facts and information you will need in front of you.
- Always brainstorm a list of possible questions the reporter might ask you and list answers to them before you return the call.
- Start your answers by repeating key words from the interviewer's questions. For example, if the question is, "What is the purpose of the Children and Families Commission?" respond with, "The purpose of the Children and Families Commission is...".
- Use your organization's name whenever possible instead of saying "we".
- Don't try and fill up a silence. When you are finished answering a question, wait and let the reporter ask the next one.

If a positive article should get published by a reporter, always send a hand-written thank-you card directly to the reporter for their time and energy.

Advertising

*Are you **inspired** and **motivated** by your own materials?*

Print Ad Principles

1. Capture the reader's attention like a stop sign and direct it like a road map.
2. Make an emotional connection before attempting to convey information.
3. Write headlines that offer a reason to read more.
4. Use pictures to attract and convince.
5. If you want people to read your text, make it readable.
6. Test before; measure after.
7. When everyone else zigs, it's time to zag.

Storytelling

You can say the right thing about a product and nobody will listen.
You've got to say it in a way that people will feel in their gut.
Because if they don't feel it, nothing will happen.
- William Bernbach

Non-profit organizations do important and meaningful work that has the ability to change lives and improve our communities. Take the time to harvest the stories that demonstrate the impact your organization has on those it serves. By telling stories of how individuals are affected by the issue you are working to solve, you personalize your mission and goals and make them more memorable.

Storytelling can be used effectively no matter what communications methods you choose, from brochures, flyers to your web site. Remember – the best stories have a beginning, middle and end; establish the heroes and villains; involve a conflict and have an emotional hook.

Kodak sells film, but they don't advertise film. They advertise memories.
— Theodore Levitt

Legislative Outreach

Public opinion and legislation profoundly affect funding for non-profit organizations. It is vitally important that organizations reach out to elected officials locally, regionally and nationally. Keep policymakers informed about your organization and aware of the key issues facing your communities. Determine which of their aides handles the issues related to your organization and then build a relationship with them.

Invite elected officials and their staff to open houses, special events and graduation ceremonies. Let them see for themselves, the great work your organization is doing in their district.



Advertising is the "wonder" in Wonder Bread.
- Jef I. Richards

Guerilla or Creative Marketing

Guerilla marketing uses fast, unconventional methods, often combined with a sense of humor, to accomplish its goals. It's all about thinking up creative ways to get your message out to your audience. The best guerilla tactics not only reach your target audience, but also create a buzz about your marketing campaign, your cause and your organization.

Some creative, guerilla tactics:

- Print your key messages on buttons t-shirts, bar coasters, coffee sleeves, banners, employee clothing, flyers, posters– you name it!
- Turn your vehicles into movable billboards with car magnets, bumper stickers or painted messages.
- Stick labels announcing an event or stating your key messages on all outgoing mail.
- Paint a mural on the side of your building or create window displays highlighting your organization. See if you can display your messages on other community businesses.
- Offer to donate children's books or toys to organizations in exchange for placing information about your agency in their lobby.
- Hold a children's art, music or talent contest.
- Increase visibility for your organization by speaking at community meetings, conferences and chambers of commerce.
- Create door hangers and canvass small sections of your community at a time. Start with the streets closest to your facility and move outward.
- Include key messages on your voice-mail system and on-hold programming on your office phones.



You'll never have great customer relations
till you have good employee relations.
Walt Disney, founder of Walt Disney

Recruiting a diverse workforce: Employing personal guides

Your organization should reflect the community you serve. If it doesn't, consider hiring from the local community. A "local" or representative of the community of which you serve can often be a cultural guide to your target population.

Never hire or promote in your own image. It is foolish to replicate your strength and idiotic to replicate your weakness. It is essential to employ, trust, and reward those whose perspective, ability, and judgment are radically different from yours. It is also rare, for it requires uncommon humility, tolerance, and wisdom.

