



National Organization of  
**State Offices of Rural Health**

## **MEDIA TOOLKIT**

A large decorative graphic at the bottom of the page features overlapping, curved shapes in shades of green and blue, representing hills. Two white human figures with arms raised are positioned on a white path that curves across the hills.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This rural health media toolkit was created in October 2014 to help State Offices of Rural Health (SORHs) develop or expand their media outreach. This guide contains information and resources that will help support you in communicating key messages to television, radio and print professionals. We have included a list of valuable resources that will answer your questions when working with the media.

Developing relationships with the media and public information officer (PIO) is vital to promoting our messages and stories about people living in rural America. Let's celebrate the power of rural America by telling wonderful stories! Together, we can transform communities through proactive media outreach and positive storytelling.

We want to thank three-time Emmy-award winning journalist, Kelly Peterson, for helping NOSORH create this helpful resource. Feel free to contact her with any questions or to practice your interviewing skills at [kpkellypeterson@gmail.com](mailto:kpkellypeterson@gmail.com).

Remember to share your stories with us so we can partner with you in promoting the successes and challenges of rural America. You can find other inspirational rural stories at [www.celebratepowerofrural.org](http://www.celebratepowerofrural.org).

## HOW TO THINK UP GREAT STORY IDEAS

How do you come up with fresh, new ideas to tell a memorable story? The best way is to put a face to your topic. Telling a compelling personal story. Find someone in your state who has an interesting story to tell—one that will resonate with the public.

### Wyoming Success Story

The Wyoming Office of Rural Health needed a story for 2014 National Rural Health Day. They didn't have a big budget to hire a crew and produce a professional video, but they did have someone who could research potential stories. Their staff worked with community partners and their PIO to get the word out: they needed a good personal story to promote to the media and public.

All that hard work paid off. After about a month of research they found a woman who dedicated years to bringing telemedicine into her small Wyoming town. Today, her town now has a health clinic that uses telemedicine to connect patients with quality medical care. Her story included helping a burn patient who came to the clinic for help and received telemedicine care remotely. All was made possible through this woman's passion for better health care within her community. The Wyoming Office of Rural Health will feature his story in their press release, key messages, and on their website and other social media sites for National Rural Health Day 2014.

When thinking of story ideas consider how they meet your goals and needs. Often a single, powerful story can attract a lot of media attention. The key is for your team to find a strong story. Once you have a one, it is easy to wrap message around it, then add facts, key messages and statistics. Making time to research a story idea is important. Seek help from your partners, and ask if they know of anyone willing to share their story about living in rural America. Chances are they will know of someone. Everyone has a story!

Brainstorming with your PIO is also a good way to identify story ideas. PIOs have strong connections with reporters and the media. Start developing relationships with university and hospital PIOs. They have strong connections within your community and state. Talk to other SORH teams and see what stories they have previously shared to gain media attention. Which stories worked for them, and why? The more relationships you build, the easier it will be to network and find a solid, compelling story for your promotional needs.

## **TELL YOUR STORY**

Understanding how the media produces and reports stories is crucial. NOSORH wants to equip each SORH with the right tools to tell their unique story to the media. This toolkit is intended to help each SORH understand how the media broadcasts or prints a story, and how to work with a PIO, reporters and producers. It will also explain how to find, pitch, tell and deliver a story that will in turn bring more publicity to your organization.

For **story ideas**, consider all of your program activities with SORH, SHIP, FLEX, SLRP or other initiatives of your SORH – who have your information dissemination, coordination or technical assistance activities touched? Can any of the partners or facilities you have supported point to a patient or a community issue or a policy that has been addressed because of these efforts? Have you given awards in your state? Is there an innovative initiative in your state that you've been involved in? What are outreach, network and network development grantees doing in your state? Do you have a group of hospitals or clinics working together to benchmark their quality or financial improvement efforts – what results can you share?

