



## Section 3:

# Outreach Tips and Tools



## **Section 3: Outreach Tips and Tools**

### **National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day 2007 FAQs**

This is a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) about Awareness Day. Add your own facts at the end to customize this fact sheet. You can use these FAQs to strengthen buy-in throughout your organization and support outreach to local partners.

#### **FAQs about National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day 2007**

##### **What are the goals of National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day 2007?**

1. To raise awareness of effective programs for children's mental health needs.
2. To demonstrate how children's mental health initiatives promote positive youth development, recovery, and resilience.
3. To show how children with mental health needs thrive in their communities.

##### **What is the overall message of National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day 2007?**

The overall message of Awareness Day is that children and youth with mental health needs and their families are thriving in the community. Children's mental health initiatives promote positive youth development, prevention, recovery, and resilience for children and youth with serious emotional disturbances and their families. It is a goal of children's mental health initiatives to transform the mental health service delivery system for children and youth with mental health needs and their families.

##### **How will the goals of National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day 2007 be achieved and the message be conveyed?**

The goals of Awareness Day 2007 will be achieved, and the message will be conveyed, through the use of the following communications strategies:

1. To hold events on a single day to call attention to our very important work;
2. To launch at least one "act of local partnership" to support their sustainability; and
3. To feature data that illustrates how children and families in children's mental health initiatives are thriving at home, at school, and in the community. The data will show that the activities of these initiatives are transforming mental health by fostering resilience, thereby helping to ensure that recovery is possible.

*continued*

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By coordinating events and activities from all children's mental health initiatives on a single day, we will gain national impact while keeping activities locally oriented. We will celebrate that we are transforming mental health services for children, youth, and families. Awareness Day 2007 will appeal to a broad range of parties and potential partners, and it will generate positive media attention. By taking part, you will bring attention to the mission and successes of your program and take a hopeful, giant step toward ensuring the sustainability of your program.

### **Why was "Thriving in the Community" chosen as the theme for Awareness Day 2007?**

The theme for Awareness Day, "Thriving in the Community," serves to support SAMHSA's vision of "Life in the Community for Everyone." The child-serving agencies and organizations that partner with children's mental health initiatives will play a significant role in identifying children and youth whose achievements have enriched schools, neighborhoods, and the greater community in which they live. Showcasing academic achievement will highlight the crucial role education plays in successful children's mental health initiatives, while celebrations of both artistic and athletic abilities can spark ideas for new partnerships, both within and outside the educational system, that provide additional outlets for children and youth with serious mental health needs to thrive.

### **Why was May 8 selected as the date for National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day 2007?**

Awareness Day is scheduled to build on long-standing "May Is Mental Health Month" and "Children's Mental Health Week" traditions of mental health and family organizations. May Is Mental Health Month was first celebrated by Mental Health America (formerly the National Mental Health Association) 50 years ago as a way to further elevate awareness of children's mental health. Children's Mental Health Week was established by the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health. By holding Awareness Day on May 8, children's mental health initiatives and programs will have the opportunity to partner with the numerous family and mental health organizations that are holding events during this time. In particular, we see substantial opportunities for children's mental health initiatives to partner with their local statewide family network organizations. These organizations have been collaborating with the Federation of Families on Children's Mental Health Week events for the past 10 years, and they will be an invaluable resource for Awareness Day.

### **How many children does [NAME OF YOUR PROGRAM] serve?**

**[TO BE PROVIDED BY THE LOCAL PROGRAM]**

### **What activities are planned?**

**[TO BE COMPLETED BY THE LOCAL PROGRAM; INCLUDE TIMES, LOCATIONS, AND OTHER DETAILS]**

### **Who should I contact for more information?**

**[TO BE PROVIDED BY THE LOCAL PROGRAM]**



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### ***Working With the Media Tip Sheet***

May is Mental Health Month and Children's Mental Health Week have traditionally been the time to actively raise awareness about the mental health of children and youth, and to build relationships with local media, partners, and other interested parties. Building strong relationships with local media is a great way not only to promote your National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day, National Children's Mental Health Week, and May is Mental Health Month activities, but also to establish your program as a resource for information about children's mental health in your community year-round.

The media are responsible for educating the public on important issues affecting the community, as well as reporting on issues of public safety and/or crisis. As such, they want news that is fresh and will attract large audiences. Awareness Day provides that fresh angle and allows you to initiate relationships with reporters who can be your allies in the future.

The media can play an important role in spreading the message that children and youth with mental health needs make significant contributions to the community. Thematically, "Thriving in the Community" may attract media interest. The opportunity to feature stories of children prevailing "against the odds" is a popular angle for journalists.

#### ***The Art of "Pitching"***

Getting reporters and the local media interested in Awareness Day and children's mental health is an important part of event planning. Remind yourself and those who are helping with your media outreach effort that you have a compelling story to tell—one that empowers mental health consumers and advocates and affects the entire community.

