



# GUIDELINES ON HOW TO ENGAGE WITH LOCAL MEDIA

## 1. Identify and contact your local media outlets:

- Write down a list of your local newspapers, radio and television stations i.e. ones specific to your area.
- Research contact details for these media outlets. The best way to do this is to either search online or to call the station/media house directly.
- Try to identify the producer of a specific show rather than the overall station manager or emailing an 'info' address.
- With newspapers try and find the editor of the community section or someone who focuses on human/women's rights.
- If you can't find details online, call the media outlet just ask reception for the email address/- phone number for the producer of the specific show you're interested in.

### **TIP for identifying outlets and contacts:**

The best time slots for radio are ones where people are in their cars - either the morning show or the drivetime/late afternoon shows. All coverage is good, but these slots are your first prize!

## 2. Pitch the event

Once you've obtained the contact details you'll need to pitch your event. Below are samples of how to pitch this event over the phone or via email. As Mother's Day approaches, Embrace will provide all team leaders with a standard press release and images you can share in these pitches.

### **Example of phone pitch:**

*Hi there. My name is XX and I am part of a movement called Mother's Day Connect. I wanted to get in touch as we are going to be visiting new moms in local hospitals on Mother's Day to show them love and support. I thought this would be something your listeners/readers would like to be a part of. It's a great way to spend your Mother's Day. We will be visiting the (name of hospital) on Sunday 12 May etc...*

### **Example of email pitch:**

*Good morning XX,*

*I am contacting you regarding Mother's Day Connect, national celebration of new motherhood*

*started by Embrace, South Africa's movement for mothers. The campaign brings together women from across the country on Mother's Day to acknowledge and celebrate the bond of motherhood.*

*It is a simple but powerful concept. Women form small teams and visit birthing facilities in their local communities for one hour on Mother's Day to build connections and celebrate South Africa's newest moms.*

*In its fourth year running, Embrace is again calling on women across the country to join us for this event and we would love for your listeners/readers to join us.*

*Please see attached the press release and some images from last year. If you would be interested in doing an interview, I am the leader for (insert hospital name) and would be happy to answer any questions or provide more information if needed.*

*I look forward to hearing from you.*

*Kind Regards,*

*XX*



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## *Tips for getting coverage:*

- The goal is to get an interview or a mention on air. We also recommend asking the outlet to share the Facebook event on their social media pages.
- Newspapers may want to interview you, but often they will use the press release information as content. They may request more images than the ones supplied in the standard Embrace press release. If so, please contact the hub team for help.
- Our first prize is coverage before the event. We won't turn down offers to run the story after the event but to make the most of the coverage we like to have the story run before Mother's Day.
- If a TV outlet expresses interest, please remember that **they are not allowed to film or interview anyone at the hospital**. It is vital we protect the privacy of these women and to keep the integrity of Mother's Day Connect. If TV are interested, then you can recommend an on-air interview using images rather than live coverage of the event.

- Persistence is key. We recommended that you follow up consistently. Try calling a few times with a gap of a day or two in between or send follow ups to your email every couple of days. That being said, media don't like to be bombarded and if they haven't replied to you after a few attempts you are unlikely to get coverage.

## 3. Complete your interview

Now that you've found the contact, successfully pitched the event now it's time to give an interview. Preparation is key! For the most part they will ask you very standard questions. In fact, producers are often keen for you to send through some questions to help them direct the conversation. Below are the questions you should be prepared to answer – be sure to rehearse some answers before your interview.

1. What is Mother's Day Connect?
2. Why did you get involved and why should other women get involved?
3. Who can be a part of Mother's Day Connect? (Remember that only women are allowed to be involved due to the private nature of visiting maternity wards.)

4. Which hospital are you visiting and which hospitals are available to be visited in this area?
5. How can our listeners get involved?

## *Tips for giving interviews:*

- Remember to give these contact details clearly and slowly. Explain that listeners can go to the Mother's Day Connect page on the Embrace website [www.embrace.org.za](http://www.embrace.org.za) and sign up to join or they can become a leader and visit a birth facility in their community. Mention that there are step-by-step guides as well and all necessary information on the website.
- If the conversation becomes more in-depth then just keep in mind the ethos of Mother's Day Connect. Alternatively, if you are asked a question and you simply don't know the answer – that's ok – just say you aren't sure and then make another point about what a great initiative it is. You can also just remind people to visit the website or Facebook page for more information.
- It's easy to get a bit flustered when talking to the media but try to just keep calm. Most presenters are lovely and just want to have a relaxed chat.



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Please keep in mind the below:

- *Remember we are not saviours. We are there to celebrate, support and to just be there for them however we can on the day.*
- *Mother's Day Connect isn't a charity. This event is about bringing solidarity not charity.*
- *We are not judging any woman's life or birth choices*