Working with a small staff and low budget is challenging, but your team has access to several affordable high-tech solutions. For example:

- Learn simple tools on your smartphone to produce stories.
- If you do not have time to write a press release or create content for an upcoming event take advantage of templates that NOSORH has created for you.
- NOSORH has also crafted thoughtful key messages, so each SORH can use these messages to tell a compelling story.

## PITCH YOUR STORY

The purpose of a pitch letter is to grab the attention of a reporter or news team-and convince them that your story is interesting, appealing and worth sharing with their audience. The best time to pitch a story is weekdays between 8 and 11 a.m. That is when the news team meets and discusses story ideas and the news of the day, mapping out which stories they will cover. This is also a time when producers, reporters and assignment editors are sitting at their desk placing calls, checking the Internet and gathering information for the news they'll present to the public that day.

How can you capture the attention of a news team and increase the chances that your own story will be told? Follow these tips.

- Before you develop your pitch letter, do your homework. Get to know your reporters and producers and the types of stories they typically tell. Know a reporter's "beat," so you don't pitch a human-interest story to a reporter who only covers financial news. Talk to your PIO for advice on how best to approach each reporter. If you talk to reporter who is not interested don't give-up. Instead politely ask to speak to the assignment editor or producer, who may see the story's potential.
- Use a descriptive, intriguing subject line when emailing your pitch to a news outlet.

**Poor subject line:** Celebrate National Rural Health Day. This is too generic and forgettable. Pique a reporter's curiosity.

**Better subject line:** Telemedicine Connects Burn Victims in Rural Wyoming to First-Class Hospital Care.

This subject line tells telegraphs the main story idea while compelling the reporter to keep reading. Keep it simple.

- Now it's time to write your pitch. Keep it connected to the subject line. Begin with a compelling quote from a telemedicine patient who received burn treatment. Keep your pitch short and get right to the point. If your opening line is long and wordy, you risk losing your reporter's interest. Remember, your pitch is one of the dozens or more that reporters must wade through. Include links to great pictures or addition compelling details.
- Always briefly introduce yourself. This gives your pitch a more personal touch.
- Make sure your idea is relevant! How and why is this pitch important to the viewers? Does it tie to another widely reported event or a season or trend? Don't delay in pitching your story, if it ties to current headline. News changes rapidly. Make sure to include who, what, where, when, why and how. Make it timely.
- Provide story ideas with your pitch. If you are pitching a story for National Rural Health Day, be specific. Give information about events happening in your state or community-and suggest multiple angles for the reporter to cover the news. The more ideas you give the better your chances of gaining media exposure.

- Follow-up your email with a phone call, asking if the reporter received your emailed news ideas tied to an upcoming event. This is also a good way to develop a relationship with people in the newsroom.

### **Top Pitch Mistakes**

- Do not have any spelling or grammar errors.
- Know your reporter's beat. If you don't know, call the assignment editor and ask.
- Never over promise. If you over exaggerate or give false information you have most likely lost a good media connection.
- Do not keep calling a reporter and leaving messages. This can be annoying and distracting.

## **GENERAL TIPS ON GETTING YOUR STORY TOLD**

- A personal story added to a press release that has a local or state impact is most likely to grab the media's attention. While they are interested in facts and numbers, the reporter will also want an interesting story to tell in their news segment. Find an engaging story and add it into your news release.
- If you do feature a personal story in a press release, try to make that person available to talk to the media. This could be the person you highlighted in your press release or in a video. The media loves it when an organization provides visuals and people to tell a story.
- Make phone calls to media outlets. Ask for the assignment editor or a producer and have a conversation about your event. Engage the person. "I know you are busy but I have a great story idea." Generally, the producer is the key player who decides if your story gets on the air is the producer. The assignment editor or reporter will make story suggestions, but the producer is the one making editorial decisions. Ask to speak to the reporter AND producer.
- Send a personal email to reporters and anchors in newsrooms using their name to pitch or forward ideas. Take care to spell their name correctly!
- Research to learn which reporters cover particular beats, or areas of interest and then create a master list of media contacts by news topics. Every few months update your list by calling to ensure that each media contact is still there and covering the same beat, especially in smaller markets.
- Make sure to update your list by calling every few months to ensure your contact list is updated, especially in smaller markets.
- Don't give up. If your story is timeless (not seasonal or time sensitive) then check in with your contact weekly. Follow-up with phone calls.