There are several ways to obtain media coverage for Awareness Day. You can "pitch" (request) feature stories, expert resources, drop-in articles, calendar items on Awareness Day activities, coverage of an Awareness Day proclamation, freelance pieces, and op-eds. Be creative in your pitch; it is one of the best ways to bring the media on board. Work with the reporter, provide a story angle and data that relate to the reporter's audience. A sample pitch letter/e-mail that can easily be adapted for your Awareness Day pitching is included in this notebook and on the CD-ROM.

Here are some ways to improve your pitch for Awareness Day:

- **Understand Reporters' Needs**

While you are planning your Awareness Day activities and events, deadlines will be a priority. Remember that reporters have deadlines, too. Here are some ways to show your consideration:

- Contact the reporter or editor to find out about specific deadlines.
- Introduce yourself and the Awareness Day activities and messages you are promoting.
- Remember that different media outlets have different requirements for the way information is presented. For example, the focus of a TV story is visual, while a radio piece would likely rely on an interview with your spokesperson.



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- **Develop a Relationship**

If you already have relationships with local reporters who cover mental health or community issues, your Awareness Day activities should be an easy sell. If you do not already have these relationships, here are some ways to build one:

- Find out which reporters cover mental health topics, and introduce yourself and your activities.
- Mention any friends, colleagues, or editors who may have referred you to that specific reporter.
- Position yourself as a resource for information on mental health, and follow through with information when the reporter needs it. This will help you maintain these relationships after your Awareness Day activities, Children's Mental Health Week, and May Is Mental Health Month have passed.

Reporters' beats—issues and areas they cover—also change regularly, so it is good to stay on top of what reporters are covering and how. By staying informed and presenting yourself as a resource for information on mental health year-round, a reporter may also call on you as an expert for other relevant stories.

- **Be Creative**

No story has just one angle. Consider the many angles a reporter could take on a mental health story such as Awareness Day, and offer evidence and examples to back them up. Brainstorm how you can tie Awareness Day activities and your "Thriving in the Community" message to other important local topics. Here are some examples:

- A story about an Awareness Day concert may work for a music, education, or lifestyle reporter.
- A story about an Awareness Day essay contest may work for an education, family and parenting, or youth reporter.

- **Be Persistent**

If one reporter cannot cover your Awareness Day activities, another reporter may be able to. Here are some things to keep in mind about the media:

- Most media outlets have large staffs of reporters that cover different topics.
- If one reporter says no, move on to the next.
- An arts reporter may not be interested in covering your Awareness Day art exhibit, but an education reporter may want it to discuss the importance of art as a valuable learning tool for schools.
- A political reporter may not be interested in covering your Awareness Day legislative briefing, but a community reporter may want it to discuss the importance of youth and family involvement in your local government.
- A national news reporter may not be interested in covering your Awareness Day proclamation, but a features reporter may want it to discuss how the mental health movement has grown and why it is essential that local governments embrace this movement.



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Ultimately, the key to media coverage is to tie your Awareness Day activities and the “Thriving in the Community” message to whatever media topic and reporter you contact and who then follows up with you. Persistence pays.

- **Show Respect**

While you want the media in your community to cover all aspects of your Awareness Day activities, make sure your first contact with them is about something newsworthy.

- Be prepared with information about your events such as your Awareness Day “Hands Around City Hall” event and with exclusive information about your program.
- While all of the information you have about children’s mental health is important, if you develop a strong relationship with a reporter, you will become a resource for children’s mental health information when that reporter does a relevant story in the future.
- Many times, the best person to talk to is the beat reporter or assistant, who might have more time to talk about issues. The beat reporter or assistant can then pitch your story about successfully improving the mental health of children, youth, and families and the importance of children’s mental health awareness in the community to their editors.

- **Stay Aware**

Remember that although your primary goal is to promote your Awareness Day activities and messages, a reporter’s primary goal is to write a compelling story. Here is some advice if a reporter asks a question that you would rather not answer:

- Remember, when a reporter is writing a story on any issue, any comment you make during an interview is fair game. If you do not want to see something in the story, do not say it. Keep the focus on Awareness Day.
- Be honest and let the reporter know if you are facing a confidentiality issue.
- Avoid telling reporters anything you do not want to see in print the next day, no matter how friendly the reporter may seem or how long you have been working together.
- When you are interviewed, avoid saying “no comment.”

- **Offer Your Opinion**

As a rule, the media want to see stories presented factually, without opinion. There is an exception to that rule—the op-ed page. Found “opposite the editorial page” (hence its name), this page provides space for local residents to express their views on topics of local or national importance. Awareness Day creates a prime opportunity to write an op-ed about mental health services and supports for children, youth, and families in your community.

- **Be Prepared**

If you offer a spokesperson for your story, be sure that the person is willing and ready to talk to the media. Promising a quotable and well-informed source for a story and being unable to deliver could derail your efforts by inviting negative coverage or hurting your relationship with the reporter.

- **Embrace Diverse Outlets**

Children’s mental health initiatives represent the spectrum of cultural and ethnic diversity. For example, your program might serve populations with more than a dozen Asian languages, or you might work in an isolated rural environment. This diversity presents a





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need and an opportunity. Approaching only mainstream media with story ideas could mean that you will eliminate a large portion of your target audience. Consider all of the media outlets that your target audience could use, and learn how to work with them. Here are some questions to ask yourself:

- Will you need to produce materials in more than one language?
- Will the editor or reporter be bilingual, or will you have to speak in a different language?
- Does the recipient have the technology to support a PDF, or should you include a Microsoft® Word file with information?

