

PSAs and the Role of Local Units

What is a public service announcement (PSA)?

PSAs are messages that media outlets (most often television and radio stations at this point) air for free to fill unsold ad space. These messages are designed to inform the general public about a topic or issue: in our case, about parent involvement through PTA[®]. PSAs are used in virtually every broadcast station, both television and radio, in the nation.

A national PSA is very appealing to local stations because it gives them access to high-quality materials that present the station well to viewers and listeners. The challenge is that stations receive many more PSAs than they have time to air.

What benefit does a local unit receive from participating in the PSA campaign effort?

We need your help to get PTA's PSAs to stand out from the crowd. The most effective method to achieve this goal is to visit the station and request that the media gatekeeper commit to airing our PSAs. This is a simple process and the materials on this site will help you to succeed. As an added benefit, you may be able to build relationships with the stations that can pay future dividends.

Local television and radio stations are sometimes interested in putting a local angle on news stories. Most stations develop a database of quality spokespeople on a wide variety of topics. Stations want spokespeople who are articulate and knowledgeable about local issues. Know who would be appropriate spokespeople from your PTA to talk about family and school topics and events.

Building an ongoing relationship with a station can also be helpful to you in other ways. The station may become a good source of celebrity MCs for events, provide additional exposure and valuable local contacts, and offer tie-in promotional opportunities. As the relationship strengthens over time, you will likely receive a higher level of support for PSAs as well. Therefore, as you meet with local stations, keep in mind that you are really trying to build long-term relationships, not just sell the current PSAs.