- Dee W. Hock, Fast Company

Program Planning: Involve the community - make them part of the solution

- Cultural competence entails improving relationships with various ethnic communities and designing programs that are directly related to their needs, lives, and individual goals.
- Culturally competent programs are effective and powerful because they are "customer driven."
- Engage families in programming from conception to implementation.
- Actively solicit the increased participation and involvement of community members, which will foster greater loyalty to the program.



Community Outreach

Relationship marketing

Relationship marketing is the process of attracting, maintaining, and enhancing relationships with key individuals over time. While personal marketing helps you to get your message across in a way that will be better received, relationship marketing helps you to strengthen your relationship with your target audience over time.

Relationship marketing is time-intensive, person-to-person communication.

Relationship marketing includes:

- Forming key relationships in the community, joining associations and chambers. Value cooperation and bridge-building with community leaders and other organizations working within the community.
- Establishing mutually beneficial relationships.
- Getting assistance and support from opinion leaders, gatekeepers, and informal leaders. Value word-of-mouth and interpersonal communication to spread your message.
- Helping in the community: charities, volunteering, special events, donating time

Relationship marketing suggests that once your program takes off, your intentions are to be there for the long haul.

Outreach comes from interacting with diverse audiences with whom you want to work. You also find uniqueness in your target audience that must be respected and incorporated into program design and implementation in order to have the greatest chance of success in serving that audience.



Face to Face Marketing

Personal marketing/Impersonal marketing



Personal Marketing = Face-to-Face. Personal marketing makes you and your program more visible because it involves personalized communication between you and your target audience. It puts a face to a name.

To be effective, you must establish a relationship with the audience you are targeting by making a connection with them over time. In order to build a relationship, as with any other relationship in life, the program staff need to be constantly in touch with its audiences.

Collaborations and Partnerships

What if similar organizations with similar communications goals worked together to inform audiences about important calls to action, such as increasing early kindergarten registration or stopping domestic violence? This type of collaboration can enhance media coverage, build widespread support for your common objective and avoid duplication of effort.

Who is doing the same type of work, or complimentary work and how can you collaborate to mobilize efforts, save money and have greater impact? Whether you partner with other non-profits, like-minded service providers, corporate sponsors, foundations, universities, government agencies or the media, opportunities for meaningful strategic alliances are plentiful.

Impersonal Marketing	Personal Marketing
Mail a letter.	Run a booth at a community fair.
Have an announcement sent to a community meeting/ event.	Visit a community meeting or event to market the program. Important: Be sure to stay until the end to meet people and answer questions.
Mail a brochure.	Make phone calls to key individuals in the community.
Post a flyer.	Have a cultural guide, opinion leader, or gatekeeper provide information on your program.
Send an announcement to a radio station, newspaper, or television station that serves target audiences.	Have the program sponsored and direct-marketed by a grassroots community organization that is trusted by the target audience.

Public Sector Partnerships

Contact county departments to put items in their department newsletters, in the employee break rooms and to place brochures and posters in lobby areas.

Business Community Partnerships

Consider putting items in doctor's offices, public libraries or even the neighborhood Starbucks.

Media Partnerships

A number of media outlets sponsor charitable causes. For example, in exchange for having its logo on the non-profit's marketing items (t-shirts, brochures, posters, banners, ads, etc.); a newspaper may offer the agency free advertising space. A radio station may offer a DJ to serve as an emcee for the event and play public service announcements.

Collaborate by sharing Community Resources

- Purchasing locally
- Hiring locally, training local residents
- Initiating local investment strategies
- Sharing internal and external resources (meeting space, vendors, staff development, training opportunities, technical assistance)

Focus on satisfying your customers, becoming a market leader, and being known as a good corporate citizen and a good place to work.

Everything else follows.

Tom Siebel, CEO of Siebel Systems

Exceeding Expectations: The FISH Philosophy

www.charthouse.com

When people are genuinely engaged in the work they do—rather than just doing the job—they become inspired and can better motivate others.