Be flexible with the type and format of the information you provide, and follow up to ensure that reporters have the information they need.

- **Blog Away**

A blog (short for Web log) is basically a journal that is available on the Web. It is updated frequently and intended for general public consumption, and it usually represents the personality of the author or the Web site. Blogs are a great way to share Awareness Day activities and mental health information with the media and your community. Because blogs often contain passionate debates and dialog that explore virtually every facet of an idea or concept, reporters see them as valuable sources of information and public opinion. So blog about your Awareness Day talent show, poetry contest and/or fair, encourage your community to share feedback, and invite the media to visit your blog and get involved.

- **Be Quotable**

Reporters are always in search of “quotable” quotes to bring their stories to life. Think about the best way to describe Awareness Day or key children’s mental health needs, and prepare some short sentences that can be used to answer these inevitable questions. Be sure to include the “Thriving in the Community” message and important Awareness Day goals and expectations.

- **Let the Community Know**

Do not forget about the community calendar. These calendars usually run free on local television channels and in community newspapers, and they are perfect places to tell your community about Awareness Day activities.

- **Say “Thank You”**

It is not a reporter’s job to make you or your program happy, but reporters do appreciate praise. Write a note or make a quick phone call to pass along your thanks for Awareness Day coverage that affects your program in a positive way.

- **Be Patient**

May Is Mental Health Month and Awareness Day activities are important, but they might not be the right fit for a media outlet at the time. Be patient, thank the reporter for taking an interest in your story, and be sure to follow up with future story ideas.



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### ***Not Everyone Gets News From the Local Paper***

Involving members of your site in your Awareness Day activities can help energize potential partners and stakeholders about your program. Many community organizations that work directly with children, youth, and families have newsletters or public bulletin boards where you can post details about your Awareness Day activities and general May Is Mental Health Month information. Some examples are:

- Schools, including colleges and universities
- Public government buildings and courthouses
- Community and neighborhood associations
- Churches, synagogues, and other faith-based organizations
- Shopping malls, supermarkets, and drug stores
- Youth centers
- Health clubs
- Spas, salons, and barbershops
- Civic organizations
- Local businesses
- Hospitals, clinics, and health centers
- Libraries
- Zoos
- Museums
- Bus stops, train stations, and other public transportation facilities
- Venues for sporting events, concerts, and theater productions
- Laundromats





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### Media Advisory Template

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
[DATE]

CONTACT:  
[NAME]  
[PHONE NUMBER]

**[YOUR PROGRAM'S NAME] To Host National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day May 8**  
*[Name of Event] Part of Nationwide Effort To Showcase  
Children, Youth, and Families Thriving in the Community*

**[CITY, State]**—To kick off May is Mental Health Month, **[YOUR PROGRAM'S NAME]** will participate in National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day: Thriving in the Community, on Tuesday, May 8, 2007. **[NAME OF EVENT]** will **[DESCRIBE EVENT]**.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) reports that in 2004, 22.5 percent of youth aged 12 to 17 received treatment or counseling for emotional or behavioral problems in the previous year. It is likely that a similar percentage in **[TOWN, CITY, COUNTY, OR STATE]** also have serious mental health needs. Through innovative approaches, **[YOUR PROGRAM'S NAME]** helps meet the mental health needs of **[NUMBER]** children, youth, and families. National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day is an opportunity for the community to better understand the value of its investment in innovative approaches to meeting the mental health needs of children, youth, and families.

Underscoring how communities can help children, youth, and families thrive, **[EXPLAIN WHAT YOUR PROGRAM DOES]**

**WHO:** **[INSERT INFORMATION ABOUT ANY KEY SPEAKERS OR ORGANIZATIONS PLANNING TO PARTICIPATE IN YOUR AWARENESS DAY ACTIVITIES HERE]**

**WHAT:** **[INSERT DESCRIPTION OF AWARENESS DAY ACTIVITIES HERE]**

**WHEN:** **[INSERT DATE AND TIME OF YOUR AWARENESS DAY ACTIVITIES HERE]**

**WHERE:** **[INSERT LOCATION OF YOUR AWARENESS DAY ACTIVITIES HERE]**

**[NAME OF LOCAL PROGRAM]** is an initiative of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, SAMHSA. Since the initiative's establishment in **[YEAR]**, **[NAME OF PROGRAM]** has helped transform the way in which treatment and care are provided to children with mental health needs and their families. The work of **[NAME OF YOUR PROGRAM]**, is part of a national effort by SAMHSA to fulfill the action steps set forth in the Federal Action Agenda.

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(An electronic version of this document is included on the CD-ROM.)



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### Press Release Template

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**[DATE]**

**CONTACT:**  
**[NAME]**  
**[PHONE NUMBER]**

**[YOUR CITY]-Based [INSERT THE NAME OF YOUR PROGRAM]  
Showcases Thriving Children, Youth, and Families as Part of  
National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day**

**[CITY, State]**—Today, **[NAME OF YOUR PROGRAM]** is joining Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) programs across the United States to participate in National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day 2007: Thriving in the Community. Local children's mental health initiatives such as **[NAME OF YOUR PROGRAM]** will showcase the great strides that have been made toward helping children, youth, and families thrive at home, at school, and in the community.

