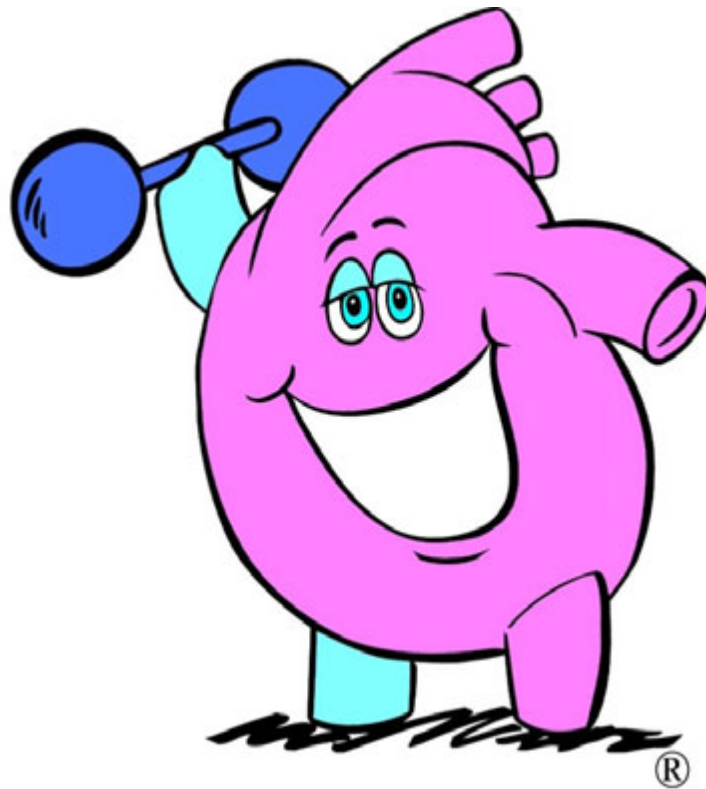

Chapter 8

Working With the Media



Working with the Media

Children's health is a hot news topic! Many people do not understand the important links between nutrition, physical activity and children's health. A Body Walk story can provide this information as well as having human interest appeal.

Make it Newsworthy

No matter how newsworthy the story is, it still must compete with many other items. Good news stories meet these guidelines:

- Timely...happening soon or of interest now-not two weeks ago.
- Unique...maybe even a little offbeat.
- Involves people in motion. Think action, drama or comedy!
- Offers an angle of personal interest to a wide audience.
- A slightly different "twist" to a story.
- Is true, accurate and confirmable.

A BODY WALK story can provide all of this!

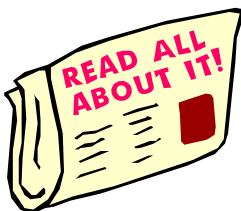
Helpful Hints

Coordinate media coverage with the district's public relations staff as much as possible. They may already have relationships with reporters and can help get the story covered.

- **Make exploratory phone calls.** Get the name of a reporter or editor to contact. Call this person **at least a week in advance** of Body Walk. Call at a convenient time-not 20 minutes before air or press time. Ask if the person would like to receive more information.
- **Send a news release.** Send a news release or fax as an initial contact. Refer to the *Sample News Release* in the Appendix. Send the release with a brief note expressing hope that this story will prove useful. Attach an event flyer or other fact sheet, but keep it short and simple-remember those deadlines!
- **Follow up.** A few days after the release is sent (**but no later than one day before** Body Walk), follow up with a call to the editor. Confirm dates, times, and locations. See if the editor plans to send a reporter out in advance or on the day of the event.

Types of Media

There are three basic types of media: newspapers, television, and radio. Keep each medium's unique needs in mind when discussing the forthcoming Body Walk exhibit.

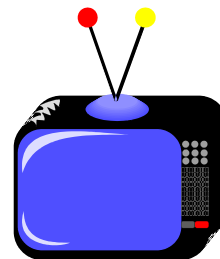


Newspapers

Body Walk offers unique built-in “photo opportunities”. If a well written story is “pitched” to the editor, a photographer may be assigned to capture “human interest” shots. Local papers give the best coverage and reach the intended audience: parents in their school community. Larger newspapers may have too many stories competing for space.

Television

TV is even more visual than newspaper. Be prepared to discuss the unique Body Walk “photo opportunities”. TV also carries sound. Be sure to let the assignment editor know that there will be sound opportunities as well as kids on hand for the reporter to interview.



Radio

Radio usually targets specific, local audiences. It is one of the few media for reaching people who speak languages other than English. It can also be much more accessible than either TV or newspapers. Keep in mind that the person's voice and the way the person describes the promotion or activity has to provide all the excitement. There are no pictures to help out!

Pre-Visit Sample News Release

Date:

Contact: (Name and Phone Number)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Students to Participate in Body Walk

An innovative new way to learn about the importance of good nutrition and physical fitness is coming to students at (name) Elementary School! On (day, date) the Body Walk exhibit will visit the school. Students will have the opportunity to explore the human body with The OrganWise Guys as their guides.

The tour begins when students, in groups of eight to ten, walk through a giant ear into the brain. Inside the huge brain dome, students experience “brain waves” and learn about brain function. After they leave the brain, the students are each given a bookmark designating them as a food, such as a carrot, hamburger or piece of cheese. The “foods” step into the exhibit’s larger-than-life mouth, are “swallowed” through the esophagus tunnel and move into the stomach dome. From the stomach, the students travel through the small intestine where they are “absorbed” into the blood. Then they follow the path of the nutrients to the heart, lung, bone, muscle and skin stations.

Students leave the body through a cut in the skin and proceed through The OrganWise Guy’s Pathway for Life. This final station recaps key health concepts from each of the nine previous stations. Throughout the exhibit, students will learn how to apply healthy life style changes. At each of Body Walk’s ten stations, a volunteer presenter engages the students in a five-minute activity focused on healthy choices.

According to the Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, (fill in name), “The traveling Body Walk exhibit is operated by University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service and Body Walk provides a unique and exciting opportunity for Arkansas elementary students to learn about their bodies and the importance of making healthy choices.” According to (fill in name), the exhibit was developed to address increasing national concerns about the lack of physical activity and the declining nutritional status of young children.

For information on Body Walk, contact (Family and Consumer Sciences Agent) at your Local County Extension Office, (fill in with phone number).



University of Arkansas, United States Department of Agriculture and County Governments Cooperating.

The Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

Post-Visit Sample News Release

Date:

Contact: (Name and Phone Number)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Students to Participate in Body Walk

Learning healthy lifestyles. That's the primary focus of Body Walk, a traveling exhibit that visits elementary schools throughout Arkansas. Today, more than (estimated number) children from (name) Elementary School had a firsthand look at how to make healthy choices and remain healthy throughout their lives.

"Body Walk is a wonderful way for students to have fun learning about health, nutrition and physical activity" said (local Family and Consumer Sciences Agent's name).

Body Walk, operated by the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service, featured a nine-stop tour of the body from brain to mouth, stomach, small intestine, heart, lungs, bones, muscles and skin. "What's great is that the kids are actively involved in learning about good nutrition and making healthful lifestyle choices," said (local Family and Consumer Sciences Agent's name). "We appreciate the support of our school volunteers and community organizations who assisted with the exhibit and made Body Walk possible," (he/she) continued.