## STORYTELLING ON A SMALL BUDGET

- Look for interns who can help you with research, finding story ideas and making phone calls. Talk to your HR department for information on hiring an intern. Many college students eager to gain business experience are looking internships because internships count as taking a class.
- In addition to college interns look for volunteers who believe in your mission and want to help with storytelling or producing videos. Non-profit television stations usually keep a list of volunteers for assistance. Start networking so you can create a list of your own volunteers. First, ask friends if they would be interested in helping you produce a video or photomontage. Talk to your HR department or PIO and ask if they know of anyone who could volunteer their time in your office.
- You don't always need a video to tell a good story. Use one or two sentences from a strong written story and post to your social media websites linking back to the printed piece. Add written stories to your press release or key messages. Tweet out links to stories week or day of the event.
- Use your smartphone to shoot a video or capture an audio clip. The quality works great for websites.

Use media templates available through NOSORH. To date, these templates include:

- Photo contest materials
  - Request for videos flyer for people who in rural America to tell their story
  - Press releases
  - Key messages
  - Governor proclamation
- Get creative! Ask for an in-kind donation for radio, television or print coverage. For example, if a radio or television station produces a 15-second spot to promote National Rural Health Day you can offer the station a free booth at your event. You can also use the station's logo on your media releases and other promotional materials.

*Dale suffered serious burns while trying to fix a water heater at his home. "I went to shut it off and lit a BBQ lighter and before I knew it my right hand, fingers, arm and palm got burned." At Farson's own small Eden Valley Telehealth Services Clinic, Dale received expert treatment under the guidance of a burn specialist in Salt Lake City, who examined Dale via video camera."*

## **HOW TO GET TELEVISION BROADCASTING COVERAGE**

Television news is always looking for visually interesting story ideas. Stay current on the news of the day, and look for opportunities to share SORH messaging. Find angles to embed rural health stories into the day's news. For example, if you are pushing a story for National Rural Health Day and know of a great story, call the media and see if they are interested.

### **Pitching your TV story idea**

- Come up with a brief, conversational and exciting story pitch. For example, infectious disease are in the news, and new procedures are in place; showcase how your rural service providers are coming up with new and innovative ways to combat the issue. Reporters, producers and photographers must come to the meeting with at least three story ideas. Your ideas could be one of them! Note: (Primetime evening newscasts usually begin between 2 and 3 p.m.)
- Why does this idea matter? Is it current or evergreen? Which means, is it a certain kind of story, a story that, because of the topic, is always of interest to reader. Both count!
- For television, think in terms of visuals. Email the reporter or producer pictures or a video to use for a story.

### **Tips for On-camera Appearances**

- Wear solid colors during a television interview. Avoid patterns and big, colorful prints. Anything “busy” will appear distracting to the viewer, which takes away from your message. Avoid big jewelry, as this can hit the microphone and create audio problems. If you will be interviewed in a TV studio call ahead and ask what to wear. You don't want to wear blue or green, for instance, if the studio set background is also blue or green. Generally, bright or solid colors are good for television -and for print interviews if you will be photographed.
- If you will be interviewed as part of a panel, always ask for guidance on how to prepare. Often, these types of interviews are rehearsed, and an interviewer can provide questions in advance.
- Before an on-camera interview, ask the reporter if you should look at the camera or the reporter. Reporters who work in smaller television markets are often new to the business and may forget to coach you on this, basic but important tip.
- Never wear sunglasses during an interview unless required for a medical condition.
- If you are the interviewer, never interrupt or “talk over” your guest. Let your guest deliver a complete thought or sentence. To ensure easier editing and a solid sound bite always wait a few seconds before asking another question.
- If you show energy and enthusiasm during your interview, most times, your guest will respond the same way.