**[NAME OF YOUR PROGRAM]** is hosting a **[EVENT]**, which is expected to involve more than **[MINIMUM NUMBER OF EXPECTED PARTICIPANTS]** from **[NAME(S) OF AREA(S)]**. Some of the activities planned for today include **[LOCAL ACTIVITIES]**. **[INCLUDE ANY OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION REGARDING YOUR EVENT HERE.]**

"National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day provides an important opportunity for our community to show how children and youth with mental health needs—as well as their families—thrive when they have the right supports and services available," said **[NAME AND TITLE OF SPOKESPERSON]**. "Together with other children's mental health initiatives, we are changing families' lives and improving outcomes all over the country."

SAMHSA reports that in 2004, 22.5 percent of youth aged 12 to 17 received treatment or counseling for emotional or behavioral problems in the previous year. To help children and youth in **[NAME OF TOWN, CITY, STATE]**, **[NAME OF PROGRAM]**, **[DESCRIPTION OF WHAT YOUR PROGRAM DOES]**. This work is part of a national effort by SAMHSA to fulfill the action steps set forth in "Transforming Mental Health Care in America, The Federal Action Agenda: First Steps," which outlines steps necessary to make mental health services and supports more accessible and effective for children, youth, and families across the United States.

**[SHORT DESCRIPTION OF YOUR PROGRAM HERE THAT SAYS WHAT IT IS, WHEN IT WAS ESTABLISHED, HOW IT IS FUNDED, WHY IT EXISTS, WHO IT HELPS, AND ITS GEOGRAPHICAL SERVICE AREA]**

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(An electronic version of this document is included on the CD-ROM.)



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### ***How To Place a Drop-in Article***

Drop-in articles, also known as repro-proofs or camera-ready news, are an effective, cost-efficient way to spread information on children's and youth's mental health needs, as well as your success stories. A drop-in article is a type of news article that is written for direct insertion in community and weekly newspapers. Similar to a feature story in content, your National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day drop-in article should focus on soft news and have a longer shelf life than more time-sensitive news releases.

#### ***What Makes a Good Drop-in?***

- A drop-in article should briefly articulate messages and facts about your program and children's and youth's mental health needs in an interesting way. Try to avoid listing straight facts and figures, but offer solutions to the problem and/or issue you are posing.
- Familiarize yourself with the article format and style found in weekly and community newspapers. As an insertion piece, your drop-in is more likely to be placed if it mirrors other articles written by newspaper staff.
- Make your article engaging and newsworthy. Raise your audience's awareness while pulling at their heartstrings by highlighting the challenges children, youth, and families face in dealing with mental illnesses—and the success your program has achieved in providing services to these families. Emphasize strengths by highlighting the “Thriving in the Community” theme.
- Keep it short, sweet, and easy to read. Limit your article to no more than 600 words and tailor it to an eighth grade reading level. Use bullet points to pull out important topics, and format the information so that the most important information is in the first part of the article. (Editors cut copy from the bottom up, so it is important to put your most critical messages at the beginning of the drop-in.)
- Give your article a direct link to the local audience. Focusing your drop-in article on children's mental health needs in your area will amplify the local appeal, increasing your opportunity for placement.

#### ***Who Wants This Intriguing Article?***

Community newspapers tend to have much smaller staffs than larger daily papers—sometimes only an editor and several staff or contributing writers. Providing the paper with a drop-in article that provides newsworthy information on children's and youth's mental health and the valuable contributions your program makes to your area will save the newspaper staff time and get your mental health messages out there.

- When building a media list for drop-in distribution, be sure to collect the name, address, e-mail, and fax number for the editor-in-chief, editorial assignment editor, and feature editor—or whichever of the three are on staff with the papers you are targeting. Smaller community papers might only have a publisher or editor as a point of contact.



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- Before sending your article, find out what format the publications prefer. Some prefer to receive camera-ready materials on slick paper, while others prefer electronic layouts, usually in PDF format. Still others prefer to lay out the articles themselves, so they will want to receive articles as Microsoft® Word documents.
  
- Do not be afraid to target a wide range of outlets for drop-in distribution. The more places that receive your drop-in, the higher the odds for placement. The following is a list of examples for alternative drop-in article placement:
  - School newsletters or newspapers
  - Supermarket news handouts
  - E-blasts or fax blasts to your mailing list
  - Faith-based organization publications
  - Publications for ethnic minorities
  - Mental health journals
  - Business journals
  - PTA/PTO newsletters
  - School administration publications



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### ***How To Write and Place Op-eds***

Op-eds—short for “opposite the editorial page”—can be a great way to speak directly to your audiences through the media about your program. Your op-ed can make a direct appeal to local newspaper readers. It can ask them to pay attention to the strengths of children, youth, and families and to support your program as an effective and efficient way to help children and youth with mental health needs. Specifically, you should cover:

- why this day is important to children, youth, families, and your community;
- brief, general information about your activities or event to show why your op-ed is newsworthy;
- whom you help;
- what your program does and how it is unique; and
- your program's successes.

