

WASHINGTON READING CORPS  
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction



A Guide to Community  
Partnerships and the Media

WASHINGTON OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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# **A Guide to Community Partnerships and the Media**

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## **The Washington Reading Corps Toolkit**

- Module 1: Volunteer Reading Tutor Training Handbook:  
A Sample Guide for Schools
- Module 2: Creating a Volunteer Reading Tutor Program
- Module 3: A Guide to Community Partnerships and the Media
- Module 4: A Guide to Family Literacy and Involvement
- Module 5: Volunteer Recruitment and Management
- Module 6: Peer and Cross-Age Tutoring

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# Introduction


This module is a tool that has been designed for tutoring programs and/or schools to use in developing community partnerships and working with the media. It contains key preliminary steps, tools, and resources to aid in building these alliances. The following materials will help programs to:


- Define their short- and long-term goals, as well as identify the process of how to attain those goals
- Outline the details of the roles each partner will play in helping reach the overall educational goals
- Anticipate potential barriers along the way and how to respond
- Identify strategies to evaluate the partnerships' success in meeting the planned goals

Adapted from *Partnerships by design: Cultivating effective and meaningful school-family-community partnership* retrieved from <http://www.nwrel.org/partnerships/cloak/booklet-one.pdf>

## Key:

 **New Section:** New topic in a chapter

 **Subsection:** A sample or another element of the topic that provides additional specific information

 **Formats and Strategies:** Offers information on sample formats and strategies to use in building community partnerships and using the media

# Creating Community Partnerships

This chapter provides information needed in order to develop community partnerships, including information on the following:

- Partnership Fundamentals
- Developing Strategic Alliances
- Levels of Involvement and Decision Making
- Goals and Objectives
- Collaboration and its Process
- Needs Assessment

## Partnership Fundamentals

### What Is a Partnership?

A partnership is a collaborative relationship that mutually benefits all those involved. There are several different types of partnerships. For example, your planning committee may work to establish a partnership between your tutoring program and your local businesses, media, community, local schools, youth, the students and families that you serve. Through this collaboration, a successful partnership accomplishes something that could not be done alone. In order to accomplish this, there needs to be a shared vision and goals as well as a collaboration of skills and resources. For additional information, see *Tool 1: Steps to Build Partnerships* in the Appendix.

### BENEFITS TO PARTNERSHIPS

- Mutual support, responsibility, respect, and shared outcomes
- Shared sense of commitment and responsibility in community
- Avoid duplication of efforts
- Ensure that recipients of service are included in all of the stages
- Additional resources, skills, funding, and feedback


Adapted from *Partnerships by design: Cultivating effective and meaningful school-family-community partnerships* retrieved from <http://www.nwrel.org/partnerships/cloak/booklet-one.pdf>

<b>📁 SAMPLE PARTNERSHIPS</b>	
<b>Internal Partnerships</b>	<b>External Partnerships</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ PTA</li> <li>▪ Classified staff                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bus drivers</li> <li>▪ Para-educators</li> <li>▪ Custodial staff</li> <li>▪ Food service</li> <li>▪ District office staff</li> <li>▪ School office staff</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Administrative district staff</li> <li>▪ Certified staff</li> <li>▪ High school students</li> <li>▪ Middle school students</li> <li>▪ Upper elementary students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local stores</li> <li>▪ Banks or credit unions</li> <li>▪ Libraries</li> <li>▪ Faith communities</li> <li>▪ Restaurants</li> <li>▪ Gyms</li> <li>▪ Service clubs                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kiwanis</li> <li>▪ Elks</li> <li>▪ Eagles</li> <li>▪ Rotary</li> <li>▪ Grange</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Educational Service Districts (ESDs)</li> <li>▪ School board</li> <li>▪ Parents</li> <li>▪ Students</li> <li>▪ Former AmeriCorps or VISTA members</li> <li>▪ Colleges</li> <li>▪ Volunteer centers</li> <li>▪ Senior centers</li> <li>▪ RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program)</li> </ul>

**📁 Identification of Potential Partners**

Partners are individuals and or organizations that share an interest in the mission of the tutoring program. Working with partners can help generate interest, participation, and resources. They are able to help reach outcomes due to position, relationships, knowledge, or skills. There are three main sources of partnerships for a tutoring program. They are the school, families, and the communities. Partners contribute differently to the program based on their resources, experiences, and levels of commitment. Success depends on involving a good mix of people or organizations in the partnership create and implement the plan. For additional information, see *Tools 2: Partnerships and Benefits*, *Tool 3: Student/Adult Partnership: Readiness Assessment*, and *Tool 4: Sample Partnership Letter* in the Appendix. Below are steps to identify and recruit partners. Aside are questions to help identify possible partners and steps to find and recruit partners:

1. Identify roles or specific people needed in order for your program to carry out its goals.
2. Create a list of possible individuals or organizations to be involved
3. Recruit partners from a cross-section community served.
4. Make initial contact by phone, mail, and/or a personal visit.

 <b>QUESTIONS TO HELP IDENTIFY PARTNERS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Who in the community served is being affected by the issue or problem?</li><li>▪ Who is already involved or interested in our work? Who are local experts? What roles are they playing?</li><li>▪ Who should be involved in your work?</li><li>▪ What roles need to be filled or created? Who might best fill them? Where could these partners be found?</li><li>▪ What resources and skills do they have to offer?</li><li>▪ How could they be involved in planning and activities?</li><li>▪ What potential barriers exist to recruiting and or working with these partners? What strategies can help overcome those barriers?</li></ul>

Adapted from *Day One in the Life of a Program Coordinator*, retrieved from <http://nwrel.org/learns/resources/startup/dayone.html#assess> and from *Community toolbox: Create coalition and partnership*, retrieved from <http://ctb.ku.edu/tools/coalitions/create/narrativeoutline.jsp> and from *Networking, partnerships, and collaboration workbook*. AmeriCorps\*VISTA Early Service Training Tool Time.

## **Developing Strategic Alliances**

When your tutoring program develops an alliance within the community, it is essential to keep that individual or organization informed of your program’s progress, activities, performance, and news. This communication can help set the tone for your interaction while helping build that partner’s financial support and level of involvement. These alliances establish support for your program, the students that you serve, and their families. There are four main stages in these alliances. They include the following:

### **1. Communication/Networking**

This initial stage has the least amount of participation. Individuals and organizations develop communication links or network to exchange information and resources. The emphasis is on utilizing other organizations in your community for information and resources. The initial focus at this stage can be very specific. Individuals or organizations work to establish informal contacts with others, which may become a long-term contact.

### **2. Cooperation**

Participation at this level focuses on the accomplishment a specific purpose or goal. Work here is often conducted by individuals rather than the organizations they may represent. A loose, informal association of a few people may develop for some mutual benefit or easily obtainable goal. Individuals at this level can be vigorously involved without really doing anything different in their jobs.

### **3. Coalition**


This stage works on building linkages at the organizational level. Organizations participate in a more formal way around the issue or a common set of interrelated issues. The purpose for forming a coalition is to acquire or compile influence and resources. This level of partnership can have an impact on an issue beyond what one group could do alone. Coalitions tend to be short lived even though the issues they work on are complex or difficult to resolve. At this level, each organization shares a measure of responsibility for the success or failure of the coalition, but the level of commitment is moderate.

#### 4. Collaboration

The highest and most difficult level of working with others is collaboration. Organizational relationships are formalized and involve a long-term commitment to work together to accomplish a common mission. Collaboration requires a commitment to participate in shared decision-making and the allocation of resources related to activities responding to mutually identified needs. For additional information, see *Tool 5: Collaborating with Community*.

