



**MEDIA TOOLKIT**  
Kick Butts Day  
Event Organizers

March 16, 2016

# Promoting Your Event to Media

## *Why should you promote your event to media?*

Media coverage can supercharge your event. Just think: if you have a rally at your state capital with 50 people, then 50 people hear your message. But if you have a rally and alert local media, your message could be seen and heard by hundreds or thousands of people.

Media coverage can:

- **Publicize** your event beforehand, so more people will be there to support it.
- **Educate** others about the importance of tobacco-control and youth advocacy.
- **Inspire** more people to follow your lead and get involved in taking on tobacco companies.
- **Attract** the attention of public officials who determine tobacco-control policies.

In this document, you will find instructions and templates to help you can conduct your own media outreach. You can either invite a reporter to your attend your event with a media advisory, or simply send materials to a local newspaper and offer additional information through a letter to the editor.

At the end of this document is a standard consent form for minors, in case parental permission is required by the sponsoring organization. It is also possible for a reporter to attend your event and only interview adult advocates. If this is what you prefer, just express this to the reporter and they will understand.

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## Media Advisory Overview

### *What is a media advisory?*

A media advisory invites reporters to attend and cover your Kick Butts Day event. Media advisories are short and provide the 5 Ws: who, what, when, where and why.

### *To whom do I send the media advisory?*

Different types of media outlets may attend or cover your event, including:

- Newspapers
  - Call or go to your local newspaper's website to see who writes about education, health and/or your specific community. If your event has captivating visuals, you can suggest they send a photographer, or contact the photographer/editor of photography yourself. You can also offer to take and send a photo if a reporter and/or photographer is not able to attend.
- Television stations
  - Contact the assignment team at your local news station(s). If there is a health or education reporter at your local news station, send to them as well!
- Radio stations
  - Call your local radio stations and let them know what's going on! Some radio stations have a news director, but you can also call and speak with the on-air host.

### *How do I convince a reporter to attend my Kick Butts Day event?*

Your goal is to make the event sound interesting and newsworthy and make it easy for reporters to quickly figure out the details. There are a few ways to do this:

- Highlight the cause!
  - Kick Butts Day is a national day of activism that empowers youth to stand out, speak up and seize control against Big Tobacco. This is a great cause that will pique the interest of reporters in your hometown.
- Explain why your event is unique
  - Are you marching on city hall? Are you demonstrating at a local elementary or high school?
- Triple check the details
  - It is critically important to provide a reporter with accurate and correct information, including date, time and place.

## Media Advisory *Template*

[Provide a few sentences describing the context of what you are doing and why.]

Kick Butts Day is an annual celebration of youth leadership and activism in the fight against tobacco use.

**Who:** [NAME OF YOUR GROUP/SCHOOL]

**What:** [BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EVENT]

**When:** [DAY OF WEEK], [DATE], [TIME]

**Where:** [LOCATION + ADDRESS + CITY, STATE ZIP]

###

For more information about the event, contact [NAME] at [CELL PHONE NUMBER] or [EMAIL].

## Sample Media Advisory

**Subject:** Monroe Kids Kick Butts on Weds 3/16

On March 16, the **Monroe County Youth Prevention Ambassadors** will host a display on the lawn of the **Monroe County Court House**, including tombstones that will feature tobacco-related causes of death, as well as a “dirty laundry” display that will visualize the lives lost to tobacco and Big Tobacco’s devious marketing practices.

Kick Butts Day is an annual celebration of youth leadership and activism in the fight against tobacco use.

**Who:** Monroe County Youth Prevention Ambassadors

**What:** Visual tombstone display on the lawn of the Monroe County Courthouse

**When:** Wednesday, March 16, 2016, 2:00 pm

**Where:** Monroe County Courthouse, 1000 Courthouse Lane, Monroe

###

For more information about this event, contact Jane Doe at 555-555-5555 or [jane@gmail.com](mailto:jane@gmail.com). Please let us know if you plan to attend.