## **HOW TO GET PRINT MEDIA COVERAGE**

Print media coverage presents a unique in-depth opportunity to tell SORH stories. Always offer to send a photo for the publication, especially if your contact is on a tight deadline. Stay current on the news of the day, and look for opportunities to share related SORH messaging. Look for opportunities to share stories so reporters can quickly add them to an article.

### **Craft Your Print Media Story Idea**

- Come up with a solid, conversational and exciting story pitch.
- Have a hook. Why does this idea matter? Is it current or evergreen? Which means, is it a certain kind of story, a story that, because of the topic, is always of interest to reader Both count!
- For print media, think in terms of in-depth or complex stories that are better explained in a longer article.
- Include opportunities for photographs, so your ideas include visuals.
- Remember, the interview is not about you! Think about your audience reading this article and what resonates with them
- Print reporters want quotes. Give them several.
- When speaking to a reporter or writer by phone keep your key messages and notes so you can refer to them.
- Familiarize yourself with the magazine or print publisher so you can match the tone with your pitch to their print style.
- Don't overwhelm your reporter with too many facts or statistics.
- Always assume that everything you say is recorded! There is NO such thing as "off the record."

## **HOW TO GET RADIO COVERAGE**

Radio provides a valuable medium for easily telling SORH stories. Create exciting, interesting health features or upcoming events to share on the radio. Radio interviews can be live, taped in advanced or recorded remotely via the phone. Radio can often broadcast longer interviews than television can. Use it to your advantage!

### **Craft Your Radio Story Idea**

- Come up with a conversational, exciting story pitch or upcoming event.
- Review your calendar with fresh eyes, looking for upcoming health events the public would want to attend.
- Create opportunities for radio stations to conduct live broadcasts where crowds gather.

### **Tips for Radio Interviews**

- If possible, conduct radio interviews in a studio. Try to avoid interviews over a cell phone, unless it is an urgent situation. The potential for a bad reception or accidental disconnection is high.
- During the interview, take care to speak words clearly, making sure you are not rushing.
- Speak in interesting sound bites! Do not ramble. Practice reading your key messages right before your interview. Use a tape recorder to do a sound check and listen to your voice. Make your message as memorable as possible.
- Be descriptive with your language.
- When using statistics, remember to include emotional elements. Weave in a short narrative with your numbers. For example, during an interview if you use statistics put a face to those numbers. Get personal with your story by using a story to really drive your point home. From a past article about a town receiving grant money to fight obesity, “We know that nearly 72 percent of Wayne County residents are overweight or obese,” said Emilie Sisson, manager of the Rural Health Network. “This statistic is about 12.5% greater than the New York State average.”
- Turn your cell phone off before an interview.
- Get a good night’s sleep before your interview so your concentration and focus will be stronger the next day.
- Bring talking points to the interview.
- End with a “call to action” statement. How can listeners learn more? Give your website address or other information about the event you are promoting.
- Relax and enjoy the interview. This is your chance to speak directly to your audience by delivering your key messages to highlight your mission.