Adapted from *Alliance: Union or association formed for mutual benefit* by Macduff/Bunt Associates

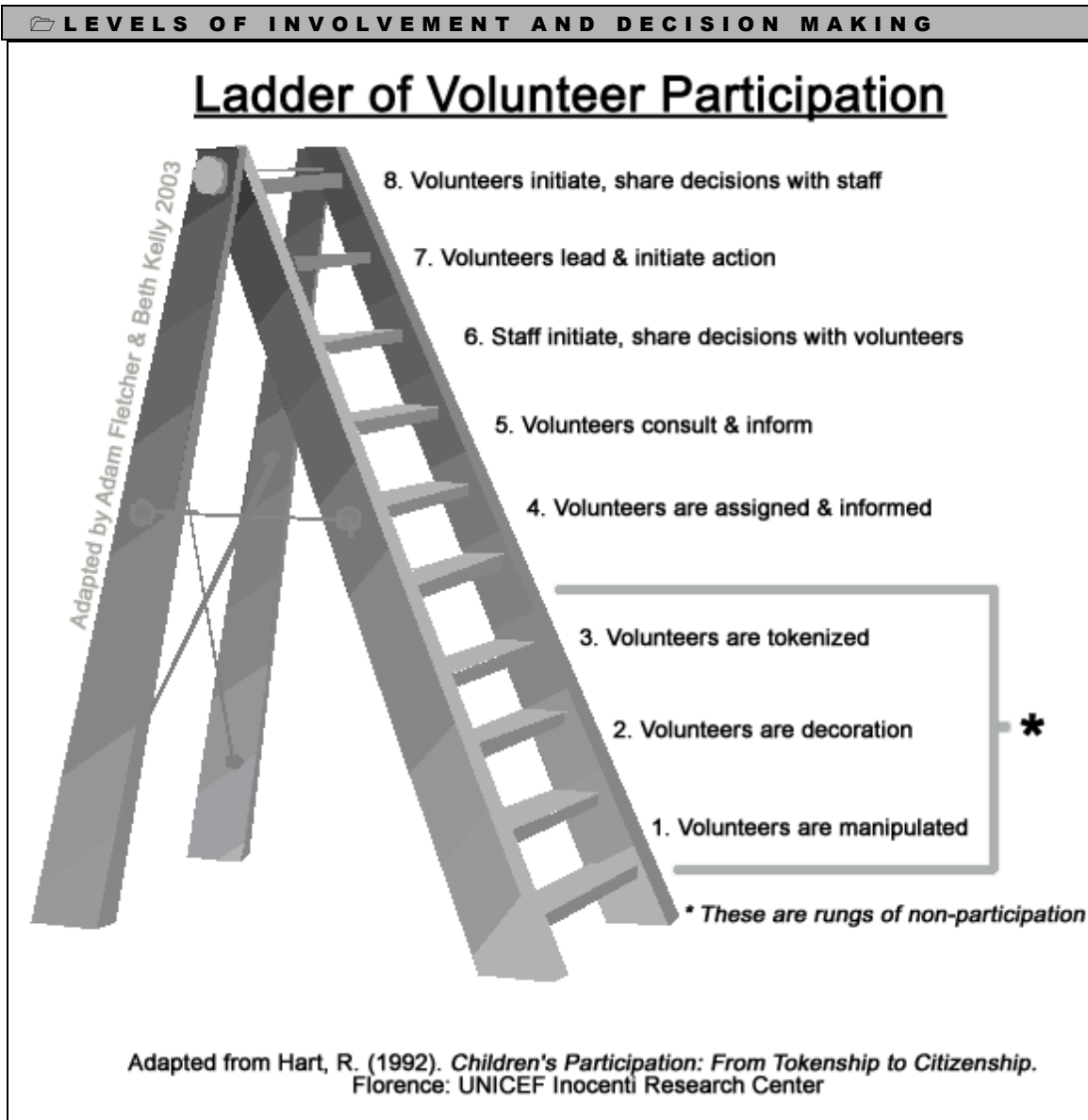
The following questions will help your team think of whom in your community would make a strategic alliance by determining what they have to offer and how to best use them:

 REFLECTION QUESTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ What partners have you invited to participate in important matters? Who is missing?</li><li>▪ How do you support community partners as they commit to supporting the school?</li><li>▪ How does each partner contribute to your program? How do they benefit in return?</li><li>▪ What technical support is needed to sustain partnerships (i.e. regular e-mail updates, conference calls, etc.)?</li><li>▪ How are non-traditional, or harder to reach, groups from the community contacted and involved?</li><li>▪ Who are the skeptics in the community who could become better informed and invited to participate?</li><li>▪ How are the different partners and their attributes assessed? Are these partners being used to their best, and most efficient, advantage?</li></ul> <p>Adapted from <i>School, family, and community partnerships</i> retrieved from <a href="http://knowledgeloom.org/practices3.jsp?location=1&amp;bpinterid=1051&amp;spotlightid=1051">http://knowledgeloom.org/practices3.jsp?location=1&amp;bpinterid=1051&amp;spotlightid=1051</a></p>

### **Levels of Involvement and Decision Making**

A partnership can take many different forms. For example, it could resemble an informal relationship between two parties or it could take on the form of a community-wide collaboration. Their participation could involve sharing their perspectives and experience from another field, ideas, resources, a background in financial matters, and the collaboration for mutual purposes and outcomes. The level of involvement or decision making can be influenced by many factors such as the level of readiness of the parties involved, resources available, and needs. By combining resources and efforts, a partnership can accomplish what could not be done alone.

Adapted from *Networking, partnerships, and collaboration workbook*. (n.d.). AmeriCorps\*VISTA Early Service Training Tool Time. and from *School, family, and community partnerships* retrieved from <http://knowledgeloom.org/practices3.jsp?location=1&bpinterid=1051&spotlightid=1051>



Provided above is a depiction of the various levels of involvement or participation for a community partner or a volunteer. The higher the rung, the more involved a community partner or volunteer is with your program. The upper the rungs contain activities such as when a volunteer or partner initiates changes, is invited to hold leadership positions, advises, and helps with strategic and long-range planning. They sit in position of power that can effect future of initiative. The middle rungs depict partners or volunteers who donate time and resources, who are invited to help generate resources, and who are invited to volunteer and staff functions and committees. The lowest rungs contain the least amount of involvement. In this level, partners or volunteers may hear about major decisions, may be invited to give some feedback, may be invited to attend key events and activities, and may hear of activity through the media such as a bulk mailer with information.

## Goals and Objectives

At the beginning of a partnership, the program planning committee should collaborate with your new partner to define its relationship, goals, expectations, and plan for the partnership. For additional information, see *Tool 6: Goal Setting Worksheet* and *Tool 7: Action Planning Worksheet* in the Appendix. Steps for defining the partnership may include:

- Outline **goals and objectives**. Clarify short- and long term goals and expectations in a *partnership agreement*.
- Create **action steps** to accomplish those goals.
- Determine **how to assess** achievement.

### QUESTIONS TO HELP DEFINE YOUR PARTNERSHIP

- What role needed will be filled or created?
- What resources and skills does your partner have to offer? What do you have to offer them (i.e. free publicity in your community)?
- How does your vision for the tutoring program and that of the partner coincide? How are they different?
- What is their role in making your program's vision a reality?
- How could they be involved in planning and participating in activities?
- How will you communicate with each other?
- What are the expected outcomes of your partnership for your tutoring program? For that of the individual or organization?
- How will you assess the partnership? How often?

## Collaboration and Its Process

In order to establish effective relationships within your community and collaborate with partners, the planning committee should accomplish the following:

- Know your program's goals and objectives. Build a solid foundation before you contact individuals or organizations in the community.
- Be able to articulate your goals, objectives, and expectations.
- Know your community and those who are to receive your service.
- Know your resources and what you have to offer.
- Know agencies and their programs. Understand their structure, their mission, and their activities at least well enough to ask informed questions.
- Know how you plan to administer your program. How will you select and notify the students? Who will keep records and write reports? If possible, prepare the forms you will use in advance.
- Make a strong effort to involve students in approaching agencies and to use them in an on-going way for program implementation.

For additional information, see *Tool 8: Know Your Community* in the Appendix.

Based on material from *Building effective partnerships for service-learning*. Retrieved from <http://www.servicelearning.org/article/archive/118/>

 **Partnership Agreement**

In more formal arrangements, partnerships with volunteer programs or schools are guided by a *partnership agreement*. This document should be created jointly by the managing planning committee and the program's partners. It articulates what the volunteer program expects to accomplish over the long term and how the partners plan to work with the tutoring program to advance their work in these key areas. The agreement could include a set of one-year objectives with measurable outcomes and clearly defined roles and strategies detailing how the volunteer program and the partners will work together and how each partner will benefit.

Adapted from *Partners in School Innovation* (2003). Retrieved June 16, 2003 from <http://www.partnersinschools.org/index.html>

**STRATEGIES TO COLLABORATION**

- 1. Set goals and objectives:**
  - define short-, long-term goals, and expectations
  - create action steps to accomplish those goals
  - determine how to assess achievement
- 2. Establish internal role expectations, avoid:**
  - ambiguity
  - multiple expectations/ overload
  - conflict in roles
- 3. Establish external role expectations**
  - influence on others in organizations and not on the team
  - dealing with group loyalties
- 4. Communication should:**
  - have an effective flow
  - be frequent
  - involve everyone, allow everyone to participate
- 5. Decisions are influenced by:**
  - the style of decision-making
  - who is included in the process
  - conflict management and problem-solving techniques
- 6. Leadership involves:**
  - a skilled facilitator
  - a skilled meeting manager
  - the shared leadership of team
- 7. Norms should be:**
  - unwritten rules
  - criterion that encourage positive team work
  - inclusive, not exclusive

Adapted from *Alliance: Union or association formed for mutual benefit* by Macduff/Bunt Associates

## **Needs Assessment**

After the tutoring program has developed their goals and objectives for establishing a partnership, a needs assessment can take place. This tool helps examine which resources are needed and which are currently available within the community.

