



2020-2021 Champion Schools Program | Media Tip Sheet

Not only are the use of local media and social media promotion part of the Project Participation contract, but they are important components of the judging criteria as well. The ultimate goal of your promotion efforts is to generate exposure about the Champion Schools Program and your project. To help you out, we've put together easy and effective ways to create awareness that incorporates both traditional and online outlets.

I. Traditional Media | Newspapers, TV & Radio

The first step to planning your traditional media outreach is to develop a targeted media list. Your media list should include local newspapers, TV programs, and radio stations that cover your county.

1. Newspapers: Fortunately, NJ.com makes it easy to find newspaper contacts. Within NJ.com, there is a News Index page that lists all local newspapers by county. From there, you can find which local newspapers cover your county and navigate to their pages within NJ.com. Additionally, NJ.com has a Contact Us page that has direct links to the contact information of affiliated major New Jersey newspapers. It is important to note that newspapers have dedicated email addresses for press release submissions. When drafting your press release, please use the Press Release Sample we have provided as a template.

2. Television: Specialty TV programs (Local TV news, programs produced by community TV stations, and educational shows) offer an excellent opportunity for communicating the program. These programs cover news relevant and appealing geographically so the more localized your pitch is, the better your chances are. The key is to make your pitch both compelling and convincing.

3. Radio: Radio interviews are another excellent vehicle for publicizing the program. Best practice is to contact your local radio station and pitch yourself as an interview candidate to the news director or assignment editor. Just as with TV, your radio pitch should be compelling.

II. Online Media | Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Blogs & Message Boards

Social Media promotion is the perfect complement to your media outreach. It's a great way to raise awareness of your project to fellow classmates, friends, parents, and other community members. Remember, they are the audience that your project is targeting.

1. Facebook: We recommend developing a fan page for your project. Be sure to include the following links listed below. Harness the power of your team and have everyone put the fan page link on their personal Facebook profile, as well as asking your friends to 'like' the page by sharing it. Regularly post status updates about your project, the program, and the showcase. By doing this, you will raise awareness of the program and increase your online voting participation. **Tag our account, @JerseyDrives in your posts!**



2. Twitter: On Twitter, in addition to regularly promoting the program to your followers, the use of hash tags (#) can be effective for finding groups that share similar interests. Start following like-minded lists and in turn get yourself listed. When incorporating links in your tweets, it's best to create short-code URLs using a service like Bitly.com. **Follow us @JerseyDrives!**

3. Instagram: Follow us and share your Champion School journey with other schools. Sometimes it's hard to communicate in words, photos sometimes makes the task easier. Help us bring the safe teen-driving world together with powerful images about the incredible projects schools are working on. **Follow us on instagram at @JerseyDrives. Tag us in your posts so that we can find your photos.**

4. YouTube: Because YouTube emphasizes visuals, sharing your videos through it can be a very effective way to raise awareness and engage your audience. When uploading your video, be sure to include related keywords and tags in the description of your video. This is a great way to generate traffic and expand your reach because it increases search engine position rankings. We also recommend throwing in a well-timed fan page link and Champion Schools Program web page link at the end of your video.

5. Blogs & Message Boards: Another way to generate exposure is to comment on blogs, article message boards, and forums. For this to work you have to leave comments on one's that are related to New Jersey teen driving. Be sure to include links to your fan page and the Champion Schools Program web page.