

Tips for a successful Give Kids A Smile® media interview – 2012

- Put things in your own words and discuss the topics in ways that are relevant to your local situation.
- Explain what Give Kids A Smile® is in a few short sentences. Emphasize how making sure state residents have good oral health saves individuals from dental pain and infection *and* is economically and socially important to our state.
- Tell how your local GKAS® event helps get children out of pain and provides some basic care, but does not solve the long-term problem for children and low-income families.

Remember to...

- Relax and speak in a conversational tone. Convey interest, concern and confidence, but don't get too familiar or chatty.
- State the most important information first.
- Be concise and clear. Print reporters need more information than broadcast journalists, because they have more space to run stories.
- Avoid technical jargon. For example, say "cavities" or "tooth decay" instead of "carries"; say "fillings and crowns" instead of "restorations".
- Most broadcast interviews will be taped and edited before they air. The reporter will probably use a 10-15 second sound bite from your interview and summarize the rest of the information you provide.
- Think before you speak. It is easier to edit out a silence than "umms" and "ahhs."
- Tell a story. Avoid simply answering "yes" or "no" to questions.
- A brief story of a child in dire need of dental care makes for a memorable interview. Direct reporters to the WDA website or press release for statistics.
- Describe in general terms a serious pediatric case you've seen due to lack of access to oral health care and then bridge to the WDA and member dentists wanting to work with lawmakers on "Healthy Choices" for reducing barriers to care in Wisconsin.
- For television interviews, always look at the interviewer. The cameraperson will find you.
- Everything you say to a reporter before, during and after an interview can be used in a story. There is no "off the record", so don't say anything you don't want to appear in a story.