

VISIBILITY EVENTS: MAKING AN IMPACT

Fun, lively events help you to educate and involve more people in the campaign. Events can also energize the people who are already invested in the campaign and keep them involved. Most important, well-attended, well-publicized events powerfully demonstrate to both the public and elected officials the breadth and depth of the constituency that supports your issue.

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL EVENTS:

(For more detailed information, refer to "Planning Events" Tip Sheets)

Hold a variety of events.

- ✓ With any campaign, it important to stage large events in central locations, but it is also helpful to hold additional events that are accessible to all members of your constituency.
- ✓ More localized events let groups come together on a neighborhood level to build their own momentum and get excited about being part of a larger campaign.
- ✓ In Brooklyn, for example, instead of just holding events in flagship parks like Prospect Park, hold events in multiple neighborhoods or council districts.

Invite VIPs to speak at your events.

- ✓ Having public officials at your events not only helps to gain their support but also engages the community and promotes your campaign. *(See "Working with Elected Officials" tip sheets for more info)*

Invite the media.

- ✓ Do extensive media outreach for your events.
- ✓ Events provide good visuals that will help you to get your picture in the paper or be featured on the news. *(Refer to the Media section in these tip sheets for more info)*

Be visible.

- ✓ Carry hand-lettered signs to give a neighborhood feel to your campaign
- ✓ Bring vivid photographs of your park or events your groups has held
- ✓ Hang a banner with the campaign name and logo in easy view
- ✓ Use stickers to show the campaign's presence in the crowd at each event where public officials will be present
- ✓ Hand out flyers at parades, debates and community events.

Be vocal.

- ✓ Be sure the people in the crowd are ready to approach key figures, such as candidates for public office or current public officials, to talk about the issues.

Attend events other than your own.

- ✓ Being present at other, non-campaign-sponsored events, such as a candidate debate or neighborhood festival, creates the illusion that you are everywhere; public officials will notice and respond.
- ✓ If you would like to find out about events in a certain park or neighborhood you can check out the Partnerships for Parks website, www.itsmypark.org, which lists public events in parks. Also, most newspapers will advertise candidates' public schedules and other important neighborhood events.

EVENT IDEAS:

Official Campaign Kickoff

- ✓ Throw a big news conference or community rally to announce the start of your effort. (*Refer to the Media section in these tip sheets for more info*)

Elected Officials' Forum Or Debate

- ✓ If your campaign falls before an election, invite the candidates for public office (e.g., mayor, city council, and borough president) to speak about and debate your issue at the height of the campaign season.
- ✓ Other appropriate times to hold a forum include before a public hearing or vote is scheduled, or at a monthly group meeting.
- ✓ While a forum lets candidates air their views, its most important function is to introduce candidates to the depth of support for the issue, showing them the diversity of groups involved in the campaign.
- ✓ To be successful, the forum needs to have a large turnout. Weeks prior to the event, start mailings and a phone bank to get all of the supporting organizations to attend and bring a crowd.

Rally

- ✓ A rally is an excellent tool for bringing together the constituency you have built, for helping them feel part of a larger movement, and to get them excited about all of the work they need to do during the campaign.
- ✓ Have each of the groups carry placards or banners to be visible; invite public officials and high-profile speakers.