



AREA AGENCIES ON AGING ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

TIPS FOR ADVOCATES ON WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

WRITE LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Research each paper's guidelines for writing letters. Include your name, address and telephone number as newspapers will not print anonymous letters and may want to call you.

Be specific and brief. Letters should only cover one subject. State the point of your letter in the first paragraph.

Write letters on issues that are current. Respond promptly to recently printed stories or editorials you want to address.

RADIO TALK SHOWS

This is a great way to get your message across to literally thousands of listeners – free! Call your local radio stations and ask if they have any open forums. If they do, dial-up during the show and make short, concise statements about a current issue – what the issue is, why it is important, and what it will mean for your community.

Contact the producer of a call-in show and suggest he/she covers your issue on an upcoming show. Write a brief letter to follow-up and including your contact information as a resource.

TOWN MEETINGS

Many elected officials host town meetings to gain visibility and hear their constituents' concerns. You can use a town meeting as an opportunity to get attention for your issue. Plan to pack the room and recruit attendees who want to speak publicly.

Develop a short talking points sheet so that your message is consistent and forceful. Contact the media and suggest they cover the event, apprising them about your group's participation and issue.

As a courtesy, let the elected official know what you are doing so he/she is not blind-sided.