## GETTING PREPARED FOR YOUR MEDIA INTERVIEW

### Before:

- Practice. Never try to “wing it” especially for planned events. Know exactly what you will say in your introduction and prepare strong talking points. If someone else writes your talking points, make time to discuss them with the writer so you fully understand each one.
- Think about the words you will use. Do not use jargon or slang that the general public will not understand. What you say during an on-camera interview may resurface on radio, in print and on social media. During an on-camera or radio interview keep your answers to about 25 to 35 seconds. Depending on the story and news your complete broadcast interview could be edited down to just one minute. Maximize your interview time by preparing a solid strategy to deliver your messages concisely.
- Send the reporter background information about your organization. This could be the history of your company or key facts related to the story.
- Ask the producer/reporter if they can provide questions in advance. Their willingness to do so may depend on the urgency of the report. If they can’t provide advanced questions, it doesn’t hurt to email them suggested questions. Often times, reporters are working on a deadline and rushing to update several social media sites, so this help may be appreciated.
- Reporters work on strict deadlines. When approached for an interview, ask how long it will take so you can adequately prepare. Also, ask the reporter’s name and what media outlet they are with. This way, if the reporter doesn’t call you back, you call the reporter.
- Develop a “call to action” for your conclusion. Prepare your material and the messages you will end the interview. Always starts strong *and* end strong.
- Take the time to present yourself professionally. Spend a few minutes before the interview freshening up. During radio or print interview a photographer often times will take pictures to post on social media to tease the story. Be prepared so you feel confident representing your agency.
- Rehearse!

### During:

- Never wear sunglasses during an on-camera interview unless a medical condition requires it. If your eyes are sensitive to strong lighting, politely ask the photographer to deflect some of it away from your face.
- Pay attention to your body language. Stand tall and confident. Do not fidget or use excessive hand gestures. Use positive facial expressions and smile often. Media interviews are quick and you want to leave a positive and lasting impression. Doing so enhances your credibility.
- Never respond to a question with “No comment.” If you do not know the answer say you will have to find out and follow-up with that information.

- Imagine your audience and speak to them. Use a conversational tone.
- Look at the reporter while answering questions as you would in a conversation. Never look directly at the camera unless the reporter tells you to.
- Frame your answers in sound bites. These are brief and interesting statements you make during an interview. This is a clear statement or sentence that you give the reporter during an interview. The reporter typically does not have time to create a sound bite through editing. Make the reporter's job easier by delivering a clear, concise message that is ready to use.
- Pause for effect when necessary.
- Never repeat a reporter's negative question. This sends the wrong message. Instead, frame your message in a different, more positive way.
- Avoid using jargon or technical language. Most reporters will NOT use this for the broadcast.
- When rehearsing notice if you say "um" when thinking, or if you tend to start a sentence with "you know?" or "right?" These speech elements distract your message. Silence is better than filler words or phrases.
- Nervousness can cause you to talk faster than normal. Consciously take your time while you are talking. This will help you articulate your words and your audience can understand you better.
- Short answers are always better than long-drawn-out answers. Sticking to the point makes a strong sound bite.

**After:**

- Thank a reporter in person and then follow up with a thank-you email immediately afterward.
- Send a thank-you card after the broadcast or publication to describe the impact this media coverage had on your community and how much you enjoyed the report. This is a great way for you to build a relationship with the news team or reporter.
- Most photographers will continue to take photos after the interview. Smile, use positive facial expressions and relax. The shoot is not over until the camera is put away and the reporter has stopped asking you questions.
- If the interview is not live, ask the reporter if he/she would like you to review anything for accuracy before it is published or aired.
- Let the reporter know you are interested in future projects.
- Make sure you are both connected on social media so you can start developing a relationship.

## HOW TO HANDLE HOSTILE QUESTIONS

- If you are in a situation where you are asked a hostile question, stay calm. Smile, relax and respond with kindness.
- Stay in control. Start using your key messages and always end with a positive statement.
- Remain calm. Do not respond emotionally. The reporter and your audience will remember your reaction, which is likely being recorded or photographed. Remember, this is an *opportunity* to deliver your message.
- Do not respond with a negative comment or argue your point. Try to empathize with the person asking the question.
- Answer the question directly to the person who is directly asking.
- Remember, people can argue about facts and figures, but they cannot argue about your experience. Use this to your advantage. Share a brief, relative story to illustrate your point.
- Watch your body language! Never place your hands on your hips or point at your audience or the camera. This comes across as offensive.
- Before the interview, think about whom your audience is and what they want to know. Review some possible questions you may be asked and write the answers down. Always maintain your composure, even if the reporter or audience is losing theirs.
- Practice handling hostile questions with another person. Have your partner role play with you and provide feedback on your responses.
- Have an exit strategy. Expect the unexpected. Add a sentence to your note cards should you encounter a hostile question. Get back to your key messages and end positive.

