

This is the fifth in a series of periodic messages to assist in the planning and implementation of NCVRW Community Awareness Projects. CAP TIPS are also posted on the subgrantee page of the NCVRW CAP web site, <http://cap.navaa.org/subs>. Please feel free to send your individual questions or requests for assistance to Anne Seymour at annesey@atlantech.net.

CAP TIPS #5

To Improve Public Awareness

“Be Prepared!”

A “One-month Out” Checklist for Success

Introduction

It's hard to believe that 2008 National Crime Victims' Rights Week is only one month away!

By now, all CAP recipients are in the throes of planning and preparation. It may be helpful to consider a “countdown check list” that identifies key issues and tasks that need to be accomplished *prior to Sunday, April 13*.

This CAP TIP is designed to offer guidance to you *for two categories* of CAP activities:

- Media relations.
- Special events.

Each checklist can be easily adapted to meet your individualized needs in your state or community, and can become your “ongoing reminder” of activities that have been accomplished, and those that require further attention.

Media Relations Checklist

Relevant CAP TIPS to Review:

- How to Engage the News Media
- Building a Comprehensive Media List
- Writing an Effective Press Release
- Creating Public Service Announcements
- Sample media sign-in sheet (see attached; also available under “Other Materials” on the NCVRW CAP Web site at cap.navaa.org/subs).

Week of March 16

- A volunteer has been assigned to document all media relations activities, i.e., press clippings, tapes of radio and television interviews, printouts of web media publicity, etc.
- Your media directory should be complete and documented in an easy-to-use format.

- Your public service announcements should be written, reviewed and edited, and finalized in the recommended PSA format.
- Any quotations or comments to be included in media relations (such as press releases, opinion/editorial columns, etc.) should be obtained from contributors, with proper attribution noted.
- Guidelines for submitting opinion/editorial columns or radio or television actualities, press releases and public service announcements have been reviewed and followed.

Week of March 23

- If any special media recognition award is being given out during NCVRW, the recipient and his/her superior are notified about the award, and when it is being presented (see *Sample Certificate of Recognition* in the OVC NCVRW Resource Guide).
- Your public service announcements are mailed to television and radio stations (and if you are providing “on air” talent to read the PSA, arrangements for taping should be finalized with the station).

Week of March 30

- Press releases are snail-mailed by Friday, April 4 (or emailed by Monday, April 7).
- Opinion/editorial columns (for newspapers and web media) and actualities (for radio/television) are submitted by mail or electronically (to be received by April 4) with a request to publish during NCVRW (Sunday or Monday is best), and include the author’s credentials and contact information.
- Conduct follow-up telephone calls and/or emails to news media representatives to see if they need any additional information, or have any special needs when covering your event.
- All key media interviews have been scheduled and confirmed (day/date/time/location and who is being interviewed/who is conducting the interview). Arrangements are made to publicize and audiotape/videotape key media interviews.

Week of April 6

- Letters-to-the-editor inviting people to any special events are emailed or snail mailed to local newspapers.

Week of April 13

- A media schedule for NCVRW has been developed and disseminated to all key players involved.

For any special events:

- A volunteer has been designated to meet and greet the media; answer any questions they may have; and ensure that key representatives are available for interviews.

- A designated (quiet) area or room has been planned for media interviews, and is equipped with ample electrical outlets and/or a power strip.
- The “Media Sign-in Sheet” has been copied and is available on a clipboard at the welcome/registration desk.
- Any special needs of the media have been identified and addressed.
- If a “media recognition award” is being presented, it is ready at the podium, along with information about the recipient.

Week of April 20

- Follow-on notes or emails are sent to media representatives who attended and/or covered NCVRW activities.
- Where relevant, letters-to-the-editor is sent that thank the news media and community members for supporting NCVRW and crime victims/survivors.

