



## **Mayors Wellness Campaign**

*Put your community in motion.*

### **How to Get Good Press Coverage**

In order to raise awareness of the Mayors Wellness Campaign (MWC) and your individual local projects and events, you will want to communicate with the press, mostly the local print media (newspapers, magazines, newsletters, online), but also television and radio when appropriate or available. Getting good press is not difficult if you plan properly.

#### **Tips for Getting Press Coverage / Ideas for Promotional Activities**

- If you don't already have a good relationship with the local media, identify key reporters in your area and contact them about your involvement in this new program. Know which reporters are likely to cover MWC-related issues and communicate with them. (For example, most daily newspapers have reporters who cover the "Health Beat" and another one who covers "Lifestyles." Stay in contact with them and keep them updated on scheduled events. Generally speaking, they are on the hunt for good story ideas. Sell the MWC as something "new and unique" to attack the problem of childhood obesity.
- Make it easy for reporters by providing the "who/what/where/when/why/how" information that they need. Provide them with background, photos (particularly if you have them in electronic or "digital" form) if appropriate, and offer any assistance you can give them.
- Draft press releases and/or press advisories to announce news, announcements and events. Appoint someone (if not yourself) as spokesperson and have them communicate with the press on a regular basis. Emphasize and provide access to local celebrities, experts or notable citizens who play a feature role in your local campaign.
- Write a letter to the editor or a guest editorial (Op-Ed) piece for a newspaper, newsletter or local magazine. Use what you know about your own municipality and the people in it. Consider offering to contribute a weekly column for your local paper about the progress of your local campaign.
- Use holidays or national observance days, weeks or months as ways to promote MWC activities. For example, February is heart month; March is National Nutrition Month; March 6 – 10 is National School Breakfast Week; April 7th is World Health Day. You can even use more obscure observations such as Foot Health Awareness Month to promote walking, for example. You can find activities to coincide with the observances on the websites of the national organizations affiliated with these observations. (For a list of the 2014 National Health Observances go to <http://www.healthfinder.gov/>) The MWC office will also be advising you of opportunities for media coverage on a regular basis. Be sure to read your MWC emails and newsletters and to check the [MWC web page](#) frequently.
- Pursue alternative media to access hard-to-reach populations such as foreign language newspapers; distribute fliers, brochures at community centers, churches, hospitals, wherever people you want to reach gather.
- Check out local, regional or state email lists that may be interested in MWC activities. You may also want to consider developing your own email list in your town to keep those who are

interested in MWC activities apprised of events. Community leaders, such as council members, municipal staff, school officials, police and fire, etc. should be part of the list.

- Appoint a local task force to oversee activities, choose events, deal with the press, etc. and make an announcement to the press.
- Hold a “kick-off” event (see ideas for activities in the MWC Toolbox). Give reporters a good local story, one they will want to cover. Make it interesting enough that they won’t pass it up.
- Issue a proclamation and/or resolution declaring MWC Day or Week
- Recruit local experts, celebrities or notable citizens who support the goals of the MWC to work with you.
- After the kick-off event, hold other special event days (i.e., How’s Your Health Day, Walk at Work Day, see ideas for additional activities in the MWC Toolbox).
- Use your township web site to promote the MWC as well as local activities. Create a link to the MWC web site (go to [Tools & Resources](#) to learn out how to do this.)
- Find a way to use the holidays for events. Editors are always looking for stories associated with major holidays. (If you have Uncle Sam in jogging shorts leading a Fourth of July community fun-run, you may get a page one story or a spot on the local news!)
- Develop your own directory of local resources. Look around your community for logical partners who may be interested in teaming up with you, such as fitness centers, YMCA, weight-loss groups, healthy-food stores or restaurants, etc. You may even want to make up a sign for local businesses to put in their windows, such as **We Support the [Municipality) MWC!**
- Use the existing local resources as well as resources provided by the MWC. You don’t have to reinvent the wheel. And remember, when you come up with a unique idea, share it with us so we can pass it on to other communities.
- Say thank you! Much like elected officials, reporters and editors and those covering the news usually only hear from people when they’re unhappy about something. If you take a moment to thank a reporter for a good story, you will stand out and help build a relationship with that person. A handwritten thank you note on your town’s letterhead to a reporter, editor or photographer can go a long way to making sure your NEXT event gets covered! If you really want to score points, send a letter to the editor to praise the work of the reporter and how it helped you connect with the community.