### **School Climate and Environmental Considerations**

Family and community members have their own unique prior experiences with schools that will affect the amount and type of contribution they have in your tutoring program. Likewise, students also have their own unique perspectives related to school and how they can contribute to the program. The planning committee should examine these perspectives when trying to identify and establish partnerships between the tutoring program and families or the community. For additional information, see *Tool 9: Group Activity on Assumptions* and *Tool 10: Environmental Checklist and Physical Walk-Through* in the Appendix. The following question can help reassess your program's atmosphere after completing a walk-through of the school:

- What is the first thing you see when you enter this area? What is your impression of this school?
- What is the condition of the things you see? What does the condition of the school (interior and exterior) say about how much people care about the school?
- Does the tutoring program's facility/school seem to reflect what the teachers, tutors, and volunteers feel about students and visitors?
- Based on what has been seen, what do you feel is important to the school?
- Are written items in the home languages of the student body?
- Does the area reflect positively on how school staff feels about students and their families?
- What does this area say about what is important to the school or what the school values?

Adapted from *Partnerships by design: Cultivating effective and meaningful school-family-community partnerships* retrieved from <http://www.nwrel.org/partnerships/cloak/booklet-one.pdf>

## On-going Partnership Maintenance

This chapter provides information needed in order to successfully develop and maintain community partnerships, including information on the following:

- Success Factors in Building Partnerships
- Barriers in Building Partnerships
- Strategies for Successful Student-Adult Partnerships
- Conflict Resolution and Problem Solving



### Success Factors in Building Partnerships

In order to create a successful partnership, your school or program should work to accomplish the following:

#### A Checklist for Successful Partnerships

- Identify potential partners
  - Schools
  - Youth service organizations
  - Nonprofit organizations
  - Businesses
  - Recipients of services
  - Individuals
- Identify needs which are of mutual concern
  - Do a 'needs assessment' of the community with students and agency representatives.
- Determine individuals who will serve as primary liaisons in the planning and implementation process.
  - Assign student coordinators.
  - Visit agencies ahead of time.
- Set up a local advisory board
- Negotiate and agree upon desired outcomes for:
  - Recipients of volunteer services
  - Student/youth volunteers

- Nonprofit organizations
  - Educational institutions
  - Others
- Negotiate and agree upon expectations for the:**
- Recipients of volunteer services
  - Student/youth volunteers
  - Nonprofit organizations
  - Educational institutions
  - Others
- Determine best method for on-going communication and evaluation**
- Periodically, redesign relationships based on changing needs and circumstances**

Based on material from Building effective partnerships for service-learning, retrieved from <http://www.servicelearning.org/article/archive/118/>

 **SUCCESS FACTORS IN PARTNERSHIPS**

- Respect and trust
- Accountability
- Shared vision and outcomes
- Shared resources, skills, funding, and feedback
- Concrete and attainable goals
- Unique purpose/Seen as in self-interest
- Flexibility/Adaptability
- Diversity in partners or cross-section of community represented
- Skilled leadership
- Clear, open, and frequent communication
- Informal and formal communication
- Clear roles and policies
- Multiple levels of decision making and participation
- Mutual support and responsibility
- Include new partners
- Skilled and impartial convener
- Group seen as leader in community
- Address territorial concerns and avoid duplication of efforts
- History of collaboration in community
- Shared sense of commitment and responsibility in community
- Ensure that recipients of service are included in all of the stages

Adapted from Mattessich, P., Monsey, B. 1992. *Collaboration: What makes it work-A review of research literature on factors influencing successful collaboration*. St. Paul, MN: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation. and from *Partnerships by design: Cultivating effective and meaningful school-family-community partnerships* retrieved from <http://www.nwrel.org/partnerships/cloak/booklet-one.pdf>

 **Barriers in Building Partnerships**

 **BARRIERS TO PARTNERSHIPS**

- Negative past experiences
- Current or past conflicts among partners

- Personality conflicts
- Competition or territorial concerns
- Different norms or values about cooperation
- Lack of direction or focus
- Lack of leadership or struggles for leadership
- Unequal involvement and recognition of members
- Poor planning efforts or project failures
- Burnout or unrealistic demands on members
- Bureaucratic or structural impediments
- Youth resistance or resistance by adults to partnerships

Adapted from *Alliance: Union or association formed for mutual benefit* by Macduff/Bunt Associates and from Kohn, A. (September 1993). *Choices For Children: Why And How To Let Students Decide*. Phi Delta Kappan. 8-20. Retrieved 2/18/03 from [www.alfiekohn.org/teaching/cfc.htm](http://www.alfiekohn.org/teaching/cfc.htm).

➔ **STRATEGIES TO MINIMIZE BARRIERS**

- Develop clear roles and expectations
- Keep commitment and activities simple at first
- Encourage partners to be direct with their needs
- Focus on communication
- Do not avoid difficult or problem areas such as territorial issues or motivation
- Spend time getting to know each other
- Make a special effort to include new members in activities

Adapted from *Alliance: Union or association formed for mutual benefit* by Macduff/Bunt Associates

## **Strategies for Successful Student-Adult Partnerships**

The keys to successful student-adult partnerships include many important points, each important to meaningful student involvement in schools. The keys below should encourage educators and student leaders to think positively and proactively about how they engage students, while challenging us all to remember why we want to engage students. For additional information, go to *Tool 3: Student/Adult Partnership: Readiness Assessment* in the Appendix.

 **KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL STUDENT-ADULT PARTNERSHIPS**

*Meaningful Student Involvement...*

- Emphasizes the practical and empowering involvement of students throughout education in order to promote greater academic achievement, close the current engagement gaps in gender, class, and race, and create supportive learning environments for all students.
- Does not happen in isolation; rather, it is the implementation of a set of interrelated strategies and activities that is infused with other efforts directed towards increased school success for all students.

- Depends on a sustainable structure of support to build the capacity of educators and administrators in schools to involve students in meaningful opportunities in teaching, learning, and decision-making. Teachers and administrators become allies with students through student-adult partnerships in school-wide learning communities.
- Requires the consistent support and willingness of adults to integrate students in all aspects of schooling, including teaching, learning, and decision-making. The role of the student-teacher relationship becomes central to creating supportive learning environments and fostering academic achievement for all students.
- Engages students in learning with purpose individually, to strengthen academic performance through relevancy and relationships; collectively, to promote lifelong learning through academic, cultural and civic engagement for all students.
- Empowers students – including their knowledge, perspectives, experience and actions by positively engaging every student in learning, teaching, and leading schools today.
- Makes applied learning relevant through practical application in the school setting: teaching students about learning, engaging students through active processes, and promoting ongoing reflection about learning and teaching by students and educators.

By Adam Fletcher, [www.SoundOut.org](http://www.SoundOut.org)



## Conflict Resolution and Problem Solving

### Principles of Negotiation

Negotiation is a process in which two or more parties share ideas, information, and options, seeking a mutually acceptable outcome. Negotiation in itself is a conflict resolution process; however, it is also an essential part of other conflict resolution processes, such as mediation (assisted negotiation) and problem solving.

#### 8-STEP CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

##### Step One: DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH ANGER

- You can't negotiate a good agreement if you and/or the other person are too angry to think straight or if you don't acknowledge your feelings

##### Step Two: DO YOUR HOMEWORK (think before you approach)

- How does this conflict affect each of us?
- What interests or values are at stake here for each of us?
- What prejudices or assumptions do we each have about the other?
- What approach/style would be best here (avoid, compete, collaborate, compromise)?
- If I want to collaborate, what would be the right time and place to initiate that?

**Step Three: SET A POSITIVE TONE**

- Invite the other person to negotiate. (“Could we talk?”)
- State positive intentions. (“I’d like to make things better between us.”)
- Acknowledge and validate the other person. (“I can see this is difficult for you, too.” “Thank you for working with me on this.”)

**Step Four: USE GROUND RULES (they may be stated or unstated)**

- One person talks at a time.
- Work to improve the situation.
- Stay calm.

