

YOUTH WEEK

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EVENT IDEAS

Advocacy and Representation Activities

- Youth forum with the mayor, ministers or members of parliament.
- "Day of Access" to decision-makers.
- Person to person meetings with elected officials.

Fundraising Activities

- Fundraising dinner, dance or variety show.
- Car wash.
- Door-to-door canvassing.
- Bakesale.
- Silent Auction.

Art Events

- Art show or auction.
- Mural or sidewalk art.
- Painting or sculpting day.

Media Activities

- Letters to the editor or opinion pieces.
- A special youth section of a community newspaper.
- Co-hosting a local radio show or TV show
- A speakers' corner.
- Special TV coverage of youth events

Community Service

- Volunteer day at a food bank, hospital/hospice.
- Helping at a local school.
- Visiting people in retirement homes.
- Assisting social service programs.

Musical Events

- Benefit concert.
- Busking or jam session.

Conferences/Workshops

- Conference on youth, social or environmental issues.
- Workshops at libraries, schools or community centres.
- Guest speaker or special presentations

Public Awareness Campaigns and Volunteer Recruitment Drives

- Letter-writing campaign day
- Presentations at schools, colleges or community centres.
- Postering your city or town.
- Public service announcements on the radio

Drama Events

- Play about a social or environmental issue.
- Street theatre.

Rallies

- Rally at city hall.
- March in a circuit through your city or town.
- Rally at a school or public office

Environmental Activities

- Tree planting
- Eco-trail building
- Environmental awareness presentations
- River/field clean-up
- Recyclable battery collection

Recreational Activities

- Cooperative games and sports tournaments.
- Picnics.

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PUBLICITY SUGGESTIONS

These "guidelines" are not meant as strict rules, but more as suggestions and ideas on how you can work with the media to publicize your Youth Week event. Publicity is an important part of the week because it can magnify and multiply the effects that Youth Week events have. Usually because of space and logistical limitations, special activities can only involve a relatively small number of people. Directly affecting these people is important, but the print, TV, and radio media offer us a way to reach out to thousands more people who might be inspired by our actions.

1. Start by deciding what publicity you want for when. For instance, do you want publicity for volunteers and participants for your event or do you already have as many people as you can handle? Do you want to promote your event on its own, or would you like to link up with other events in your community?

2. Prepare an initial list of media contacts with their fax numbers. If you don't have a list already from your previous activities you can ask other non-profit groups to share their contacts with you. Often your best contacts will be specific individuals (reporters or radio personalities) who you know are interested in youth events and would be happy to help you out. We also have directories of media in Canada and some abroad, so if you call us we can fax or mail to you contact lists for your area.

3. Start your outreach for volunteers and participants. There aren't really any hard and fast rules about how to do this, and you probably know best what works for your community and the youth you want to reach. Some other the things that have worked for us are: flyers in community centres, libraries, and schools; public service announcements on the radio; event listings in local papers; and postings with volunteer centres.

4. Prepare a one-page media release that concisely describes your event. The release should be no more than a page and should contain all the relevant details (time, place, activities, contact person). Begin with a good headline and don't delay too much before making your most important points. Write the release as if it were about to go straight into print (because sometimes it does). If you need samples of press releases, contact us and we'll fax you some. Mentioning that your event is part of Youth Week will help bring out the media because they'll see your activities as part of a larger event. It will help provide the media with a context for their story that will make it more newsworthy

5. Phone the people on your media list about two weeks before Youth Week. Often they'll want you to fax them some information, so you can send off your press release and any other materials you've prepared. If you do manage to speak at some length with a reporter or editor, keep track of what they've said and when they expect you to get back to them.

6. Fax your media release again two days before the event to make sure it's still fresh in the mind of the assignment editor. Wake up early on the day of the event to do a final calling around to your different media contacts. Often the decision to cover an event is made on the actual day, so a friendly reminder can often make the difference.

7. Keep a record or tape of the TV or radio coverage you do get and clip out any written articles about your event. It's great to be able to look back at your event and the coverage you received.

Good luck with your publicity efforts and remember to contact us about your event at (416) 368-2277, 1-800-718-LINK or youthweek@youthweek.org so we can also publicize it!