## Letter to the Editor *Overview*

### *What is a letter to the editor?*

A letter to the editor is sent from a reader to a newspaper for publication, and expresses an opinion about a timely topic that is important to the reader.

### *Why should I write a letter to the editor?*

The opinion pages of newspapers are widely read—including by policymakers and local officials, who read them for clues about issues of concern in the community. Writing a letter to the editor can be a useful way to share your knowledge about tobacco control issues with the local community and its leaders.

They can also either promote your event beforehand, or highlight its success afterwards. In addition to hosting your Kick Butts Day event, writing letters to the editor is fairly simple and an effective way to be a voice for tobacco control in your community.

### *How do I write submit a letter to the editor?*

Check your local newspaper's print guidelines either on the paper's website or the editorial page of the print version for information about submitting a letter to the editor. The maximum word count is typically between 200 and 300 words. Some newspapers have an online submission form that you can use, or you can send it directly to an opinion editor via email.

Small-circulation newspapers print many of the letters they receive. It is more challenging to get a letter printed in a major metropolitan newspaper.

## Letter to the Editor *Template*

To the Editor:

**Lede/Opening** [State your reason for writing here.]

**State your case** [State your case here. Include facts, references, or research here to establish credibility.]

**Call to action** [Include a call to action, asking readers to follow up with some activity, such as joining in calling on policymakers to address the issue.]

**Closing** [End with a strong, positive statement in support of your case.]

Sincerely,  
[Name of Writer]  
[Writer's Title/Role]  
[Writer's Organization]

## Sample Letter to the Editor

*Darien Times, March 6, 2014 (Darien, Connecticut)*

### **Letter: 'Kick Butts Day' will combat youth tobacco use**

To the Editor:

More than 400,000 people in the United States will die this year from a tobacco-related disease. On March 19, Kick Butts Day—46 kids from The Depot chapter of SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) are taking a stand to stop youth from getting hooked on deadly tobacco products.

We know that 90% of smokers start using tobacco regularly by the time they are 18. Isn't this astonishing?

So in order to give kids a fighting chance, we plan to join thousands of students across the country who are taking part in Kick Butts Day, a nationwide initiative that makes students leaders in the effort to stop youth tobacco use. As part of the Kick Butts Day celebration, SADD will present "They Put What? In a Cigarette" during lunch at Middlesex Middle School. The event consists of two tables showcasing the ingredients found in cigarette tobacco. The Darien Fire Department will be on hand to answer any questions students and/or teachers may have. Presentation includes handouts, pamphlets, posters and educational information.

There are many effective ways state and local officials can protect young people from tobacco. They can use funds from the states' 1998 legal settlement with the tobacco companies to pay for tobacco prevention programs; they can increase tobacco taxes; and they can pass smoke-free laws to protect us from secondhand smoke. Consider these facts: Each day, more than 1,000 kids become new regular smokers; roughly one-third of them will die prematurely from a tobacco-related disease.

Today's youth are not just part of the problem; they're part of the solution. And the students from Darien want tobacco companies to know that on Kick Butts Day and every day throughout the year, we're going to fight them every step of the way!

Sincerely,

Darien KBD Committee Chairmen

**CONSENT TO PHOTOGRAPH, FILM, OR VIDEOTAPE A STUDENT OR MINOR**

**Name of Youth Advocate:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School/Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby consent to the participation in interviews, the use of quotes, and the taking of photographs, movies or video tapes of the Youth Advocate named above by:

\_\_\_\_\_

I also grant to the right to edit, use, and reuse said products for nonprofit purposes including use in print, on the internet, and all other forms of media. I also hereby release the \_\_\_\_\_ and its agents and employees from all claims, demands, and liabilities whatsoever in connection with the above.

Signature of Parent/Guardian (if Youth Advocate is under 18):

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**OR**

Signature of Student (if 18 or over): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_