**Step Five: DISCUSS AND DEFINE THE PROBLEM**

- One at a time each person shares issues and feelings.
- Use effective listening and speaking techniques. The listening person should be able to paraphrase what they heard.
- Identify interests and needs.
- If necessary, discuss assumptions, suspicions, and values.
- Summarize new understandings.

**Step Six: BRAINSTORM POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS**

- Each person contributes ideas to satisfy interests and needs.
- Don’t criticize or evaluate ideas yet.
- Be creative.
- Use “I can ...” or “We could ...” rather than “You should ...” or “You’d better ...”

**Step Seven: EVALUATE AND CHOOSE SOLUTIONS**

- Solutions should be:
  - Mutually agreeable
  - Realistic
  - Specific
  - Balanced.

**Step Eight: FOLLOW UP**

- Check back with each other at an agreed upon time and date.
- If the agreement isn’t working, use the same process to revise it.

From *Networking, partnerships, and collaboration workbook*. (n.d.). AmeriCorps\*VISTA Early Service Training Tool Time. For additional information, see: [http://www.nwrel.org/ecc/vista/est/documents/Networking\\_Workbook.pdf](http://www.nwrel.org/ecc/vista/est/documents/Networking_Workbook.pdf)

Chapter  
**3**

## Working with the Media

This chapter provides information needed in order to work with the media, including information on the following:

- Media
- Media Plan
- Interviews
- Public Service Announcements
- Advertisement
- Public Relations

For additional information see the *Glossary of Media Terminology* on pages



### Media Usage

Effective media usage and relations can significantly increase the impact of your tutoring program. By using the media, you can reach your entire community instantly. Media can shape how the program or school is perceived by the community. It allows schools or programs to get their message out, provide consistent information, and influence their audience. For example, media can assist your program in:

- Recruiting volunteers
- Locating financial support
- Educating the public about your program and its accomplishments

#### TYPES OF MEDIA

##### Print Media:

- Newspapers (Local and regional newspapers; daily and weekly)
- Magazines
- Other print media such as community newspapers, calendars, church bulletins, corporate newsletters, etc.

##### Electronic Media:

- Television (Local television news and talk shows)
- Radio (Local radio news and talk shows)
- Wire Services (i.e. Associated Press, United Press International, Reuters)

- Internet

#### **MEDIA USES**

##### **Recruitment:**

- Advertise in local or regional newspapers
- Business or organization newsletters
- PSAs on local radio or television stations

##### **Recognition:**

- Recognize outstanding volunteers in newspaper or radio announcement
- Internal newsletter article
- Give story tips to TV and newspapers about your program and or volunteers

##### **Promotion:**

- Advertise upcoming family literacy events
- Invite reporters to events for photos and interviews
- Invite high profile local celebrities to draw in media attention

Note: This section is excerpted with permission from a presentation and material produced by Kim Schmanke, *Building relationships: A guide to working with the media*, 2003, and is adapted from *A guide to working with the media* retrieved [http://www.nationalservice.org/resources/cross/media\\_guide.pdf](http://www.nationalservice.org/resources/cross/media_guide.pdf)

## **Media Plan**

If your tutoring program will be using the media in the future, you should create a media plan. This plan should be flexible, updated annually, and will help your program prepare for working with the media.

### **Planning Steps**

1. Get to know the local news organization. Develop and maintain a comprehensive, up-to-date press list for your community's media outlets. For each of these channels, you should identify the following information for key reporters and or editors:
  - Name
  - Title
  - Address and or e-mail address
  - Phone number
  - Fax number
2. For each source of media inquire about methods for submitting news ideas to the media
3. Learn about the community pages and announcements opportunities
4. Call editorial board at the local paper for opinion articles
5. Identify your public relations goals (i.e. volunteer recruitment, community awareness, financial support)
6. Identify your audience
  - Parents, schools, community leaders, potential volunteers
7. Identify your message
  - Limit to no more than 3 messages in any single story idea
  - Present relevant and concise information
8. Identify your resources (i.e. resources available or needed, time, budget, etc.)

9. Identify your timeline (are there any upcoming events, projects, or results that you would like to promote?) Developing a timeline should address factors such as timeliness of the story and media deadlines.

↪ STRATEGIES FOR CONTACTING REPORTERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Place the first call in advance of the event</li> <li>▪ Introduce yourself and the organization that you represent</li> <li>▪ Avoid jargon or acronyms</li> <li>▪ Identify the reason that you are calling, i.e. key message</li> <li>▪ Ask if they have time to talk, then be brief and concise</li> <li>▪ Offer to provide a press release or letter with details of your event or story.</li> <li>▪ See <i>Tool 11: Press Release Guidelines</i> and <i>Tool 12: Sample Press Release</i> in the Appendix.</li> <li>▪ Do not take it personally if a reporter seems uninterested or rushed</li> <li>▪ Follow up with details of the event or story</li> </ul>

↪ STRATEGIES FOR WORKING WITH REPORTERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Get to know local media or familiarize yourself with your outlets</li> <li>▪ Build relationships</li> <li>▪ Be considerate and respectful</li> <li>▪ Be aware that stories are often prepared on a tight deadline and return phone calls as soon as possible</li> <li>▪ Be aware that a reporter maybe unfamiliar with particular topics, have background information available</li> <li>▪ Provide accurate and factual information, if you are unsure about an issue offer to get back to the reporter as soon as possible</li> <li>▪ Make initial contact</li> </ul>

Note: This section is excerpted with permission from material produced by Kim Schmanke, *Building relationships: A guide to working with the media* presentation, 2003.

**📁 Creating a Media Opportunity**

It is best to contact the media in advance of your program’s event or story. You may begin sending press releases and advisories two weeks before an event and follow up with a phone call. When creating a media opportunity, consider the following questions:

- Is it newsworthy?
- What is the story and message?
- Which news outlet-visual, oral, or written-is most likely to cover?
- Is there a certain time during the event that is most newsworthy?
- Who is the right spokesperson?
- What is their timeline?

At the event, make sure to identify a point of contact for the media to access. Greet the reporter and offer to show them around. Introduce him or her to key participants. Provide any relevant details or materials about the group or event. For example, background materials can be sent with a press release or media alert. For additional information, see *Tool 13: Sample Media Advisory* in the Appendix.

**WHAT MAKES NEWS?**

- Visual
- Timely
- Interesting or unique
- New
- Local interest
- Local angle to a larger issue
- Controversial
- Widespread appeal or well-known people involved

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## **Interviews**

An interview is a great method for reaching your community. You are able to address the public and their concerns first-hand.

### **Preparing for an Interview**

Before the interview, you should learn about the media source with whom you are providing an interview. There are several things to take into consideration:

- Understand with whom you are speaking. Is it a photographer, reporter, producer? Sometimes these people do more than one job.
- Know their angle. Be prepared and think of the context. You may ask what their direction is ahead of time. Inform them that you need preparation time in order to be accurate, etc.
- Prepare talking points. Think through your objectives and key messages and rehearse.
- Remember aesthetics. For example, dress and background.

**TIPS FOR TELEVISION**

- Talk to the reporter, not the camera
- “Sound bites” are usually 10-12 seconds. Practice your message and timing prior to the interview.
- Minimize hand gestures.
- Be aware of how you appear on camera. Remember you are representing your program. Also, do not wear white.

### **During an Interview**

During the interview, remember that there are various degrees of comments. Below are some examples of terminology for different levels. However, it is best to assume that everything you say is always “on the record.” Also, be aware of the following:

- If an interviewer is creating a negative slant on the topic, avoid going negative, too
- Stay on the subject and focus on your message.
- Answer the question. Give the answer that you want, not the one they want.
- Speak clearly
- Remember your audience: Avoid jargon and acronyms.
- Smile and breathe
- Tell the truth
- Remember the “5 Ws and H” or “Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How”

**VARYING DEGREES OF COMMENT**

**“On the record”**

- All statements made can be attributed to you by name and title

**“On background”**

- All statements are directly quotable, but not by name or title

**“On deep background”**

- Anything said is useable but not in direct quotation or for attribution

**“Off the record”**

- Information shared is for the reporter’s knowledge only, and cannot be checked for confirmation or made public in anyway.

**After an Interview**

- Find out when the story will be printed or air
- Assess how you did
- Check your own notes
- Respond to an inaccuracy, either in what you said or in what the reporter said. Be polite when making corrections.

Note: This section is excerpted with permission from a presentation and material produced by Kim Schmanke, *Building relationships: A guide to working with the media*, 2003.