1. **Be there**
2. **Play**
3. **Make their day**
4. **Choose your attitude**



Saying “Thank You”

The fundamental rule is that you cannot say “thank you” enough.

Ways to thank partners:

- Send a thank you note with an enclosed photo following an event
- Send a thank you letter following a one-on-one meeting, visit or lunch
- Call or ask your Executive Director or Chair of your board to make a thank-you call for a significant partnership
- Give a recognition certificate or plaque acknowledging the partner’s contribution
- List the partner’s contribution on your web site or in your organization’s newsletter

Play!

Be There!

Make Their Day!
Choose Your
Attitude!

Communication Tools

- Marketing items (water bottles, pens, etc.)
- Newsletter/bulletin
- Cable television public access channel
- Banner
- Outdoor sign on building/inside building
- Billboards
- Outdoor advertising, public transit busses, posters, bus shelters
- Booths at community events
- Clothing with agency logo
- Brochures
- Bumper stickers/window clings
- Business cards
- Buttons or lapel pins
- Direct mail
- Door hangers
- E-mail blasts
- Flyers
- Grocery bags/grocery carts
- License plate frames
- Magazine advertising
- Movie theater advertising
- Payroll or utility bill stuffer
- Posters
- Stickers or tattoos
- Table tents
- Website

Marketing is not an event, but a process . . . It has a beginning, a middle, but never an end, for it is a process. You improve it, perfect it, change it, even pause it. But you never stop it completely.
- Jay Conrad Levinson

Marketing Small Group Exercise

Write down up to three of your organization’s marketing goals. Using the information learned from this workshop, write down some tactics you can use meet each goal.

Marketing Goal 1:

Tactics:

-
-
-

Marketing Goal 2:

Tactics:

-
-
-

Marketing Goal 3:

Tactics:

-
-
-



Templates and Tools

Sample Media Advisory

Sample News Release

Sample Calendar Advisory

Event Planning, Preparation and Set-Up

Photo Release Form in English

Photo Release Form in Spanish

Sample budget



Marketing Materials & Tools Inventory Checklist

Marketing is not only about what you communicate about your organization, but how you communicate it.

An important part of identifying your marketing needs is to determine what marketing materials and tools you already have and what you will need to effectively reach your target audiences.

Take a look around your organization (literally) and use this inventory checklist to help you identify your marketing needs.

- Like it:** Items that are ready to be used for marketing today
- Need it:** Items that your organization wants or needs for marketing
- Re-do it:** Items that you have for marketing, but they need to be updated and revised
- Dump it:** Items that are no longer useful for marketing
- Think about it:** Items that you might consider adding later or are not sure about right now

	Like It	Need It	Re-do It	Dump It	Think About It
Annual Report	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Strategic Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Brochure(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Elevator Pitch	<input type="checkbox"/>				
E-mail Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Blog(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Flyer(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Info Card	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Information Packet	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Logo	<input type="checkbox"/>				

	Like It	Need It	Re-do It	Dump It	Think About It
Tagline/Slogan	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Multi-media presentation (PowerPoint, promotional DVD)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Screensaver	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Postcard	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Letterhead	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Business cards	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Promotional Giveaways (pens, magnets, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Trade show display	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Web site	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Poster(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Outdoor sign(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Banners	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Special event(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Customer service program	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Word-of-mouth	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Media Alert/Advisory

Purpose: To alert or advise the media about an upcoming event.

Format:

- Limit alert or advisory to one page.
- If available, print the alert on your letterhead.
- Use a headline. The headline should capture the reader's attention and be self-explanatory.
- Use a sub-headline as appropriate.
- Present information under headings: What, Where, When, Who, Background, Visuals and Contact.
- Put ### or –End – at the bottom of the page to signify the end.

