

# Media Relations Tips for Television Interviews

## What to Wear

- > Don't wear all white or all black. White makes the camera image flare and black washes out your face. If you like to wear black, use a colorful scarf or a single-colored jacket over it.
- > Don't wear stripes, dots, paisley, herringbone or other small, busy prints. They make the camera image shake or jump back and forth and can be very distracting to the viewer.
- > Solid colors work best — wear a color that makes you feel good.
- > Be well groomed with professional attire. This may sound obvious, but you will appear more credible. For women, that usually means a suit or dress, and for men, a coat and tie, suit, or shirt and tie.
- > If you wear glasses, try to wear contacts for the interview. If you have to wear glasses, ask the camera person to sit you in a way so that you have the least amount of glare.
- > Keep jewelry to a minimum, especially noisy necklaces or bracelets.
- > Women should touch up their makeup prior to the interview and men should get a little powder to take off any shine on the face and forehead. Take a final look in a mirror before your interview.

## How to Position Yourself

- > Stand or sit still. Fidgeting with your hands or clothes will distract viewers from the message you are trying to get across. Remember that the camera is usually focused on your head and shoulders so excessive movement of the head is very distracting.
- > Once the interview starts, concentrate on the interviewer (make eye contact) rather than the camera. Try not to let the noise and action in the background distract you.
- > Relax — talk at a normal pace.

## What to Say

- > Be sure to give your name and your guild name. “Hi, I’m XXX from XXX guild, a Seattle Children’s Hospital guild.”
- > Be courteous with the reporter and photographer.
- > Think of two to three main points you would like to make about your subject. Gather facts, figures and anecdotes to support these points.
- > Anticipate questions the interviewer might ask and have responses ready.
- > Use short, direct words, beginning at a basic level. Avoid jargon and explain terms or acronyms if you must use them.
- > Be brief! We live in the age of the sound bite. When you are interviewed for TV, you are likely to be in a three- to 30-second sound bite as part of a one- to two-minute news item. Do not give one-word or long-winded answers.
- > There are “five Cs” to success: Speak with *conviction* in a *conversational* manner while retaining your *composure*. Be *confident* — you are the expert. Be *colorful* — tell stories and anecdotes that illustrate your point; give examples.
- > Do not speculate. If you do not understand a question, ask for clarification rather than talking around it. If you do not have the answer, say so.
- > Remember, the interviewer is there to do a job. Everything is ON THE RECORD, even before and after the taping. While you are wearing a microphone, reporters can pick up everything you say — before, during and after the interview.

**To contact Seattle Children’s Hospital Media Relations staff, call (206) 987- 5246.**