In addition to these basics, you should end with a call to action. You may urge your readers to attend your National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day activities to learn more about your services and supports, to refer a child or adolescent who might be overcoming mental health needs, or to educate State or local representatives. These suggestions are meant to stimulate ideas; feel free to develop a call to action of your own that meets your program's specific needs and goals.



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### ***Public Service Announcement Tip Sheet***

Public service announcements (PSAs) offer you the opportunity to promote your National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day activities and your program to the general public—for free. Radio stations make time available for PSAs as a way to show their commitment to the communities they serve. This planning notebook includes scripts for 15-, 30-, and 60-second radio PSAs you can use as a basis for promoting Awareness Day activities, as well as tips for promoting your program all year long. The scripts are called “live announcer,” meaning they will be read on the air by a radio personality. A sample PSA pitch letter/e-mail is included in this planning notebook, and, like the radio PSA scripts, electronically on the CD-ROM. All can easily be adapted to reflect the activities of your program.

#### ***Motivating Public Service Directors and Producers***

Most radio stations have public service directors who decide which PSAs will air. Public service directors are busy people who receive many PSAs every day. They are most likely to use PSAs that they believe are of local interest to their communities, and they often favor issues and causes related to health and children's issues. Because children's mental health is an important issue that affects many families in your community, public service directors will likely find Awareness Day PSAs highly appealing. In addition, they will likely find the “Thriving in the Community” theme just as interesting, especially if you tie it to other events you have planned. Educating local public service directors about the strengths of children and youth and the harmful effects of stigma can also encourage them to read your scripts on the air.

The following tips will help you get your PSAs placed on radio stations:

- **Know Who Is in Charge**

Radio station public service directors may have various titles, including community affairs director, advertising manager, or general manager. Often, the on-air personalities or the producers decide which PSAs will air. Call the station and ask whom you should contact about placing your Awareness Day PSAs.

- **Write a Letter of Introduction**

Once you have determined whom to contact, send a letter of introduction that includes:

- The importance of children's mental health—that according to SAMHSA, in 2004, 22.5 percent of youth aged 12 to 17 received treatment or counseling for emotional or behavioral problems in the previous year<sup>2</sup>;
- Your success stories and how they have made an impact on your community;
- Your plans for Awareness Day; and
- A call-to-action: Ask the radio station to support your activities by running PSAs.

Remember to keep it local. The people in charge of PSA placement want to know how the issue affects their community. A sample pitch letter is included in this planning notebook on page 3.18.

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<sup>2</sup> Results from 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health Series H-28, page 97, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies.



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- **Meet Face to Face**  
Follow up your letter by scheduling meetings with the public service directors at the radio stations where you want your PSAs to air. These meetings put a face on the issue and provide an opportunity for you to educate public service directors about issues related to children's mental health. It generally takes a few weeks for radio stations to put PSAs on the air, so you should schedule your meetings well in advance of Awareness Day. Then, ask the radio station to run your PSAs before Awareness Day.
- **Say "Thank You"**  
Follow up your visits and meetings with thank-you notes. Acknowledge radio stations once they use the PSAs. Send thank-you notes, and let them know you are delighted that they were able to help raise awareness about children's mental health and your Awareness Day activities.
- **Use Your Connections**  
Perhaps you or someone in your program already knows someone in a management position at a radio station. Take advantage of that connection to encourage your contact to use your Awareness Day PSAs.
- **Approach Radio Stations That Use PSAs**  
Not all radio stations use PSAs. So listen to the radio stations in your community and approach those stations that already air PSAs. If you live in a large metropolitan area, it might be challenging to get your PSAs placed on the most popular radio stations. On the other hand, there are probably several less popular radio stations that will be willing to air your PSAs.
- **Look for Community Calendar Opportunities**  
Many newspapers and radio and TV stations have community calendars or bulletin boards that feature listings of local events. Be sure to have Awareness Day listed on the calendar or bulletin board.
- **Seek a Media Partnership**  
Often the media, including TV and radio stations, newspapers, and magazines, will sponsor community events. When they do, they actively promote the event by giving PSAs premium placement and even producing PSAs—and they usually ask that the organization co-brand the event. For example, they might ask you to name the event "The Channel 4 National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day." There is one downside to a media-sponsored event: Competing media will not use your PSAs. This downside could be far outweighed by the benefits of gaining premium PSA placement and visibility with the media outlet with which you form the partnership.
- **Reaching Diverse Audiences With PSAs**  
Media serving diverse communities offer an outstanding opportunity for PSA placement, especially if you offer in-language PSAs. This is because there is often a lower demand for paid advertising among these media—many mainstream advertisers simply overlook media reaching ethnic or specialized audiences, or consider the cost of adaptation to be too high—so there is usually a higher-than-average availability for PSA time. In addition, not all PSAs





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are adapted for ethnic or specialized media, so there is less competition for PSA placement than in mainstream media. The key to placement in ethnic and specialized media is to make all communications meet the needs of that outlet's target audiences.