Sample Media Alert Format

*** MEDIA ALERT * * MEDIA ALERT ** MEDIA ALERT ***

HEADLINE

- WHAT:** Name/short description of event
- WHERE:** Name of location
Address
Nearest major cross streets
- WHEN:** Day, date, time (example: Thursday, May 3, 2007, 10:00 AM)
- WHO:** List spokespeople. For example, County Supervisor, City Mayor,
Executive Director, High School Principal
- VISUALS:** List specific photo opportunities: young children and families, art
projects, petting zoo
- CONTACT:** Organization's media contact, organization's name, phone number
and day-of-event phone number, if different.

###

Sample Media Alert

*** MEDIA ALERT * * MEDIA ALERT ** MEDIA ALERT ***



**FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA TO LAUNCH ASIAN-LANGUAGE
KIT FOR NEW PARENTS**

First 5 California Executive Director Kris Perry to unveil free comprehensive Asian-language resource for new and expectant parents

WHAT: First 5 California will host a media event for Asian Pacific Islander American media to launch the first-ever Asian-language versions of the *Kit for New Parents* – a free comprehensive parenting resource. The *Kit* includes practical advice on prenatal care through a child's first five years, including nutrition, safety, health, and early learning information. This free resource, which has a retail value of \$75, is available in Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean and Vietnamese.

The *Kit* includes an educational DVD with parenting advice from prominent child development experts and celebrities, easy-to-read parenting guides, and a storybook called "Puppy and Friends" for parents to read with their children. Other resources include obesity prevention guides, a poison control magnet, brochures and fact sheets on topics ranging from oral health to smoking cessation, and information on programs such as Paid Family Leave and Healthy Families.

Dr. Ricky Choi will be on hand to share his perspective on the *Kit* and provide an overview of the important role that parents play in the lives of young children.

WHO: Kris Perry, First 5 California Executive Director
Ricky Y. Choi, MD, MPH, Pediatrician- Asian Health Services

WHEN: Wednesday, January 14
10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Kris Perry and Dr. Choi will be available for media interviews following the event.

WHERE: The California Endowment Center for Healthy Communities
Mojave Room
1000 N. Alameda Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

VISUALS: A 5-minute highlight reel of the Asian-language *Kit for New Parents* DVDs; copies of the *Kit for New Parents* in Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean and Vietnamese.

CONTACT: Arthur Vong

News Release or Press release

Purpose: A news release is one of the basic tools used in media relations to distribute information. It provides the media with news about something important in your organization. The most important thing to remember is that it must contain NEWS relevant to the media outlet's audience.

A release should be written like a news story following an inverted pyramid structure, with the most important information at the top.

Format:

- If available, use 8 ½ x 11 inch letterhead with at least one-inch margins.
- Most news media use the ***Associated Press Stylebook***.
- At the top of the first page, put the release date and a contact name and phone number.
- Use a headline and a sub-headline, if appropriate.
- List the city from which the information is being released or where the event is taking place.
- Double-space the body of the story.
- Signify that there are additional pages by putting – more – at the bottom of the page. Use only one side of each sheet of paper.
- Put ### or –End – at the bottom of the page to signify the end.

Tips:

- The headline and lead paragraph should capture the reader's attention and be self-explanatory, since this is as far as many reporters read before deciding if they are interested in the story.
- Be concise. Eliminate unnecessary words.
- Avoid technical language, jargon and acronyms.
- Do not editorialize or offer opinions unless they are a part of a quote.
- Do not have any grammatical or spelling errors.

Sample news release format

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: (NAME)
(PHONE NUMBER)

HEADLINE (centered, single-spaced and bold)

OPTIONAL SUB-HEADLINE (centered, single-spaced, italicized)

CITY, STATE – Lead Paragraph

2nd paragraph – should support lead paragraph with facts and figures. This is a good place for a quote.

Additional paragraphs – more supporting information, data and quotes

- more -

SHORTENED VERSION OF HEADLINE

Page 2

Final paragraph – Sometimes referred to as the “boilerplate”. This is a standard paragraph which may include the organization’s location, the area or population it serves, the organization’s purpose and contact information.