## **PRODUCING YOUR VIDEO**

Before producing your video you must first have answers to these critical questions:

- What is my topic?
  - Who is my audience?
  - Where will I distribute the video for promotional purposes?
  - What is my budget?
  - Do I have anyone to help me?
  - Do I need to hire a professional crew?
- 
- If you need to produce a video for television, chances are you will probably have to hire a professional production crew. The cost for a professional crew varies. If you to hire a producer to create a 3 to 5 minute video, it will cost you between \$4,000 and \$5,000. If you want a 25-minute video then production help would a start at a rate of \$30,000.
  - Broadcast outlets have specific video requirements. If you intend to post your video only on the Internet, however, you have much more flexibility for the web. For the web, such as your state website or social media page, you can create a good quality video or audio clip with just your smartphone. Here is a link that explains exactly how to produce a video on your iPhone. <http://www.knewton.com/blog/teacher-tools/how-to-make-a-complete-movie-with-only-an-iphone/>

### **Cameras and Editing Apps**

- Free video camera and editing apps are also available on your smartphone. Simply go to the app store on your phone and select a video camera app. Once you install the app you are ready to start shooting. Click on the video app and start recording. You can also edit your video on your phone or create a photo montage to upload to your website. This link gives you more information on which apps to use <http://appcrawlr.com/ios-apps/best-apps-photo-montage>.
- Typically, once you add the editing app to your phone you must grant permission to add your photos and videos to the app. Then, you can begin editing your videos, adding effects, enhancements, adjust lighting, etc. Start experimenting with the app and see what works best for your video needs.

### **Interviewing Your Guest**

- Before the interview officially begins, ask the interviewee to spell and pronounce their first and last name while filming or recording. Get the person's job title. This ensures you do not misspell their name or incorrectly identify them.
- Ask the interviewee questions in a friendly, relaxed way, as if you were having a conversation. If possible arrive 10 minutes early for small talk. This breaks the ice and helps your interviewee relax.
- To gather complete information, make sure your questions include who, what, where, when, why and how.



- Try to avoid questions that can be answered with only a yes or no.
- When interviewing people, try to involve their emotions. Whether your interview is political, personal or industry-related, one question that typically works is, “How did that make you feel?”
- Create a list of questions before the interview, but feel free to stray from these to ask follow-up questions to an interesting answer. Keep the conversation flowing naturally.
- Before you end an interview ask, “Is there anything else you would like to add that I did not ask you?” That answer will most likely be your best sound bite.
- When interviewing children try to interview them in a setting where they feel comfortable. This might be at their house, in their bedroom or backyard. A familiar setting helps children relax and open up to you.

