

Promoting Your Unit - Scouting for News Stories

Why is Public Relations (PR) Important?



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

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1. **The media (newspapers, radio, TV) is a powerful tool**...because of its ability to inform and influence.
2. **Scouting needs to grow** and new families and youth need to understand what Scouting means for them...its value and relevance. Parents and kids are busier now than ever and we need to help them cut through the clutter and learn the benefits of getting involved in Scouting.
3. **Because of the media's influence and Scouting's need to grow**, an important way for families to learn about Scouting is through positive publicity (PR), especially grassroots news stories covered by the local press.
4. **News organizations large and small constantly need stories** and help finding them. Whether it's paper-based news or online news editions, the local press (daily and weekly papers) get read.
5. **Your neighbors are interested** in how Scouting makes a positive impact in our community. There's plenty of news with stories about hardship, bad situations and poor choice. Scouting's positive and uplifting stories can help provide some balance in the news and peoples' lives.
6. **Scouting by its nature often does not draw a lot of attention to itself.** Consider that that we often meet in church basements, camp in the woods and perform community service projects while not in uniform, all making Scouts somewhat less visible and creating a greater need for community awareness.
7. **Many reporters and editors might perceive Scouting stories as "soft" news** (somewhat less important or a lower priority than other types of news). Some of today's news topics and Scouting's focus areas show below help to show the importance of Scouting:

	Some Key Media Topics	Scouting Activities (potential stories)
1	Child obesity	Personal fitness; nutrition, exercise (hiking, swimming, bicycling)
2	Alcohol/drug abuse	Participation in school/community/unit anti-drug programs
3	Emergency preparedness	Disaster training and first aid/lifesaving skills training
4	Leadership	Youth leading patrols, running meetings, planning events
5	Character	Learning and living the Scout Oath and Law
6	Family values	Cub Scouting is a family-based program involving parents and youth
7	Diversity/tolerance	Helping Scouts with physical and mental disabilities
8	Environmentalism	"Leave No Trace" training
9	Community service	Scouting For Food, Good Turn for America, Eagle projects
10	Youth achievement	Rank advancement and merit badges
11	Mentoring	Positive adult role models and their impact on young lives
12	Civic involvement	Citizenship training, flag ceremonies

Scouting stories...something that people want to read about.

When you consider the 8,000+ youth involved in Scouting programs in the Hawk Mountain Council and add Scout parents and siblings, extended Scout families (local aunts, uncles, and grandparents) and then add the 2,000 adult volunteers and their families, you have the potential for 25,000+ local news readers that are already predisposed to reading Scouting news stories. This is one reason why it's important for the local press to cover Scouting stories...their readers are interested in Scout news.

Remember, we want your story ideas.