###

Sample news release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 19, 2010

CONTACT: Bonnie Woodrome
(909) 386-7706

First 5 San Bernardino Invests in Day Care Centers at Transitional Assistance Departments throughout the County

County Commission works to provide new educational play equipment for children

San Bernardino, CA – First 5 San Bernardino invested \$20,000 into County Transitional Assistance and Transitional Assistance Youth Departments, when it was apparent that the onsite daycare centers were in need of updated educational and play items for the children who spend hours in their centers. The sites care for approximately 2,600 children each month.

The Transitional Assistance Department (TAD) and Transitional Assistance Youth (TAY) Centers of the San Bernardino County Human Services is responsible for administering the Department's financial support programs to persons in need of financial, nutritional and medical assistance. The 17 sites that First 5 San Bernardino invested in, include the cities of San Bernardino, Ontario, Rancho Cucamonga, Barstow, Hesperia, Victorville, Redlands, Yucca Valley, Fontana, and Colton.

In line with the mission of First 5 San Bernardino and the commission's strategic plan, the play space was overhauled to a more updated and education focused area. Children can enjoy toys and activities that support learning including focus on shape and color recognition, matching, problem solving, discovery, imagination, and creativity. Each site received educational and play items including, play tables equipped with manipulative toys, along with crayons, markers, colored pencils, rubbing plates, toy bins, book displays with a variety of bilingual reading and activity books, soft mats and baby play gyms, dress up costumes, and a bilingual kid's themed area rug.

The centers also now house a variety of resources including brochures, pamphlets, and referral information for parents regarding the dozens of First 5 funded partners and other local referral and service organization's information.

- more -

**FIRST 5 Invests in Day Care Centers at Transitional Assistance Departments
throughout the County**

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About First 5 San Bernardino

The Children and Families Commission for San Bernardino County (First 5 San Bernardino) was created in order to realize the benefits of Proposition 10 (California Children and Families Act) for the County's youngest residents and their families. The act created a program for the purpose of promoting, supporting, and improving the early development of children from the prenatal stage to five years of age. First 5 San Bernardino, in partnership with 76 contracted service agencies, provides a variety of programs and services designed to promote, support and enhance the early development of children prenatal through age five in San Bernardino County. For more information about First 5 San Bernardino, please call (909) 386-7706 or visit the Web site at www.first5sanbernardino.org.

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Sample calendar

listing



CALENDAR ADVISORY*CALENDAR ADVISORY*CALENDAR ADVISORY

***Fair Thee Well* Health and Resource Fair at the Joshua Tree
Community Center**

Families are invited for a free day of fun and games with a message of well being

WHAT: Join First 5 San Bernardino, for dental screenings, interactive games and activities for children at the *Fair Thee Well* Family Health and Resource Fair at the Joshua Tree Community Center on Saturday, February 20. Perfect for children age 5 and under and their families, this free event will offer activities and information from health, safety and education programs from across the County.

From 10:00am to 1:00pm, First 5 San Bernardino along with First 5 California Hands On Healthy Express will educate children through activities and games on how to stay well. The Arrowhead Regional Medical Center's First 5 Dental program will be on site to do free dental screenings, along with many other agencies and organizations dedicated to the well being of our children. Parents can receive information on the importance of intervention and prevention when it comes to their young child's health and find resources available in the Mid Desert communities. Also, to add to the fun, children can have their faces painted or receive a balloon animal and a healthy snack!

WHO: First 5 San Bernardino, Joshua Tree Parks and Recreation Department, along with participating local agencies. Open to all families with children ages 0-5.

WHEN: Saturday, February 20
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

WHERE: Joshua Tree Community Center
6171 Sunburst Avenue in Joshua Tree

CONTACT: Bonnie Woodrome
(909) 386-7706
bwoodrome@cfc.sbcounty.gov

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Event Planning, Preparation and Set-Up

Every week Print out event flyers and registration forms for community events. Place them in a binder for current year, according to month and date of event.

Note: Return registration forms as soon as possible and place copy in binder. Note method of delivery of form (e.g. Fax, e-mail, mail, phone call)

Every month Check inventory of publications and marketing items to ensure enough materials are available for upcoming month's events.