Special Events Checklist

Relevant CAP TIPS to Review:

- How to Turn Out a Crowd
- NCVRW Activities for Children
- Engaging Criminal and Juvenile Justice Officials and Agencies
- How to Engage and Involve Teens in Your NCVRW Activities
- Sample sign-in sheets (see attached; also available under “Other Materials” on the NCVRW CAP Web site at cap.navaa.org/subs).

Week of March 16

- All co-sponsoring agencies and organizations have been provided with NCVRW artwork and a highlight of your special event to publicize to their constituents and communities, such as:
 - Posters.
 - Letter of invitation.
 - Reminder post cards.
 - Language/artwork for “Save the Date” email or snail mail, and list serv dissemination.
 - Artwork and copy for website publicity.
- **T**he location of special events has been confirmed, and you have a copy of the contract or agreement (*which should be carried on-site to the actual event*). A walk-through has been conducted to:
 - Determine the physical logistics (such as stage, podium or table, seating, resource arena, etc.) and make sure that you have an adequate number of chairs and tables.
 - Finalize any requirements related to hanging things on the walls and/or decorating the stage or venue.

- Assess and address physical access for persons with disabilities, from transportation and parking to entry into the site.
 - Identify a space or “quiet room” where attendees who may be deeply affected by the proceedings can go to.
 - Determine where bathrooms and adjunct facilities (i.e., storage, kitchen, etc.) are located.
 - Ensure that **there is a secure place to hang coats.**
- Arrangements are made with event site staff to arrive *at least two hours* (and maybe more) *in advance of the event* to prepare and set up.
 - A map to the specific location (with a physical address, directions, and information about public transportation, parking and disability access) is secured in both paper and electronic formats.
 - If your location is outdoors, an alternative location has been planned for in case of inclement weather.
 - Volunteers to provide security are obtained and confirmed with email and cell phone contact information (local police departments may be a good source for this!).
 - Any food or beverage orders have been confirmed.
 - Any entertainment has been confirmed (choirs, singers, color guards, etc.).
 - Your budget is reviewed to ensure that you are in line with all expenditures.
 - An e-mail roster of potential attendees has been developed.
 - If you are sponsoring a Resource Arena, potential participants are:
 - Notified and provided with logistical information.
 - Provided with information about the availability of tables, wall space, etc.
 - Asked to bring a specified number of brochures, posters, and other victim awareness and public education resources.
 - Provided with information about where to go at the actual event (i.e., to the Resource Arena coordinator/sign-in table).
 - For all key activities, volunteers have been secured to plan, implement, and clean-up after the event. A list with names, landline and cell phone numbers, and email addresses has been developed.
 - If any special event giveaways are planned (such as tee-shirts, caps, pens, squeeze balls, etc.), the order has been confirmed, and a volunteer has been assigned to track its arrival.

Week of March 23

- A “Save the Date” reminder has been emailed to all potential attendees.
- Interpreters have been secured to facilitate active participation by any Deaf attendees.
- All decorations have been planned and ordered.

- If any awards are being given out:
 - Award recipients have been notified and provided with all information relevant to the special event.
 - Awards have been prepared with the name of the award and recipient.

Week of March 30

- An event schedule with *every minute* timed and designated is emailed to all presenters; and a master/mistress of ceremonies is confirmed, with introductory and segue way remarks prepared in advance.
- An email confirmation/reminder is sent to all key participants and contributors with day/date/time/location and any other relevant information:
 - All potential attendees.
 - All participants in any Resource Arena.
 - Speakers and presenters.
 - Entertainment.
 - Food/beverages and napkins/plates/cups/utensils.
 - Volunteers.
- (*Optional*) A photographer and/or videographer is confirmed.
- Plan for volunteers who can be available to assist any attendees – especially crime victims and survivors – who may need extra emotional support during the actual event.