## Public Service Announcements

Public service announcements or PSAs are short messages that radio and television stations air free of charge on behalf of the public interest. These messages must contain information beneficial to the community and cannot include controversial material. PSAs are a great vehicle to communicate upcoming community events, recruitment needs, service opportunities, and other information beneficial to the community. For additional information, see *Tool 14: Sample Public Service Announcement* in the Appendix.

**WRITING STYLE**

When writing a PSA, remember that broadcast copy is written and designed for the ear. Keep in mind that broadcast copy should:

- sound personal and have a sense of immediacy;
- be clear, concise, conversational, and correct;
- use the active voice and present tense whenever possible;

- use contractions just as you would if you were talking; and
- include information about how listeners (viewers) can obtain more information.

Your message should be easy to understand the first time it is heard. One way to test your copy for conversational tone is to read it aloud to someone else. Make sure there are no words that are hard to pronounce. Keep in mind that it may be an announcer reading your PSA and not you. Also, be sure it contains accurate facts, dates and names.

**PSA LENGTH GUIDELINES**

The following is a guide on how the length of your message relates to the time needed. Be sure to fit your message in the time slot that is allotted.

- 10 seconds – about 25 words
- 30 seconds – about 75 words
- 60 seconds – about 150 words

**Getting Your PSA Placed**

To find out more about placing PSAs, contact the public service directors at the television and radio stations serving your area. Meet with them personally to find out their PSA requirements (preferred length and format). Be sure to stress why your announcement is important to the community. Some stations may even be willing to help produce PSAs for your organization! The Office of Public Affairs produces print, radio, and television public service announcements for national distribution. You may request these products and localize them for use in your community.

This material is from *A guide to working with the media* retrieved [http://www.nationalservice.org/resources/cross/media\\_guide.pdf](http://www.nationalservice.org/resources/cross/media_guide.pdf)

 **Public Relations**

The goal of public relations, also known as PR, is to attempt to positively influence people and perceptions. Perceptions are the things people believe to be true about an organization or movement. These perceptions can be formed through what people see and experience either through personal interaction or through the media. Misperceptions about your organization can cause problems such as lack of community support, poor recruitment efforts, and loss of funding. Your program’s PR approach should strive to shape and define the perceptions of those with who you interact or you “public.”

**TIPS FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS**

**Public Relations**

- Developing good public relations is like developing a personal reputation. It requires time, energy, effort and understanding.

**Perception and Image**

- It is essential to understand that you have the ability to influence how individuals and groups view your program. Be sure to stay in touch with the various perceptions and images of your program.

**Publics**

- Know who your publics are and address their issues and information needs appropriately.

From Maddux, D., (n.d.). *Public Relations Toolkit for National Service Programs*. Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

## **Appendix**

Contains additional resources to assist in the development of community partnerships and use of the media for a volunteer-based tutoring program.

## **Tool 1: Steps to Building Partnerships**

- 1. Plan before contacting community organizations.**
  - Develop basic goals and guidelines for your tutoring program.
  - Identify issues in which your program is interested.
  - Learn which community organizations and people are already involved in addressing these issues (i.e. United Way, volunteer centers, word of mouth, etc.).
  
- 2. Include community organizations in the planning process**
  - Community organizations can offer a multitude of information and provide insight into the community's needs.
  - Invite a variety of community organizations to participate.
  - Involve the organization's clients, if appropriate.
  - Obtain the individual's or organization's "buy-in" and belief in your program.
  
- 3. Involve community agencies as partners in your program, if possible.**
  - The agency has the final say in their service to be provided to their clients.
  - Develop shared responsibility for the program (in areas such as orientation, training, project development, supervision, and recognition.)
  - Develop a partnership that is mutually beneficial and on-going.
  - Share costs where possible.
  - Identify a contact for the agency to call if it has questions.

 **Tool 2: Partnerships and Benefits**

**Directions**

Use this worksheet to help identify possible partnerships and contributions. First, brainstorm with your planning committee about who is a possible partner. Make a list of potential partners, what they can contribute to your program, and what you have to offer them. Record the information below. Some samples are provided below.

<b>Possible partner</b>	<b>What does the partnership contribute to this partner?</b>	<b>What does the partner contribute to this partnership?</b>
Mass media/media representatives		
Retired persons		
Volunteer center		
Financial institutions		
Elected officials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tribal</li> <li>▪ Local</li> <li>▪ State</li> <li>▪ Federal</li> </ul>		
Local government agencies		
Chambers of commerce		
Youth/Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Elementary</li> <li>▪ Middle and High School</li> <li>▪ Peer and Cross-Age Tutors</li> </ul>		
Teachers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Elementary</li> <li>▪ Middle and High School</li> </ul>		
School staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Elementary</li> <li>▪ Middle and High School</li> </ul>		
School Board members		
School/district administrators		
Business/industries and leaders		
Parents		
Community residents		
Religious leaders		
Women’s groups		
United Way		
Civic organizations/clubs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kiwanis</li> <li>▪ Lions</li> </ul>		
Other(s)		

Adapted from *Networking, partnerships, and collaboration workbook*. (n.d.). AmeriCorps\*VISTA Early Service Training Tool Time. For sample contributions go to: [http://www.nwrel.org/ecc/vista/est/documents/Networking\\_Workbook.pdf](http://www.nwrel.org/ecc/vista/est/documents/Networking_Workbook.pdf)

 **Tool 3: Student/Adult Partnerships**

**An Adult’s Self-Assessment Tool**

**Directions**

This is not a test! Rate yourself on a scale of 1-5, “1” being a beginner in this area. In the first column, write where you see yourself now. In the second column, write where you’d like to be. Be honest, and remember that there are no wrong answers.

Now	Future	
		I affirm and support people’s feelings and ideas.
		I treat all youth with respect.
		I appreciate and incorporate the strength of similarities and differences among young people (gender, class, etc.)
		I resist the urge to dictate in my classroom or youth program.
		I am careful about interrupting youth.
		I believe in the potential and empowerment of all youth.
		I listen carefully to all kinds of students.
		I trust young people to be responsible.
		I am able to identify positive possibilities in difficult situations.
		I get involved and provide support when a person puts down or devalues themselves or others.
		I seek to learn from the young people I work with.
		I expect youth to make their own decisions.
		I say something where youth rights and due respect are being denied or violated.
		I advocate for the improvement of young peoples’ involvement and youth/adult partnerships throughout my school and community.
		I am familiar with resources about involving young people and youth and adult partnerships (e.g. technical assistance, books, etc.)

## **Tool 4: Sample Partnership Letter**



Date

Potential Partner's Name

Job Title

Name of Organization/Business

Address

Dear Name,

Please consider our organization, Title of Tutoring Program, for a future partnership with the Potential Partner's Organization/Business. The mission and vision of our program is well respected and a wonderful gift to every community it serves. We have many needs that we would appreciate the opportunity to share our program with you at sometime.

Program background, philosophy, and/or accomplishments

Explain the benefits this organization would receive as a result of the partnership, such as:

As an event Partner, your company will be promoted throughout the conference as a supporter to hundreds of club board members and professionals. Your company's name will appear in program materials and will be displayed on signage you provide during the conference. Should you so choose, your company may even participate as an exhibitor during this conference. This is a perfect venue for your company to build awareness and goodwill among hundreds of leaders in the organization who will be attending from throughout the state.

We hope you will consider supporting us at this conference. Conference Partnerships enable our program to keep registration and other conference fees to a minimum – maximizing the number of board volunteers and professionals that are able to attend. It's going to be a great conference – so don't miss out on this exciting opportunity

Enclosed is information about our program and recent events. Please let me know if you have any questions or would like to come over and take a tour of our facility to determine the level of possible involvement. I can be reached at phone number or email address. For more information, our website can be found at program's website.

Thank you for your consideration,

Your Name

Job Title

Initials

Enclosure

## **Tool 5: Collaborating With Community**

### **Directions**

Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.

<b>Our Tutoring Program:</b>	<b>Rating</b>				
	<b>Not Occur- ring</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Extensively</b>
Provides a community resource directory for parents and students with information on community services, programs, and agencies.	1	2	3	4	5
Involves families in locating and utilizing community resources.	1	2	3	4	5
Works with local businesses, industries, and community organizations on programs to enhance student skills and learning.	1	2	3	4	5
Provides “one-stop” shopping for family services through partnership of school, counseling, health, recreation, job training, and other agencies.	1	2	3	4	5
Opens its building for use by the community after school hours.	1	2	3	4	5
Offers after-school programs for students with support from community business and volunteers.	1	2	3	4	5
Solves turf problems of responsibilities, funds, staff, and location for collaborative activities to occur.	1	2	3	4	5
Utilizes community resources, such as businesses, libraries, parks, and museums to enhance the learning environment.	1	2	3	4	5
Other types of activities:	1	2	3	4	5

Based on *Collaborating with community* evaluation tool in a *Measure of school, family, and community partnerships*. Available online: <http://www.nwrel.org/csrdp/Measurepartner.pdf>

 **Tool 6: Goal Setting Worksheet**

**Directions**

This worksheet can be used to record short- and long-term goals. First, write down your vision statement. Next, brainstorm with your planning committee about in which areas you would like to set your goals. Record the areas in the first column. Next, in the middle column, record the specific that corresponds to that area. Finally, record a timeframe by which each goal can be accomplished.