Post events on calendar of events on website or in facility on a bulletin board. List in organizations newsletter, if applicable.

One month prior to event Order/Check supply of:

- Publications and materials with subject matter relating to event
- Coloring sheets or activity sheets for children
- Door prizes (optional)
- Marketing materials

Ensure adequate staff coverage of event. Request assistance from management or partner agencies if necessary.

Verify theme and topic of event. Order or ensure supply of visual aids for table top or booth display.

Two weeks prior to event Contact agency hosting the event. Verify the following:

- Do they need a door prize?
- How many people are expected to attend? How many children 0-5 are expected to attend?
- What is the percentage of Spanish-speakers attending? This will ensure appropriate materials and staff coverage for the event.
- Are they providing meals to vendors? If so, verify the number of people attending and meal choice, if applicable.
- Can a banner be displayed? What is the name of the person to whom we should deliver the banner?
- What are the event set-up and take-down times? Arrange to set up the day before the event, if possible.
- Will electricity will be available, if needed. If needed, is there a charge for electricity?
- Do we need to bring our own EZ up or canopy, table and chairs?
- Can we play children's music at our booth?

Decorate table top display with materials related to topic and theme of event.

Plan the children's activity. Verify there are enough supplies and materials for the activity.

Event booth Pack the following in boxes for event set-up:

- Tablecloth(s)
- Agency banner(s)
- Minimum of 2 brochure stands, filled with collateral materials (brochures, flyers, fact sheets, etc.)
- Business cards
- Agency pens, pencils or crayons
- Scissors, tape, markers
- Agency plastic bags (# based on the total event attendance)
- Flyers of upcoming community events
- EZ Up or canopy if necessary
- Folding table if necessary
- Game for children
- Marketing items
- Water, ice and ice chest (optional)
- Door prize (optional)

- Visual aids**
- Table top display
 - Guidelines for goals
 - Inflatable Plastic crayons, posters or other visual aids

- Day of event**
- Arrive at least one hour prior to event.
 - Check in to vendor registration.
 - Verify space is adequate. If not, rectify situation.
 - Visit all booths before event begins, if possible to give agency materials and request they visit the agency table throughout the day.

- Table set-up**
- CD player with children's music
 - Table top display
 - Minimum 2 brochure racks
 - Marketing items
 - Bucket of pens, pencils or crayons
 - Plastic bags
 - Publications and other materials

Clean up Re-pack all materials including marketing items, plastic bags, brochure racks and visual aids.

One day after event Send thank you note to event host for invitation to participate

One week after event Send e-mail to contacts made at event for future or continued partnerships.

Distribute materials collected at event to staff. Report out to staff on community event.

RELEASE AND HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT

Consent to use of Voice, Name, Likeness, Photograph and/or Video

I, _____, consent to the unrestricted use of my voice, name, likeness, photograph and/or video by the Children and Families Commission of San Bernardino County (Commission), its officers, employees, agents, affiliates, volunteers, successors and those acting with its permission and authority for the purpose of promoting the goals and objectives of the Commission.

I fully understand that photographing and interviewing for use in informational material, advertising and media release will reveal to the public my voice, name, likeness, photograph, and status as a recipient of services from or employee/volunteer of _____ (name of organization). I hereby waive any right of privacy, anonymity, and/or confidentiality conferred by state, federal, or other recognized laws.

I waive any right to inspect or approve the finished product(s), the advertising copy, printed or electronic media that may be used in conjunction with my information or likeness. I relinquish all rights, titles and interests I may have in the finished media to the Commission and its affiliates. The Commission retains copyright and exclusive reproduction rights of images at all times.

I hereby release and forever discharge the Commission, its officers, employees, agents, affiliates, volunteers, and successors for any liability from any injury or damage to or loss of anonymity and confidentiality arising out of or in connection with the reproduction, exhibition, or broadcast of my voice, likeness and/or my statements in any format either directly or with the aid of a machine or device, including by affidavit, photograph, film, videotape, or sound recording.