## PROFESSIONAL VIDEOS

- If you are considering hiring a professional video crew to produce a SORH video, there are several factors to consider: cost, time, audience, story idea, distribution needs and what you will get from the video. As mentioned on page 16, the cost can vary to produce a professional video.
- Before hiring a crew, talk to your staff and brainstorm what story (stories) you want to tell. What part of the state should be covered? Should you contact any of your partners and ask for story suggestions? What topic should you choose? Already having an idea for a story will help you save money. The producer you hire does play a key role in conducting research, but having your own idea or theme for the video this will help you in the long run.
- If you hire a video production crew, remember that *you* maintain editorial control. If you want a certain story or angle to be featured in the video tell the producer. Always create a production contract with your crew for legal purposes. In addition, production companies often have their own location and personal release forms for people to sign. Talk to your PIO and see if your office also needs a particular release form signed. ALWAYS err on the side of caution! You may want to get the interviewee to sign the waiver ahead of time so he/she does not balk in signing on day of the shoot. Before you begin shooting any video, always have your subjects sign a release form.
- Producing a professional video involves coordinating many details. Once you hire a crew, the first step is holding a production meeting. You will need to discuss story ideas, locations, camera gear, audio equipment, if you need a lighting technician, your timeline and production deadline, distribution, promotional goals and editing. You may need a few content meeting before shooting actually begins.
- Next, the producer starts the interviewing process. Some producers just spend one day only doing interviews and another day getting background video shots. This depends on whom you hire. After filming is complete it is time to edit. How long will it take to edit my video? This depends on the size of the project. A 2-3 minute video should take about a week or two to edit. If you want a 3- minute or hour-long video, you could spend anywhere from six months to a year. Again, this can vary depending on your budget, resources and the quality you want.
- After the editing phase, it's time to approve the project. Remember, you have the right to request any changes within reason. This is your video, which represents your agency. If you dislike the music or a sound bite or want a photo moved—request it. The production company wants your feedback to ensure that you are happy with the project. As you are finalizing the approval process discuss distribution movie files. Ask for a digital copy of the video, DVD, etc. so you will have a copy for your promotional needs.

In summary, producing a professional video requires more time, energy and attention to detail. Make sure your key messages are in your video and don't settle for anything less than your complete satisfaction with the final product.

## **SAMPLE EMAIL PITCH**

Rob Stewart  
Reporter/Producer  
PBS, Rob on the Road  
Sacramento, CA

Dear Rob,

On Saturday October 2, Sacramento Kings' player Tyrone Corbin will join thousands of walkers gathering at the California State Capitol to help raise money toward a cure for Type-1 diabetes. This serious disease strikes 3,000 Americans each year—most of them children, teens and young adults.

For Tyrone Corbin, this cause is personal. His sister was diagnosed with Type-1 diabetes when she was 12 years old, and he watched her struggle to keep her blood sugar levels stable ever since.

This Saturday, walkers representing families, schools, and families like the Corbins are expected to attend the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) 18th annual Walk to Cure Diabetes.

One of those walkers is local 8-year-old resident Gabrielle Zegers, who has been living with devastating disease since her diagnosis since age 5. She, along with the Sacramento River Cats' mascot Dinger, will lead walkers in their quest to raise \$400,000 for continued research to find a cure.

Gabrielle will be available for interviews before, during and after the walk to talk about her personal journey with this disease, which requires a daunting daily regimen of multiple insulin injections, numerous finger pricks to draw and test her blood, and calculations of the carbohydrates she eats.

This life-threatening disease does not have a cure and its victims are usually children. Many people know a family member, friend or coworker who is living with this disease. This story is a good fit for your audience because it showcases the “good news” of community hope and support for a cure while raising awareness for a disease that local families are personally dealing with.

Please let me know how I can help you with this story.

Sincerely,

Kelly Peterson  
JDRF Board Member

## **SAMPLE PHONE PITCH**

Hello Rob,

My name is Kelly Peterson and I'm calling on behalf of Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) in Northern California. Do you have a few minutes to talk?

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For Tyrone Corbin, this cause is personal. His sister was diagnosed with Type-1 diabetes when she was 12 years old, and he watched her struggle to keep her blood sugar levels stable ever since.

This Saturday, walkers representing families, schools, and families like the Corbins are expected to attend the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) 18th annual Walk to Cure Diabetes.

One of those walkers is local 8-year-old resident Gabrielle Zegers, who has been living with this devastating disease since her diagnosis since age 5. She, along with the Sacramento River Cats' mascot Dinger, will lead walkers in their quest to raise \$400,000 for continued research to find a cure.

Many people know a family member, friend or coworker who is living with this disease. This story is a good fit for your audience because it showcases the "good news" of community hope and support for a cure while raising awareness for a disease that local families are personally dealing with. Gabrielle will be available for interviews before, during and after the walk to talk about her personal journey with this disease.

Is this story something you might be interested in covering?