- If you are focusing on Hispanic radio stations, for example, make sure you provide both Spanish and English versions of the PSAs—there has been a growing trend toward Spanish media using both languages. Be sure any correspondence to the media outlet is in Spanish. Although public service directors at Spanish-language radio stations are likely fluent in both English and Spanish, they will appreciate the sincerity of your pitch if it is in Spanish, and the gesture will increase your opportunity for placement. Sample Spanish-language PSAs have been included as part of this planning notebook.



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### ***Radio PSA Guidelines and Templates***

(An electronic version of this document is included on the CD-ROM.)

Providing radio stations in your community with live-read scripts is a great way to raise public awareness of National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day and children's mental health in general. On the following page are example 60-, 30-, and 15-second PSA scripts for you to send to local radio stations.

#### ***Awareness Day Scripts***

The following Awareness Day scripts are examples you can tailor to your program's activities. They are based on a fairly simple formula that will appeal to public service directors:

- Start by explaining the issue and how it affects your local community.
- Describe how your program addresses the issue.
- Promote the special activities taking place on Awareness Day, May 8.
- Repeat the date and location of the event. Because people are usually doing something else while they are listening to the radio (driving, for example), they might miss the information the first time. So it is always a good idea to repeat it if time permits, as it does in the 60-second version.
- Include the phone number for listeners who might not be able to attend the event but may want to contact your program later.

Depending on the type of activity you plan for your program, you might want to structure the PSA entirely differently. If you plan a fundraising walk for children with mental health needs, for example, you might want to open the PSA with that information. You might even ask the radio station to help you write the PSA. If you write your own, here are some points to keep in mind:

- Radio PSAs, like radio commercials, are available in blocks of time. The preferred lengths are 60 seconds, 30 seconds, 15 seconds, and 10 seconds.
- Radio announcers usually read at a rate of 2½ to 3 words per second. That means a 60-second PSA should contain 150–180 words, a 30-second PSA should contain 75–90 words, and a 15-second PSA should contain 38–45 words. To get a good idea of whether the PSA will fit into the allotted time, read it out loud at an even, deliberate pace, and time it with a stop watch or the second hand on your watch.
- Keep it simple. Avoid the temptation to include too much information. Because people typically retain only a portion of what they hear, it is a good idea to repeat important information, such as the date, time of activity, and location.



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#### ***Example 60-Second National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day Script***

You might know a young person with a serious mental health need—an honor roll student, a star athlete, or a talented artist—and not even know it. On Tuesday, May 8, you can learn about how these young people are thriving in **[NAME OF TOWN, CITY, OR STATE]**—and the systems and supports that help them. On Tuesday, May 8, **[NAME OF YOUR PROGRAM]** will sponsor National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day: Thriving in the Community. It will showcase the strengths of our young people in **[NAME OF TOWN, CITY, OR STATE]**, as well as the work of **[AWARENESS DAY PARTNERS]** who provide services and supports to these young people and their families. Join us at **[TIME]** on Tuesday, May 8, at **[LOCATION]**. Call **[TELEPHONE NUMBER]** or visit **[WEB SITE]**. A public service of this radio station.

#### ***Example 30-Second National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day Script***

You may know young people with mental health needs and not realize it. In fact, some of **[TOWN'S, CITY'S, OR STATE'S]** most talented children and youth are supported by vital local programs. Join us Tuesday, May 8, when **[NAME OF YOUR PROGRAM]** sponsors National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day: Thriving in the Community. Learn about programs that help young people with mental health needs thrive. Call **[TELEPHONE NUMBER]**. Visit **[WEB SITE]**. A public service of this radio station.

#### ***Example 15-Second National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day Script***

On Tuesday, May 8, see how **[NAME OF YOUR PROGRAM]** helps young people with mental health needs. Join us for National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day at **[LOCATION]**. Call **[TELEPHONE NUMBER]** or visit **[WEB SITE]** for details. A public service of this radio station.



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### PSA Pitch Letter Template

Dear **[NAME OF PUBLIC SERVICE DIRECTOR]**:

Being a parent or guardian is one of life's most demanding roles. Those who are caring for children or youth with mental health needs face a variety of challenges many people cannot even imagine—not the least of which is figuring out where to turn for the services these children need. Fortunately, services and supports are available to children and youth with mental health needs—and their families—in **[CITY NAME]**. Since **[DATE]**, **[NAME OF YOUR PROGRAM]** has provided services to **[NUMBER]** children and their families. In addition, **[BRIEFLY STATE ANY OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS AND/OR SUCCESS OF YOUR PROGRAM]**.

On Tuesday, May 8, **[NAME OF YOUR PROGRAM]** will be joining other children's mental health initiatives across the country to kick off May Is Mental Health Month and celebrate their collaborative achievements through National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day 2007: Thriving in the Community. To celebrate the success of **[YOUR PROGRAM NAME]**, **[INFORMATION ABOUT LOCAL NATIONAL CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS DAY ACTIVITY]**.