Week of April 6

- Event programs are finalized (and edited!) and printed.
- A final reminder about your special event with map/directions has been emailed to all potential attendees.
- Sign-in sheets have been prepared and copied (see attached; also available under “Other Materials” on the NCVRW CAP Web site at cap.navaa.org/subs).
- A “run through” with all key players is hosted, either at your office or at the actual site of the special event, and timed to ensure that you keep with your planned schedule.
- Any audio/visual activities are subjected to a “practice run-through” (such as the NCVRW Theme DVD included in the OVC Resource Guide; PowerPoint presentations; and/or a PowerPoint “welcome slide”).
- You obtain a final confirmation of food and beverage orders; ensure that the vendors/volunteers have the day/date/time/location of the special event; and confirm cell phone information for delivery.
- All volunteers are confirmed with their assignments, and an email reminder is sent (see below, *Week of April 13*, “Prior to and at the Event – Volunteers”).

- Arrange in advance to have any leftover food delivered to a shelter or other program in the community that accepts such donations (such as a co-sponsoring domestic violence shelter).
- (*Optional*) For confirmed attendees, name tags are prepared in advance.

Week of April 13

- Signage has been prepared to post around and at the event:
 - With arrows pointing to the entrance.
 - With information about disability parking and access.
 - With details about specific sign-in locations (for attendees, volunteers, news media, etc.).
 - Welcome signs (using NCVRW Resource Guide artwork).
- Special event giveaways (such as tee-shirts, caps, squeeze balls, etc.) are nicely displayed.
- A first aid kit has been secured for the actual event.
- A list of emergency numbers is developed for the event (police, ambulance, hospitals, etc.)

Prior to and at the event:

- All decorations have been finalized at least two hours prior to the event.
- You have copies of all relevant contracts and “proof of payment,” and emergency contact information for all vendors (i.e., food, sound system, etc.).
- On-site logistics:
 - Tables and chairs are set up for registration; any food or beverages; resource arena; attendees; speakers on the stage, etc.
 - An audio/visual check is conducted one hour prior to the event.
 - You have copies of three sign-in sheets available as people enter (for attendees, the news media, and volunteers).
 - Logistical signage is posted.
 - Enough copies of the special event program have been duplicated.
 - A list of emergency numbers is available at the registration desk.
 - Prepared name tags and/or name tags and Sharpie pens are available at the registration desk.
- Volunteers are available (and receive a short briefing one hour in advance of the event) in advance, during and following the event on-site to:
 - Haul boxes and other resources into the site.
 - Set up the room
 - Decorate the room.
 - Facilitate any Resource Arena.
 - Provide security at and around the event site.

- Meet and greet guests at the front door(s) and provide information and guidance.
- Staff the welcome/registration table and sign-in sheets.
- Assist any attendees who may need to visit a quiet space or room and receive comfort and support (have plenty of Kleenexes available!).
- Coordinate audio/visuals for any presentations.
- Coordinate distribution of giveaways (tee-shirts, caps, pens, etc.)
- Coordinate any refreshments.
- Coordinate media participation.
- Coordinate welcoming speakers and key participants.
- Break down the event, and clean up afterwards (you'll want to leave the room in good shape so you'll be welcome back in the future!).
- Make arrangements to promptly return any borrowed equipment (audio/visual, laptops and LCD projectors, tables, chairs, etc.)
- Deliver any leftover food to a shelter or other designated organization.

Week of April 20

- Remember to thank all the volunteers, featured speakers and others whose contributions made your event a success!
- Snail-mail "thank you's" are preferable to email. You can use the artwork included in the NCVRW Resource Guide to create a lovely 8 ½" by 11" piece of stationary, with standardized artwork and a thoughtful message, and leave room at the bottom of the page for a personalized one-line note-of-thanks and signatures.
- Plan or conduct a post-event debriefing with all key coordinators. Assess what worked, and what needed improvement, and document your findings for future commemorations of NCVRW (a final 2008 CAP TIP will address "Debriefing and Evaluation").

For More Information

Please contact National Crime Victims' Rights Week Community Awareness Project Consultant Anne Seymour via email at annesey@atlantech.net; or by telephone at 202.547.1732.