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS RELEASE AND HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS. I AM AWARE THAT IT IS A FULL RELEASE OF ALL LIABILITY AND SIGN IT OF MY OWN FREE WILL.

Print Name	
Minor's names, if applicable	
Address/City/State/Zip	
Telephone/E-Mail	
Signature	
Date	
Relationship to subject (if subject is a minor)	



ACUERDO PARA EXIMIR DE RESPONSABILIDAD

Consentimiento para el Uso de la Voz, Nombre, Semejanza, o Fotografía

Yo, _____ por medio del presente, cedo permiso para que la Comisión De Niños y Familias del Condado de San Bernardino, junto con sus agentes, oficiales, empleados, afiliados, voluntarios y sucesores utilice mi voz, nombre, semejanza y/o fotografía para el fin de promover los objetivos y metas de la Comisión. Comprendo totalmente que la toma de fotografía y la entrevista para uso informativo y publicidad revelará al público general mi voz, semejanza, fotografía y estado como recipiente de servicios del empleado/voluntario de _____ (nombre de la organización). Por medio del presente, renuncio a cualquier derecho de mi carácter anónimo, confidencialidad, y/o derecho privado conferido por las leyes estatales, federales u otras leyes reconocidas.

Por medio del presente, y para siempre eximo la Comisión, sus oficiales, empleados, agentes, afiliados, voluntarios y sucesores de todo pasivo o responsabilidad que sea relacionado a cualquier lesión, daño, o pérdida de mi carácter anónimo y confidencialidad que surge de, o que se relacione con la reproducción, exhibición, o radiodifusión de mi voz, semejanza, y/o mis declaraciones en cualquier forma, sea directa o con el uso de máquinas o aparatos, incluso declaración jurídica, fotografía, película, vídeo, o cinta.

He leído cuidadosamente este acuerdo y comprendo totalmente su contenido. Estoy enterado de que es un descargo total de toda responsabilidad, y la firma de mi completa voluntad.

Fecha	
Nombre escrito o por máquina del firmante	
Firma	
Firma de pariente o guardián si es menor de 18 años	
Testigo/Recibido por	
Nombre escrito o por máquina y título	
Nombre de la organización	

Community Sample



Engagement Budget

The following are sample costs associated with community engagement activities.

Item	Sample Cost per year*
Advertisements in newspapers	\$500 - \$10,000
Advertisements outdoor bus stops	\$500 - \$10,000
Advertisements outdoor bus wraps	\$1,000 - \$10,000
Advertisements indoor bus	\$500 - \$8,000
Advertisements local billboards	\$1,000 - \$30,000
Outdoor banners	\$300 - \$600
Building signage	\$500 - \$1,500
EZ Up or outdoor canopy for events	\$200 - \$600
Event display	\$200 - \$600
Event tablecloth	\$150 - \$700
Folding table and chairs for special events	\$150 - \$500
Brochure racks	\$100 - \$600
Community event exhibit/booth registrations	\$150 - \$600
Helium tank and balloons	\$50 - \$300

* Sample costs may vary significantly with complexity of item, number of items, style, type and location

Community Engagement Sample Budget continued

Radio spots	\$5,000 - \$8,000
Digital video or photography services	\$500 - \$1,500
Design of publications	\$1,500 - \$5,000
Printing brochures, flyers	\$500 - \$3,000
Marketing incentives	\$1,000 - \$5,000
Door Prizes for special events	\$50 - \$300
Agency shirts/apparel	\$200 - \$800
Agency nametags	\$100 - \$300
Agency business cards	\$50 - \$300
Chamber of Commerce membership	\$100 - \$300
Media Kit	\$100 - \$300
Website design	\$1,000 - \$5,000
Website management	\$500 - \$2,500
Translation services	\$200 - \$1,500

* Sample costs may vary significantly with complexity of item, number of items, style, type and location