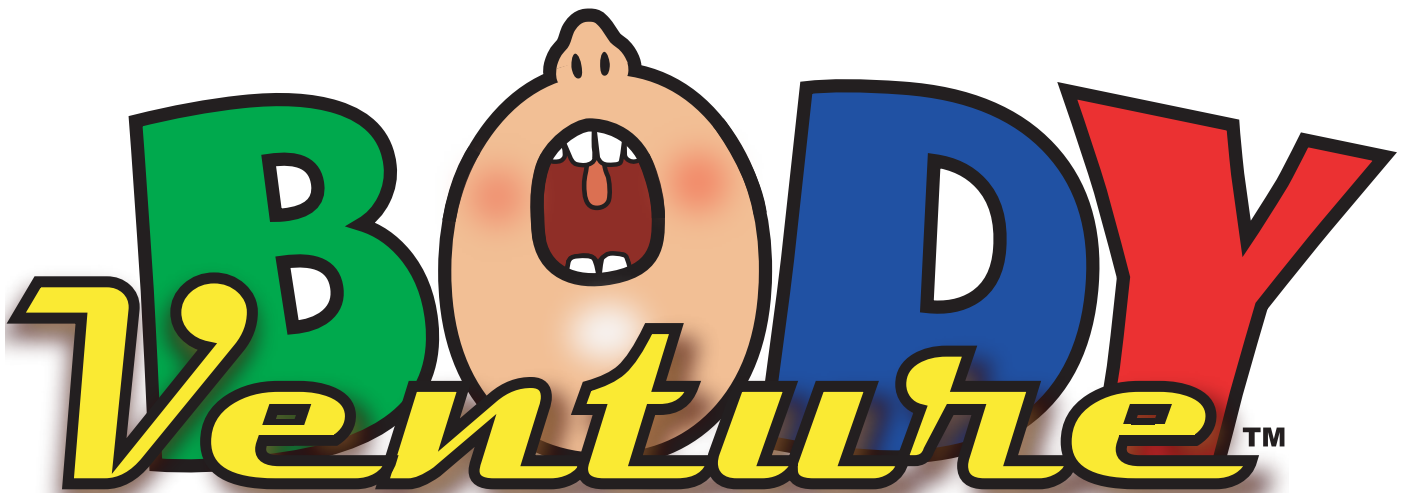


CHAPTER 8

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA



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Working with the Media

Pre-Visit Sample News Release

Post-Visit Sample News Release



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 Venture story can provide this information as well as have human interest appeal.

Make it Newsworthy

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

- Are timely; they are happening soon or are of interest now — not two weeks ago
- Are unique... maybe even a little offbeat
- Involve people in motion. Think action, drama... or comedy!
- Offer an angle of personal interest to a wide audience
- Provide a slightly different “twist” to a story
- Are true, accurate and confirmable

A BODY VENTURE 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 Venture. 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 or fax as an initial contact. Refer to the Sample News Release. 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 Venture), 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 upcoming Body Venture exhibit.

Newspapers

Body Venture offers unique built-in photo opportunities. If a story is presented to the editor well, 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 Venture 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!

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

Pre-Visit Sample News Release

For Immediate Release

Date: (Today's Date)

Contact: (Name and Phone Number)

Students to Participate in Body Venture

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 Venture exhibit will visit the school. Students will have the opportunity to explore the human body with Power Panther, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service mascot as their guide.

The tour begins when students, in groups of eight to ten, enter the school lunchroom and become a food such as a carrot, low-fat milk or a piece of chicken. In the second station, they walk through a giant ear into the brain. Inside the huge brain dome, students experience “brain waves” and learn about brain function. 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, lungs, bones, muscles and skin stations.

Students leave the body through a cut in the skin and proceed through Power Panther’s Pathway to Life. This final station recaps key health concepts from each of the ten previous stations. Throughout the exhibit, students will learn how to apply Power Panther’s slogan, **EAT SMART. PLAY HARD.** At each of Body Venture’s eleven stations, a volunteer presenter engages the students in a five-minute activity focused on healthy choices.

The traveling Body Venture exhibit was developed and is operated by Child Nutrition & Wellness, Kansas State Department of Education. Cheryl Johnson, Director of Child Nutrition & Wellness said, “Body Venture provides a unique and exciting opportunity for Kansas elementary students to learn about their bodies and the importance of making healthy choices.” According to Meg Boggs, Body Venture Coordinator, 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 Venture, contact (school coordinator's name) at (school name and telephone number).

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

Post-Visit Sample News Release

For Immediate Release

Date: (Today's Date)

Contact: (Name and Phone Number)

Students Participate in Body Venture

Learning healthy lifestyles is the primary focus of Body Venture, a traveling exhibit that visits elementary schools throughout Kansas. 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 Venture is a wonderful way for students to have fun learning about health, nutrition and physical activity" said (local Body Venture school coordinator's name).

Body Venture, developed by Child Nutrition & Wellness, Kansas State Department of Education, featured an eleven-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 healthy lifestyle choices," said (local Body Venture school coordinator's name). "We appreciate the support of our school volunteers and community organizations who assisted with the exhibit and made Body Venture possible," (he/she) continued.