**[YOUR PROGRAM'S NAME]** is a program funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Like other SAMHSA programs, it makes services available to children and youth with mental health needs and their families. **[DESCRIPTION OF YOUR PROGRAM, AND A DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMHSA INITIATIVE THAT FUNDS IT]**.

In observance of National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day, we have prepared scripts for live-read public service announcements that we encourage you to run during the month of April. We have enclosed the PSA scripts and will contact you within the week to see if we can schedule a convenient time to meet about National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day, as well as the critical issues surrounding the care of children, youth, and families with mental health needs.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue. I hope you will help us celebrate National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day by running the PSAs.

Sincerely,

**[NAME OF SPOKESPERSON]**

(An electronic version of this document is included on the CD-ROM.)



## Section 3: Outreach Tips and Tools

### Speechwriting Tip Sheet

If you are conducting National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day activities, there is a good chance that someone from your program will deliver your message through a short speech or presentation. A detailed outline can provide the framework for an organized and compelling speech. Outlines allow you to plan and order your points for maximum impact on your audience. Preparing with an outline also helps you remember your speech by creating a visual image of your speech's "bones." As a result, you will be able to focus on the emotion of your presentation, rather than on trying to read a script.

The first step? Write down your topic, purpose, audience, and audience attitude. For example:

*Topic: Thriving in the Community*

*Purpose: Persuasive*

*Audience: Educators*

*Audience Attitude: Busy, concerned about mental health impacts on classroom and learning*

Next, build the framework for your outline. Remember that the body of your speech will contain three main ideas, which support the topic and purpose. Under each main idea should be subheads that relate to the main heads. Revise, reword, and rearrange your ideas. Go back to your outline to make sure that items are parallel and logical. Make sure you have **sufficient support** for each of the statements you've included.

Below is a general speech outline that you might be able to adapt to suit the special needs of your audience.

- I. Introduction
  - A. Grab your audience's attention
  - B. State your topic and purpose
  - C. Preview your speech
- II. Body
  - A. State first main idea
  - B. State second main idea
  - C. State third main idea
- III. Conclusion
  - A. Restate your main ideas
  - B. Add a memorable conclusion

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### ***Do's and Don'ts of Speechwriting***

#### **Do:**

- Find out everything you can about the group you are speaking to, the venue, the event, etc.
- Ask how much time you have to give your speech.
- Check to see if they have what you need for visual aids—overhead projector, LCD projector, etc.
- Prepare an outline of your speech before you start to write it.
- Preview your speech to someone before the event.
- Give facts and figures with references to back them up.
- Have a clear objective in giving the speech, i.e., what you want the audience to know and take away from the speech.
- Concentrate on your message.
- Visualize yourself giving the speech.

#### **Don't:**

- Use humor unless you are positive about what the reaction will be.
- Assume the audience knows all of the background information about your topic.
- Use jargon or confusing phrases.
- Exaggerate, stretch the truth, or lie.
- Write more than you need to.
- Rely too much on visual aids to sell your message.
- Talk down to the audience.
- Use the same speech for every venue.

A good length for the average speech is 10 to 20 minutes. If you need more time to make your point, do not be afraid to take it. Because your audience cannot go back and review confusing parts of your speech, it is important for you to deliver a clear, organized presentation and repeat your central points. If you use this three-part structure, your speech will be clear, organized, and powerful.

- 1. Introduction: Tell 'Em What You're Going to Tell 'Em.** In the first part of your speech, tell your audience your themes and major points. This is your speech's introduction, and it should take 1 to 3 minutes.
- 2. Body: Tell 'Em.** In the middle of your speech, illustrate all the points that support your theme. This is the body of your speech and it should take about 8 to 15 minutes.
- 3. Conclusion: Tell 'Em What You Told 'Em.** At the end of the speech, recap. Be sincere, be brief, be seated. This is the conclusion of your speech, and it should take 1 to 2 minutes.



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### Public Speaking Tip Sheet

Countless speechwriters have experienced the disappointment of handing over an interesting, compelling presentation to a speaker who is ill-prepared, hesitant, or downright boring. Awareness Day is a time that partners and other audiences hear directly from your program. Motivate your audience to pay attention to your message through a compelling delivery.

The best communicators are those who believe in what they are saying and whose sincerity and dedication to their topic are readily apparent. Before you choose your Awareness Day speakers, consider your audience. What messenger will they best respond to? Since the Awareness Day theme highlights the strengths of children and youth with mental health needs, it could be most appropriate to ask a youth from your program to present a speech. Family members and partners also make great spokespeople for your event.

No matter whom you choose, the speaker needs to convey expertise, experience, interest, and commitment to the mental health needs of children, youth, and families. These tips can help you prepare your spokespeople to present a confident and compelling Awareness Day speech.

