YOUTH JUSTICE AWARENESS MONTH

MEDIA OUTREACH CHECKLIST

TWO TO THREE WEEKS BEFORE YOUR EVENT:

□ Fill in your media advisory and press release so that it is ready to be used.

□ Review and update your press list to include reporters or media people that you know.

**TIP:** Reporters that have written about juvenile justice are likely to cover it again. Dig through your old press clips/articles or do a search on your local news stations/papers websites to find those reporters.

□ List your event on your local news stations calendars and online community boards.

**TIP:** Don’t forget about your local radio stations. They also have community boards, community forum or event pages where you can list your event information for free

□ Reach out to the community relations or public affairs person at your local radio stations and local news stations to see if you can come in and talk about your event on their public affairs show. They usually book the guest spots well in advance so reach out early. If you miss the deadline…IT’S OKAY! Ask to do a post event story about the issue of trying, incarcerating and sentencing youth in the adult criminal justice system.

□ Inquire about recording a public service announcement to promote your event.

TWO WEEKS BEFORE YOUR EVENT:

□ Submit your event advisory/media alert/Save the Date to the reporters and editors on your media list.

□ If your event is on a weekend (Friday evening through Sunday), submit your event advisory/alert to the weekend assignment desk/editor at your local daily paper and local news station TWO WEEKENDS BEFORE your event.

□ Wait a couple of days after sending out your advisory/media alert/save the date to conduct follow-up calls to the reporters that you think are interested or have written about the issue before to confirm if they have received your correspondence. This is your opportunity to gage their interest. Ask them if this is something that they will likely cover. If their answer is no, follow-up with a thank you and ask them is there is someone that is more likely to cover your event.

 **TIP:** When reaching out to the media, always try to call in the morning as they are often “on deadline” to finish a story by close of business. Also, have your talking points handy and be as brief yet efficient as possible with your ask.

ONE WEEK BEFORE YOUR EVENT/WEEKEND BEFORE YOUR EVENT:

□ Confirm that your event is in the daybook with your local television affiliates and radio stations and wire services.

□ If you have a weekend event, feel free to send your press release to the assignment desk/editor.

□ Confirm your spokesperson(s) and make sure that they are well versed. Provide them with the media materials including talking points. If you have time, conduct a dry run. Also, have a back-up spokesperson in the event that someone gets sick or has extreme stage fright.

 **TIP:** Media prefer to hear from the people that have been directly affected by an issue. If that person happens to be you, the organizer of the event, GREAT! If not, that’s okay too. You can look at doing interviews as a pair.

THREE DAYS BEFORE YOUR EVENT/WEEKEND OF YOUR EVENT:

□ Send out the press release to your entire list first thing in the morning.

□ Reach out media to conduct follow-up calls soon thereafter. Gage interest and mention that they can speak with a person that has been directly affected by this issue. Try to confirm attendance, if possible. If they aren’t the reporters that are likely to cover your story, find out who that person is. Also try to find the decision makers (i.e. editors, planning editors, program directors, etc.)

□ Make sure your event staff have your cell phone information so that they can contact you when media show up. Also, make sure that you have the cell phone number and can reach your spokespersons when needed.

□ Designate a place for media to “check-in.” Clearly label the area and make it fairly close to the registration area (but not too close)! Media are constantly listening so keep conversations out of the range of media as you don’t want your story to focus on anything outside of the issue. Also, create a media sign in sheet for the media check-in table. Designating a person to man that table would be helpful too.

□ Create your press packets. These should include all of your media materials and any additional materials (i.e. fliers, postcards, fact sheets, etc.)

DAY OF YOUR EVENT:

□ First thing in the morning, call back any reporters that were interested in attending your event. Also call your local television stations to see if they are sending a news crew.

□ When reporters show up and cover your event, ask them when the piece will run. Make sure you get copies of all the stories you appear in and let us know about them so that we can mention them in our roundup!