**Vision Statement**

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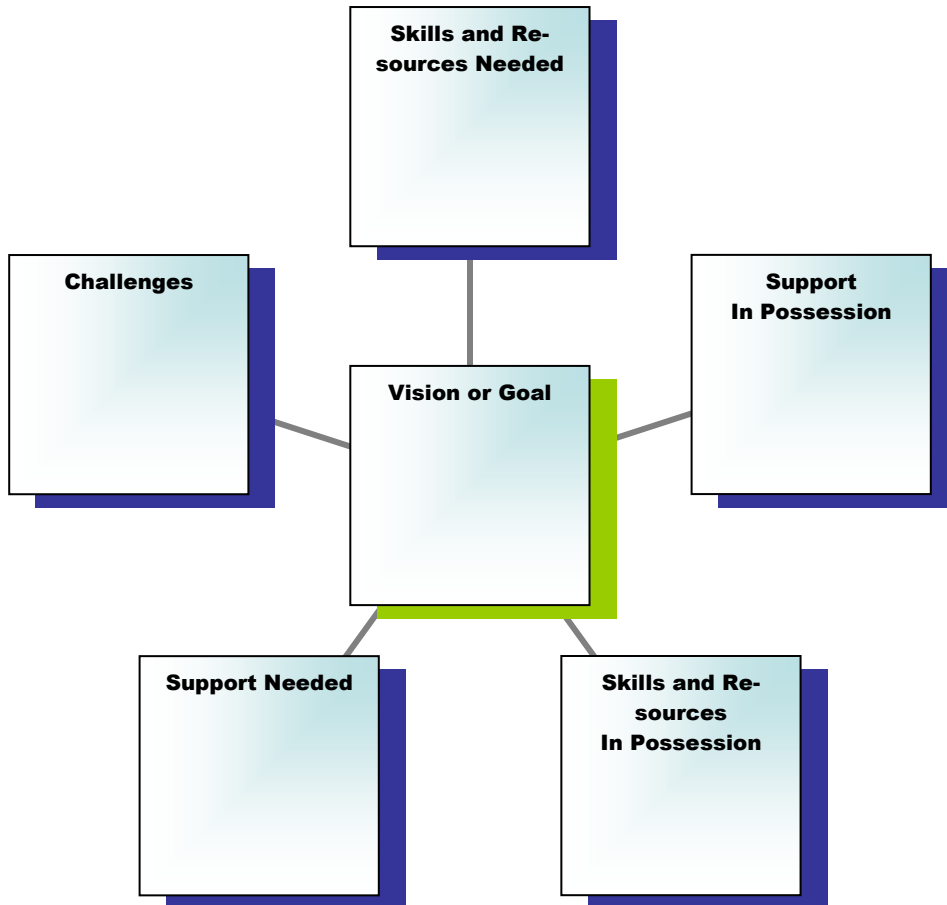
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<b>Goal Area</b>	<b>Specific Goals or Objectives</b>	<b>Timeframe or Target Date</b>

This tool is based on material from *Beyond the Bell: A Toolkit for Effective after School Programs*. (Online). Available: <http://www.ncrel.org/after/bellkit.htm>

 **Tool 7: Action Planning Worksheet**



## Tool 8: Know Your Community

### Who Are the Members of Your Tutoring Program or School Community?

After your team, who should be composed of a students, families, program staff, and community members, has addressed assumptions held by you and others, it is time learn about the members of your school or tutoring program's community. This activity will give you an opportunity to know who they are as well as what their assets and strengths are. This exercise will help your program be better able to plan activities as well as identify barriers you may come across.

*Use your school improvement plan and district/school demographic information to find out the general make-up of your school community, including such aspects as:*

- Percentage of single-parent homes
- Number of ESL/ELL families and what languages are spoken at home
- Rate of mobility
- Percentage of latchkey children

### Directions

Write the following statements down. Have the individuals (from each category: youth, families, school, and communities) discuss the statement and write the things they want the people in the room to know about their group. When finished with their poster, have them continue to another poster, read the things written by that group, and add any additional comments.

1. A few things that the school should know about *families* in this community are:
2. A few things that families and community members should know about the *school* are:
3. A few things that families, the community, and school should know about the *youth* in this community are:
4. A few things we should know about the *community* are:

After they have had a chance at each of the above posters, have them continue to the rest of the posters. Encourage discussion. Remind groups to proceed to the next poster when they have finished with the one where they are. When each of the poster statements have been answered, ask the group members to return to their seats and ask one person to read aloud the answers from one sheet ... using the answers as discussion starters to increase understanding among team members and the groups they represent.

- If I only had access to \_\_\_\_\_, I could be a much better teacher (parent, administrator, student, etc.). (Fill in the blank)
- If only this community had \_\_\_\_\_, my job as a teacher (parent, administrator, student, etc.) would be much easier. (Fill in the blank)
- What are some the challenges facing families and school staff on a daily basis?

Based on *Partnerships by design: Cultivating effective and meaningful school-family-community partnerships*, retrieved from <http://www.nwrel.org/partnerships/cloak/booklet-one.pdf>

## Tool 9: Group Activity on Assumptions

### Directions

Read each statement and check whether you feel this is or is not an assumption that hinders partnerships at your school. When done, discuss the assumptions the group considers most troublesome. Together, identify positive statements that will dispel preconceived notions, change attitudes, and help facilitate partnerships.

### Assumptions That Hinder Partnerships

1. **Parents who don't attend school events don't care about their children's success in school.**  
School-Based Assumption?  Yes  No  
What May Be the Reality?
2. **Parents who are illiterate or do not speak English can't help their children.**  
School-Based Assumption?  Yes  No  
What May Be the Reality?
3. **Parents from different ethnic and racial groups don't understand the role they play in their children's education.**  
School-Based Assumption?  Yes  No  
What May Be the Reality?
4. **It is up to parents to find out what is going on at school.**  
School-Based Assumption?  Yes  No  
What May Be the Reality?
5. **Getting families involved takes a lot of time and energy, with the results not often corresponding to the effort.**  
School-Based Assumption?  Yes  No  
What May Be the Reality?
6. **Children who are troublemakers often come from families that do not value education.**  
School-Based Assumption?  Yes  No  
What May Be the Reality?
7. **It is all right for school staff to contact families only when a child is in trouble.**  
School-Based Assumption?  Yes  No  
What May Be the Reality?
8. **The problems of "hard-to-reach" families and "at-risk" students are the fault of the families themselves.**  
School-Based Assumption?  Yes  No  
What May Be the Reality?
9. **Teachers are expected to play the roles of parents too much in their jobs.**  
School-Based Assumption?  Yes  No  
What May Be the Reality?

Based on *Partnerships by design: Cultivating effective and meaningful school-family-community partnerships*, retrieved from <http://www.nwrel.org/partnerships/cloak/booklet-one.pdf>

 **Tool 10: Environmental Checklist and Physical Walk-Through****Directions**

**Environmental Checklist Instructions:** Take one to two minutes to answer the questions on the Environmental Checklist. For all questions that you cannot answer, leave the line blank. Think about these questions when you are doing your physical walk-through and, during the walk-through, fill in any answers you may have missed.

**Physical Walk-Through Instructions:** Divide the partnership development the planning group or team into smaller groups of two to three individuals. Each small team should contain no more than one family member, community member, school staff, or student so each team has a chance to view the school from multiple perspectives. Assign teams to examine two to three specific areas of the school, which may include the parking lot, entrances, main office, halls, classrooms, rooms specifically set up for family/ community members, restrooms, cafeteria, library, playground/recreation area/playing fields, and principal/ administrator's offices.

Use the **Record Sheet** for Physical Walk-Through to make comments regarding the areas you have been assigned. Questions on the top of the form will assist your critical observation, but make any additional comments you feel are important.

Take 15 minutes to complete the walk-through. Then have team members reconvene in the meeting room to share their experiences. Use the guiding questions below to assist with your discussion.