- **Content.** Share information about yourself up front. This personalizes you to the audience and makes listeners feel that they know you. The introduction should be 15 percent of your speech, the body about 75 percent, and the conclusion 10 percent. This is also the opportunity to share your own experiences with children's mental health initiatives.
- **Eye Contact.** The reason you maintain eye contact with your audience is for feedback. The only way you will know if your audience is getting the message is through eye contact.
- **Smile.** Did your face say you were approachable? It did if you smiled (at appropriate times).
- **Facial Expression.** It is impossible to hide your feelings when you talk about something you really care about. The kind of passion people feel and exhibit when they talk about their loved ones, their mates, or their children is the same passion that should be harnessed when talking about your issues. That kind of passion gives off energy, and energy makes you convincing.
- **Gestures.** Gestures help tell the story. Remember, 50 percent of what people retain is through your body language. Gestures reinforce and highlight your story and give you energy in your delivery.
- **Voice.** You have six different octaves—use them. Avoid non-fluencies such as “ums,” “ahs,” and “you knows.” Never try to camouflage a regional dialect. All you have to do is tell people where you are from and they will expect you to sound the way you do.
- **Pauses/Silence.** There are four good times to pause: when you move from one subject to another, when you want the message to sink in, when you want or need to collect your thoughts, and when you receive laughter or applause.
- **Use of Humor.** Jokes and anecdotes make for an entertaining speech, but make sure you practice them. Choose material carefully, and *never* tell “off-color” jokes.





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- **Avoid Distractions.** Do not fiddle with your hair, shuffle your feet, sway back and forth, jingle change in your pockets, or play with your eyeglasses.
- **Practice.** Practice, practice, practice. If possible, spend time alone just prior to your speech; take some deep breaths and think about your central theme.
- **Do Not Forget That Being Nervous Is Normal.** Try and “reframe” your fear into excitement and enthusiasm.
- **You Are the Expert on Your Own Story.** People have come to hear you talk about what you know.

### ***Is Your Presentation Culturally Competent?***

Presenting to audiences from cultural backgrounds different from your own can feel intimidating. But the benefits of reaching out to a broad spectrum of community organizations make it worth a little extra planning and research. Here are some tips from the National Center for Cultural Competence at Georgetown University:

- Consult with people from the community about customs and taboos in speaking and presenting. Keep an open mind and do not assume anything about practices and customs. Is it acceptable to look a person in the eye when they are speaking? Is it considered rude to shake hands before someone else introduces you?
- Consider asking someone from that community who can effectively deliver your message to co-present or conduct the entire presentation.
- Think about your message. Is it crafted in a way that is relevant (and not offensive or condescending) to your audience?
- Be open to suggestions, and be willing to adapt and modify your message and presentation style to your audience.
- If you have to use an interpreter, keep these points in mind:
  - Talk directly to the audience and not the interpreter. Give the presentation as if they speak your language, and try to connect with them.
  - Do not use clichés or jargon that might trip up the interpreter or may not be translatable.
  - Jokes are seldom funny when translated, and they may be culturally offensive.
  - Give the interpreter as much information ahead of time as possible. If you have a copy of the speech, share it even if you know you won’t follow it to the letter.
  - Notice the pace and manner of the interpreter. Practice with the individual if possible. Try to adjust your speech to that pace.
  - If you want to put in a few words or phrases in the audience’s language, make sure you can pronounce them properly, that you are saying what you mean to say, and that the interpreter knows what you are trying to say beforehand.



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### ***How To Make Your Own National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day T-shirts***

Your CD-ROM contains four images that you can use to create T-shirts featuring the National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day logo and the "Thriving in the Community" theme. You can wear these T-shirts to promote your Awareness Day event, or you can distribute them on Awareness Day. Here's how to make a fashion statement about children's mental health:

#### ***You will need:***

- a plain, white, cotton T-shirt;
- a color printer (either inkjet or laser);
- transfer paper, available at most office supply or art supply stores. Transfer paper comes in inkjet and laser printer-specific types, so make sure to get paper that matches your printer type;
- an iron;
- a pillowcase; and
- the Awareness Day icon transfer images found on your CD-ROM:
  - English icon with text: Reversed icon.jpg;
  - Spanish icon with text: Símbolo español al revés.jpg.

#### ***Instructions:***

1. Print the file of your choice onto a sheet of transfer paper. (Make sure it prints onto the blank side.) The image will look "backward" on your screen and on the paper, but it will transfer onto the T-shirt correctly.
2. Let the printout dry—do not touch the paper while the ink is drying.
3. Preheat your iron for about 8 minutes, using the high cotton setting. Do not use steam.
4. Place the pillowcase on a flat, non-porous surface, such as a countertop. Do not use an ironing board or a glass, metal, or wood surface. Iron the pillowcase so that it lays flat with no wrinkles.
5. Place the T-shirt on the pillowcase, centering the area where you want to place the image. Heat the shirt for a few seconds with the iron and allow it to cool.
6. Cut out the image from the transfer paper and place it face down on the T-shirt.
7. Iron the transfer onto the shirt using heavy pressure until the transfer sticks. Then continue ironing for 60–90 seconds, using circular motions and covering every part of the transfer.



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8. Wait a few seconds and remove the backing paper. Your new Awareness Day T-shirt is ready to go.

#### ***Washing Your T-shirt:***

- Wait 72 hours after transferring before washing your T-shirt for the first time.
- Always turn the T-shirt inside out before washing.
- Do not use bleach.
- If you need to iron the T-shirt, place a sheet of baking parchment paper (not wax paper) over the transfer. Do not iron directly on the transfer.