



Lifesaving Society

How to Deal Effectively with the Media



SARCENE 2010 – Barbara Byers



The Lifesaving Society

- dedicated to the prevention of drowning
- a national volunteer and charitable organization
- teaching Canadians to save themselves & others since the first Bronze Medallion *in 1896*
- setting the standard: over 700,000 Canadians participate in Lifesaving Society training programs annually
- the Canadian governing body for Lifesaving Sport – a sport recognized by the International Olympic Committee and Commonwealth Games Federation

The
Lifeguarding
Experts



What the Media is looking for

- News, trends and tips
- Knowledgeable articulate spokespeople
- Spokespeople with passion & personality
- Quotes by real people
- Good quotes
- Good clips

What the Media is looking for

- Stories with a message
- Stories with good visuals
- Stories that can be told easily
- Statistics for context and news but
.....less is more

Common Media Enquiries

Why the media want to talk to us

- Beginning of the “season” such as boating, skiing, hiking, swimming etc.
- Responding after a tragedy
- “News” such as stats, research, new program or campaign
- “Good news” story with great visuals or narrative

Effective Media Relations

How to prepare for your interview

- Find out what the interview is about beforehand
- Assemble your key messages-ideally 2 to 3 before the interview
- If asked, find an appropriate setting for the interview
- Practice!

Effective Media Relations

How to talk to the media

- Dress the part – look professional
- Be friendly and cooperative
- Answer their questions but make sure your key messages are delivered
- Use short quotable sentences and simple language
- Get to the point right away!

Effective Media Relations

How to talk to the media

- Speak slowly. Allow reporter to take notes and pause to think about your answers
- Don't use jargon
- Relax. Don't fidget. Remember to breathe
- Don't speculate or answer hypothetical questions. Stay in your area of expertise

Effective Media Relations

Giving a good interview

- Remember that nothing is “off the record”
- Everything you say can be published or broadcasted
- Remember the main points that you want to make and state them whenever possible
- Be honest and accurate

Effective Media Relations

Giving a good interview

- Answer your questions carefully and slowly
- Answer the questions asked. Don't avoid or fill the air with unnecessary or unrelated comments
- If you don't know the answer to a question, say so – get back to them later with the answer

Effective Media Relations

Giving a good interview

- If a reporter requests confidential information that you do not want to give, say so – directly, but politely
- Be specific. Name names. Provide examples. Give statistics
- Be careful about using jargon. Explain any technical terms as you go

Effective Media Relation

Remember!

- Most of the time you are helping the media
- They are grateful for your help to complete their story
- They are unlikely to take a “gotcha” approach
- You are not a politician
- “Use” the media to help deliver your messages

Ethnic Media Study

Lifesaving Society Case History

- New research study
- Unique research topic for Canada
- High interest topic to the media-drowning
- Ethnicity has been a common question from the media
- Hot summer Canada- wide;except Alberta
- Higher number of drownings in May and June vs. 2009

Ethnic Media Study

Lifesaving Society Case History

- Released at the beginning of National Drowning Prevention Week
- Sent media advisory out 3 days early
- PR firm “pitched” the event ahead of time
- Picked a location that is easily accessible to the media
- Offered “embargoed release” to selected media

Ethnic Media Study

Lifesaving Society Case History

- Positioned the Lifesaving Society and Barbara Byers as spokesperson as leading expert source
- Used the study as leverage to educate the public about safety issues
- Used drowning statistics as support
- Engaged a Chinese PR agency

Ethnic Media Study

Public Relations Objective

- *Generate awareness of the Lifesaving Society's drowning prevention messages including water-safety issues among Canada's immigrant population, National Drowning Prevention Week and the Swim to Survive program via earned media placements across Canada*

CBC News Now

- *Media clip*

CBC National

- *Media clip*

Global National

- *Media clip*

Ethnic Media Study

Results

- An unprecedented success!
- Total audience reach exceeded 86.5 million impressions for 10 day period
- Key interviews included the Canadian Press, the Globe and Mail, the Toronto Star, CBC The National, Global National News, CTV National News

Ethnic Media Study

Results

- 506 total placements
- 101 print stories
- 147 radio stories
- 118 television stories
- 140 online stories
- 100% -mentioned the Lifesaving Society
- 72% -quote from Barbara Byers

Ethnic Media Study

Success Factors

- “News” that was of high interest to the media
- Built upon previous media relations equity
- Detailed news release with quotes
- Picked simple “sound bite” for headline
- Promoted report/event in advance
- Established a “TV friendly” location for launch

Questions??????

- Contact Information:
- Barbara Byers –
barbarab@lifeguarding.com
- 416-490-8844