**Guiding Questions Instructions:** After your walk-through, have team members discuss the things that really stood out to them and the things that they may not have noticed before. Were there any surprises? After a general discussion of findings, have the large group answer the following questions.

Based on your findings,

- How welcoming is the school?
- What is different between what children see and what adults see?
- What do the displays say about what is important to the school or what the school values?
- Is this a place where parents want to send their children and where children want to come? Do they feel at home?
- What environmental changes would you make to your school to create a place where family and community members want to form a partnership?

NOTE: You may want to use some of what you found during the team's walk-through to prompt ideas for partnership activities during the action planning stage.

 **Environmental Checklist**

1. Are there parking spaces reserved for family and community members?  
 Yes  No
2. Are these spaces located near the front entrance of the school?  
 Yes  No
3. Is the playground material and equipment safe and in good repair?  
 Yes  No
4. Are fields maintained?  
 Yes  No
5. Are tracks useful and in good repair?  
 Yes  No
6. Does the exterior of the building look good?  
 Yes  No
7. From wherever a person enters the building, can they easily find the main office?  
 Yes  No
8. Is the tone of the signs in the school welcoming and inviting?  
 Yes  No
9. Are signs written in the home languages of the students present in the school?  
 Yes  No
10. Is student's work displayed on the walls within the hallways and in the classrooms?  
 Yes  No
11. Are people greeted warmly when they entered the main office? (For instance, does the staff seem pleased to see them? Do staff smile and use a pleasant tone of voice?)  
 Yes  No  
 Are people greeted individually when they arrived? (For instance, do staff members say "hello" and introduce themselves? Do staff members call visitors by name? Do staff members use the primary language spoken at the home to say "hello"?)  
 Yes  No
12. Do staff members assist in a timely manner?  
 Yes  No
13. Can students and family members see themselves represented in the books, pictures, and materials used in the classrooms?  
 Yes  No
14. Are the school and the classrooms accessible to all students and family members (even those with disabilities)?  
 Yes  No
15. Are restrooms clean and well lighted?  
 Yes  No
16. Are soap dispensers filled and paper supplies adequate?  
 Yes  No
17. Are there doors on the stalls in the restrooms?  
 Yes  No
18. Are the tables and benches in the cafeteria clean and in good repair?  
 Yes  No
19. Are floors in the cafeteria kept clean?  
 Yes  No

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20. Is the library well-stocked with reading materials?  
 Yes  No
21. Is the library an inviting place that makes students want to come in and read?  
 Yes  No
22. Are family and community members allowed to access resources within the library (check out books, use computers)?  
 Yes  No
23. Is there a table for meetings in the principal's office?  
 Yes  No
24. Are the main office and the principal's office all "business" or are they student/family friendly?  
 Yes  No
25. Does the principal's office reveal a personal side of the principal?  
 Yes  No
26. Does the school environment reflect how the staff feel about the students?  
 Yes  No
27. Is there a room set up specifically for family and community members?  
 Yes  No
28. Are there adult tables and chairs in the family room?  
 Yes  No
29. Is there a telephone in the family room?  
 Yes  No
30. Is there a place to store valuables and personal items in the family room?  
 Yes  No
31. Does the family room reflect how the school feels about parents?  
 Yes  No
32. Do family and community members feel welcome at the school?  
 Yes  No

Based on the *Environmental Checklist* tool in *Partnerships by design: Cultivating effective and meaningful school-family-community partnerships*. Available online: <http://www.nwrel.org/partnerships/cloak/booklet-one.pdf>

## Tool 11: Press Release Guidelines

This material is from *A guide to working with the media* retrieved [http://www.nationalservice.org/resources/cross/media\\_guide.pdf](http://www.nationalservice.org/resources/cross/media_guide.pdf)

A press release needs to follow strict editorial guidelines. A release should follow the “inverted pyramid” format news stories are written in, with the most important information first. The inverted pyramid allows editors to easily cut the story to fit available space without losing important facts.

### THE INVERTED PYRAMID

The top of the pyramid – the first paragraph – is the lead. It generally answers the “five Ws and H” — who, what, when, where, why, and how. The lead must be written to grab reporters’ and editors’ attention immediately.

The second paragraph is called the “bridge” and provides transition from the lead to the more detailed information to follow. It may explain any “whys” and “hows” not included in the lead.

The third and last part of the pyramid is the “body.” The information given in the lead should be explained in the body. It should include interesting and significant details that pertain to the story. Quotes from relevant people can be included here. Remember, the facts in your body – as in the entire release – are presented in diminishing order of importance.

### FORMAT

Formatting a press release will help ensure it gets read – and used. The following information should be at the top of your release:

- contact name, telephone number, and e-mail and web site addresses for your organization in bold type;
- the date for the story’s release (usually the day you send it out); and
- a short headline that serves as the “hook” for your story.

#### Releases should:

- be no longer than one page, if possible;
- be single-spaced;
- avoid using jargon and technical terms, or explain them if they must be used;
- include a paragraph that defines national service;
- use quotes from relevant people; and
- be printed on your organization’s letterhead.

When there is more than one page, type the word “MORE” at the bottom of the page and at the end of your release, type “END” or the marks “###”.

The A.P. Stylebook (available at local bookstores) provides useful details on punctuation, capitalization, abbreviations, and titles that are acceptable to most media.

*Always remember to check carefully for spelling errors!*

## **Tool 12 : Sample Public Service Announcement**

This material is from *A guide to working with the media* retrieved [http://www.nationalservice.org/resources/cross/media\\_guide.pdf](http://www.nationalservice.org/resources/cross/media_guide.pdf)

Starkville Literacy Program  
123 State Street Stop  
Starkville, MS 12345

Start Using: Upon Receipt  
Stop Using: June 1, 2003

CONTACT: Jane Smith  
(555)555-5555

**--20 seconds --**

AmeriCorps is getting things done.

In Starkville, AmeriCorps is increasing the literacy rate by tutoring children and teaching adults how to read.

If you're over the age of 18, you can become an AmeriCorps Member and

Do service for your community.

Earn money for college.

Get experience for life.

Call 555-5555.

 **Tool 13: Sample Media Advisory**

This material is from *A guide to working with the media* retrieved [http://www.nationalservice.org/resources/cross/media\\_guide.pdf](http://www.nationalservice.org/resources/cross/media_guide.pdf)

NEWS ADVISORY  
January 1, 2001

CONTACT: Jill Smith  
(000)000-0000

**MAYOR POWELL TO VISIT LEARN AND SERVE AMERICA PROJECT  
Powell Joins School Superintendent Washington in Honoring Students**

Mayor Abbey Powell and Superintendent Ransom Washington will visit Abraham Lincoln Middle School's Learn and Serve K-12 program on Wednesday, Jan. 8 at 10 a.m. The Mayor and Superintendent will congratulate the program's student volunteers on their highly successful efforts in beautifying the surrounding neighborhood in Appletown.

The mayor will present Lincoln's principal, Jacqueline Aker, with a certificate commending the students' accomplishments and will tour the local area to survey the project sites.

Since the program's inception in September, Lincoln students have removed graffiti, cleaned up parks, and planted trees throughout the area. The seventh- and eighth-graders are a part of Learn and Serve America, a national program that engages students in service-learning, a teaching method that integrates community service into classroom curriculum.

National service is a movement that engages Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service to help solve community problems. In addition to Learn and Serve America, which involves students from kindergarten through college in community projects that integrate service and education, the Corporation for National and Community Service also oversees AmeriCorps and the National Senior Service Corps.

Press is invited to cover the event.

WHO: Mayor Abbey Powell  
Superintendent Ransom Washington  
Principal and students of Abraham Lincoln Middle School

WHAT: Presentation of certificate to Learn and Serve America students

WHY: To commend the students for their community service efforts

WHERE: Lincoln Middle School  
123 Main Street, Appletown

WHEN: Wednesday, Jan. 3 at 10 a.m.

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## **Tool 14: Sample Press Release**

This material is from *A guide to working with the media* retrieved [http://www.nationalservice.org/resources/cross/media\\_guide.pdf](http://www.nationalservice.org/resources/cross/media_guide.pdf)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 1, 2001

CONTACT: Sandy Scott  
(123)123-4567

### **SENIOR CORPS TUTORS IN CLEVELAND SERVE AS MODEL FOR “AMERICA READS” INITIATIVE**

CLEVELAND -- The success of 20 Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) members who tutor children at East Elementary School has made their program a national model for the “America Reads” initiative. The goal of “America Reads” is to ensure that all children can read independently by the time they complete third grade.

The RSVP volunteers worked twice a week with first-graders over the past year and helped the children raise their reading levels by 20 percent.

