

# 2013 WCN Advocacy Training Workshop

## Media & Communications Training

# Media & Communications Training: Goals

- To provide participants with:
  - An understanding of the best ways to develop and use key messages
  - Strategies for successful interviews
  - Practice working on the fundamental media skills
  - The basic skills to know how and when to use the media to support your advocacy goals
  - Tips on how to maintain a lasting relationship with the press

# Developing Key Messages

- Key Messages are the cornerstone to successful Media Relations – be sure they:
  - Are short, memorable, compelling, and easy to understand
  - Are your essential talking points
  - Describe the most important points of your Action Plan Objective
  - Are repeated as often as possible

# Developing Key Messages

- Part of developing a Key Message is also defining:
  - Your target market
  - Goals, measurements, and outcome
  - Timing
- Effective Key Messages are:
  - Timely
  - Relevant
  - Newsworthy
  - Memorable

# Developing Key Messages

- **Keep it Simple**
  - Avoid technical, insider or medial jargon
  - Test: If your family can understand your Key Message, then you're on the right track
- **Limit it to 3 Points**
  - It's difficult to remember more than 3 messages
  - More memorable = more effective
- **Be Consistent**
  - Avoid changing your Key Messages

# Bridging to Key Messages

- When off topic, use this technique to “bridge” back to your Key Message
  - What’s important to remember...
  - Oh, that reminds me...
  - That’s not my area of expertise, but X is...
  - Let me add...
  - Before I forget...
  - Good point. You may also be interested to know...
  - At this point, some additional background may be useful...

# Key Messages: Examples

Clips from the *Palatucci Advocacy Leadership Forum* Sound Bite Drill

# When to use the Media

- When would media exposure be useful?
  - Where does it fit into your Action Plan
- Think about which type of Media your Action Plan calls for
  - Print, TV, Radio, Online, or combination?
- Media can play either a:
  - Central role (efforts to raise public awareness) or
  - Supporting role (increasing your profile may have indirect benefits to your Action Plan)



# Media Interview Tips

- Be yourself - You are the expert
- Be prepared / know your facts
- Anticipate tough or controversial questions
- Remember that reporters often do not understand the issue or terminology
- Answer questions in simple terms
  - Avoid jargon, abbreviations, and acronyms
- Target your answers to your audience

## Media Interviews Tips

- Give your answers in a complete sentence
  - Stay away from one word answers
- Avoid seeming combative or like you have something to hide
- With reporters, nothing is “off the record”
- Look at an interview request as your opportunity to convey “YOUR” message
- Continuously bridge back to your Key Message or Issue

## Media Interviews Tips

- Even if you can't speak to the entire scope of the interview, take the time to convey what you want to talk about
- You may be asked the same question in different ways, answer again with your message
- *Example:* You are asked if you support X proposal on the spot at a reception. You can say you are not aware of that issue, but X issue important because of...

# On-Camera Interviews

- Ask questions before the interview begins
- Look at the interviewer, not the camera
- Don't worry about stumbling
  - If the interview is taped, ask to start over
  - If interview is live, simply correct yourself and move on
- Look relaxed
- Keep it conversational

# On-Camera Interviews: Examples

Clips from the *Palatucci Advocacy  
Leadership Forum* Media Training  
Sessions

# Radio Interviews

- Ask questions prior to start of interview
  - Before going on air, ask how much the interviewer knows about the topic
  - Ask to know what general questions will be asked
- Speak in short sentences
  - Try to state your position in 10 seconds or less
  - Use short declarative statements
- Speak in listener terms
  - Keep it interesting & relevant to the listeners

# Building Strong Relationships

- **Fact:** Reporters are more likely to call you for your opinion when they know who you are
- Introduce yourself to the reporters who cover your issues
- Promptly return calls
  - Timeliness is key; act quickly on requests for information or they will find someone else
- Develop Fact Sheets
  - Provide summaries of your Issue and interview contacts

# Press Releases

- Use a press release when you want to promote an outcome or big event related to your Action Plan
- Press Releases should be:
  - Newsworthy (Have a local focus/human interest)
  - Accurate, Clear and Concise
  - Targeted to Specific Media
  - Personalized
  - Include contact information
  - No more than one page