

## Develop a Media List

### MEDIA PRESS RELEASE

A Press Release informs the media about something that is of interest to readers. For example, a story about the history of PTA and the events planned, or a single story about the 100-year celebration, such as a picture and story of PTA members ringing in the new year, lighting 100 candles, and making a resolution to continue the child advocacy work that started in Utah 100 years ago.

### SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

Contact Name: Sally Smith, PTA Centennial Chair

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Best Elementary PTA Members Make Child Advocacy their New Years Resolution

At sunset on New Year's Day, more than a hundred Best Elementary PTA Members gathered for a candlelight ceremony recognizing the start of their state PTA's 100th year. In 1925, the Utah Congress of the National Congress of Mothers (Utah PTA) was formed in October 1925 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Ann Hancock, Best's PTA President, welcomed members who represented parents, teachers, students, the community, and businesses. The PTA Historian introduced the community's longest-standing PTA member, Sue Bellows. Collectively, they lit 100 candles to represent the start of Utah PTA's 100th year, making the following resolution:

For 100 years and beyond, we commit to our continued involvement for even more significant changes in our society, government, and schools so that all children will be safe and healthy; have access to quality education; and be secure and prosper as they grow into adulthood.

Hancock said, "The PTA kicked off the Centennial celebration with a Back to School Picnic. There have been many events already and more to come. We will close with a 100th Celebration, including a cake with 100 candles and the walls of the school lined with thank you cards from students for all that the PTA has done for children."

### COMMUNICATING WITH THE MEDIA

- *Be prepared* - Know your facts and the message that you want to convey.
- *Memorize your key message points* - Develop concise messages that get your points across.
- *Understand deadlines* - Return calls promptly and always ask what their deadline is and honor it.
- *Use facts to tell your story* - If you cite figures, be prepared to back them up.
- *Be in control of the interview* - Answer the way you want to. If you get off track, guide the conversation back to your message.

- *Maintain focus* - Don't be distracted by emails or other things when on a phone interview. Stand up during the phone interview, it helps to maintain focus and adds energy/passion.
- *Avoid giving blunt answers to open-ended or hypothetical questions* - Don't be drawn into making generalizations. Simply restate the reporter's question in the context of our business and your message.
- *If you don't want it repeated, don't say it.*
- *Beware of the "hot" mic* - If you have a microphone on you, there is a chance that you will be recorded or have your words picked up, even if you aren't on the air. Private conversations and thoughts should remain private.
- *Give examples and use quotes* – When sharing information, give an example such as: “people may think parents aren't involved, however, we find that our parents are involved in ways that are different from the past. For example, more than 50% of our parents volunteer by doing tasks outside of school like managing our Facebook page, updating our website, and sending out electronic minutes of our meeting.”