

General Tips for Media Interviews

Before the interview:

- Prepare two or three essential points that you want to get across during the interview.
 - Focus on the great work the community of parents, teachers, children and schools are doing with their school garden.
 - Use the [HP Media Messaging Talking Points](#) sheet for key points.
- Support your points with facts or anecdotes from your experience.
- Be aware of the time and length of your interview.
- Some interview programs will have someone "pre-interview" you before you go on. This will establish the direction the interviewer intends to take, and amount of time
- Remember you are never off the record.
- Always break the ice by asking the reporter something about them.

During the Interview:

- Before you begin to speak, smile at the interviewer to establish rapport.
- Speak like you're speaking to a friend, family or younger sibling giving friendly advice.
- Let your voice and your delivery reflect your emotions and points of emphasis.
- Try to avoid distracting, meaningless movements.
- Maintain eye contact throughout the interview and call him/her by his/her first name.
- Ignore the technicians on the set and look at the camera only when you want to drive home a special point directly to the viewing audience.
- Keep an "open," friendly face.
- Communicate total enthusiasm and involvement in your subject.
- When doing video recordings don't be afraid to ask for a break, water, or a bathroom break especially if an interview is steering in the wrong direction.

Getting Your Point Across:

- State the most important information first – then provide the background.
- Listen carefully to the question. If you consider it difficult, pause before you answer to give yourself time (it's ok to ask for a question to be repeated).
- Don't feel obligated to accept unfamiliar facts or figures.
- If you don't know the answer to a question simply say, "I don't know, but I'll find out the answer and get back to you," or reference somewhere the public could get more information.
- Answer an incorrect question by: "This is a common misperception. Here's why..."
- Don't be afraid to re-direct the interview
- Don't try to answer hypothetical questions; they tend to obscure your true position. Turn the tables by clearly stating your general position and then offering your own example.
- Use short words and simple, declarative sentences.
- Avoid scientific terminology.
- If you use quotes, keep them short. If you can't recite the quote verbatim, then don't.