“The President has challenged Senior Corps volunteers to take a major role in the ‘America Reads’ drive to provide a million tutors and build young children’s reading skills. Our program will be a model for similar efforts around the country,” said RSVP Director Joanne Newsome.

“The children are excited about reading and look forward to seeing their tutors. The volunteers are equally excited about helping the children and are very proud of their improved reading scores. It shows that senior service can make a tremendous difference in children’s lives.”

National service is a movement that engages Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service to help solve community problems. In addition to the Senior Corps — which involves a half million Americans age 55 and over as Foster Grandparents to troubled children and youth, Senior Companions to the homebound elderly, and RSVP volunteers in a myriad of community projects — the Corporation for National and Community Service also oversees AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America.

###

# Glossary of Media Terminology

From *A guide to working with the media* retrieved [http://www.nationalservice.org/resources/cross/media\\_guide.pdf](http://www.nationalservice.org/resources/cross/media_guide.pdf)

## electronic communication

The Internet and the World Wide Web offer opportunities to provide information to reporters on your program. If your program has its own web site, consider developing a section targeted to press – and include press releases, a project summary, an updated “what got done” report, member profiles, and quotes from corporate partners, community leaders, and national service members. Remember to include your Internet e-mail and Web addresses on press releases and other materials. If you don’t have your own Web address (or even if you do), you may want to refer reporters to the Corporation for National and Community Service’s web site -<http://www.nationalservice.org> The corporation’s web site provides up-to-date information to help the public - and the media - understand the corporation’s mission and national service programs. It also gives the media and others interested in national service fast access to information such as press releases, legislative updates, program directories and applications, and newsletters, as well as providing links to other national service web sites. Please provide a hotlink to the corporation’s web site – and contact the Office of Public Affairs with your site address so we can reciprocate. National service programs may encourage members of the press to visit the CNCS web site to:

- Better understand the National Senior Service Corps, Learn and Serve America, and AmeriCorps;
- Access recent press releases;
- Get an in-depth look at national service in action through one of many program profiles; or
- Obtain address and phone numbers of national service programs to schedule interviews or site visits.

## magazines

Local and regional magazines offer many of the same advantages as newspapers- large staffs, time, and space to devote to your story and a product that can be reprinted. Stories of interest to magazines include profiles of interesting people, trends, or exceptional performance in some area. Except for stories of widespread, national interest, you probably will want to concentrate your efforts on placing stories in regional, state, or city publications. Articles in special interest publications, or in trade or professional journals, reach specific, key audiences that can be important to your program. These publications cover issues ranging from nature trail restoration to crime studies to new trends in education. You should tailor each story to the specific audience when approaching such publications. And remember that most magazines work with a lead time of several months.

## media advisories

A media advisory (or press advisory) is a memo to the media alerting them to an upcoming event (i.e. press conferences, awards ceremonies, special events, etc.). Media advisories are written similarly to press releases, but are much shorter and repeat the “5 Ws and H” in an invitation format at the bottom of the release. Advisories should be faxed to reporters about three to five days before your event and followed up with a phone call to confirm their at-

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tendance or to offer additional information. Be sure to include detailed information on where your event is to be held, including directions if necessary.

**newspapers**

Newspapers provide in-depth coverage of stories and are particularly good for reaching decision-makers who are interested in more than the “headline” news found on television and radio. Newspapers include regular news and features, editorials, commentaries, letters to the editor, investigative reports, and opinion columns. Print reporters spend a great deal of time learning about and explaining complex issues. They appreciate all the documentation, facts, and figures you can provide. Weekly newspapers are a major source of information for people outside of metropolitan areas. It is generally easier to place stories in these publications, as they focus primarily on local stories. Additionally, college newspapers are usually receptive to stories about local programs.

**pitch letters**

When a story is not breaking news - such as a human interest story - writing a compelling letter to the editor of a newspaper or magazine, or the producer of a TV or radio show, is often the most effective way to summarize the most important aspects of your story and why readers, viewers, or listeners will want to know about it. The letter should be no longer than a page and should be written in clear and convincing language. Written materials should be faxed to all the media outlets on your press list that may be interested in your story. Although this may mean that three press releases go to the same publication, you are more likely to get coverage when you have the attention of several people at a newspaper or station. All of the above press communications should be followed up with phone calls to the appropriate reporters and editors.

**press calls**

If you don't have time to put anything in writing, call reporters and editors directly to pitch your story. Be sure to get your main point across quickly and in the most compelling fashion. Reporters do not have time to waste.

**press conferences**

Press conferences are held to announce significant news to the media, such as the launching of a new program, an anniversary event, or an innovative partnership. They frequently include VIPs and other speakers. Effective press conferences require careful planning and attention to detail, and can be quite time-consuming.

**press kits**

A press kit is a set of materials that provides the information a reporter needs to write an accurate article. Press kits can be sent anytime to reporters but they should always be on hand at press conferences and other special events. Among the materials you may choose to include in press kit are:

- Press releases
- Fact sheets
- Program brochures
- Agenda (for an event or press conference)
- Biographical sketches of speakers (for an event or press conference)

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- Photos of speakers (for an event or press conference)
- A copy of your latest newsletter
- Any other important program information
- Your business card

**press release**

A press release is a succinct account of your story (usually one page) and should be written as a news article, following the “5 Ws and H” format. That is, the who, what, where, when, why, and how of the story. Press releases usually publicize an event or program, announce an upcoming activity or a new initiative, or report relevant news. Newspaper editors often use portions of press releases in their stories.

**public affairs programs**

Public affairs programming is usually a combination of news and community service-oriented material. It takes many forms on both radio and television:

- Interviews
- Documentaries
- Panel discussions
- Editorial commentaries

Program ideas should be current and geared toward the community at large. For example, you can ask the station to sponsor a community service segment during local news programming, then provide information and national service members to be interviewed.

**public relations**

The attempt to positively influence people and perceptions.

**public service announcements or PSAs**

Are short messages that radio and television stations air free of charge on behalf of the public interest. These messages must contain information beneficial to the community and cannot include controversial material. PSAs are a great vehicle to communicate upcoming community events, recruitment needs, service opportunities, and other information beneficial to the community.

**radio**

Radio shares many of the characteristics of television. Most radio stations tailor their programming to a very specific audience (e.g., older adults, minorities, etc.) In recent years, many radio stations have expanded their news coverage to include talk shows and call-in programs on issues of interest to the community. This provides opportunities to match your message to the station’s audience. However, there are many radio stations that don’t carry news at all, so again, it’s important to do some homework. Please be sure to tape radio shows that feature your program and send a copy to the Office of Public Affairs.

**special events**

Special events on Opening Day, Martin Luther King Day, National Day of Service, and Make a Difference Day are not only great occasions to work with other service programs, but also great opportunities to gain media coverage of your program. Encouraging commu-

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nity leaders and other VIPs to participate in these special events will also help attract media attention.

**television**

Television provides the greatest media reach, but it is also the toughest sell. There are several opportunities for airing your message:

- Local news programs
- Public affairs programs
- Talk shows
- Editorial comment
- Feature segments
- Public service announcements
- Local cable television shows and public access TV

Watch your local news programs to become familiar with the reporters, their interviewing styles, and the types of stories they care about. Your message for television must be short and simple. Television news usually reduces complex stories to 30- to 60-second segments. Lengthy explanations usually end up as short “sound bites.” The assignment editor in a TV news department generally assigns reporters to cover stories one day in advance. Inform the assignment editor and reporters of scheduled events in advance with a media advisory and follow-up call. Calls should be placed before noon. Events held before 1:00 p.m. have the best chance for coverage in that day’s broadcast. Whenever a TV program airs a piece on your program, be sure you tape it on a VCR. You’ll want a copy to help with future marketing efforts, and outside video services can be very costly. Please send a copy to the Office of Public Affairs immediately after airing — this helps staff track story trends and share good ideas with other national service programs.

**wire services**

Wire services, such as the Associated Press (AP), United Press International (UPI), Reuters, and PR Newswire gather news from all across the country and the world -and provide stories on a continuous basis for other media. Wire service bureaus are typically located in large cities, but they frequently use “stringers” (local reporters) to cover news in smaller cities.

Reuters Daybook and the Associated Press Calendar, published Monday to Friday, carry short accounts of breaking stories and upcoming activities like press conferences, conventions, speeches and hearings. Reporters often use this calendar to determine their story of the day. To get an event listed, submit the information via press release or media advisory at least three to five days in advance to the wire service bureau nearest you — and follow up with a telephone call. Materials should be addressed to the Daybook Editor or Calendar Editor.

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