



Prepared by
the Media
Working
Group

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Media Relations Handbook for Grandmother Advocates

This Guide is a resource for grandmother advocates.

Although presented here in document format, it is also available on the GRAN website where you can download the templates and samples mentioned here, plus some very helpful spreadsheets.

Copy. Use. Share. Adapt.

This Guide is for you!

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GRAN and the Media

Purpose of the guide

The Grandmothers Advocacy Network (GRAN) is guided by a national steering committee. From time-to-time, this committee may ask for local support in making media aware of an issue. Such requests will usually be made through the monthly GRAN newsletter, the *Update*. These requests will be accompanied by templates for articles, media releases and/or letters to the editor. This guide describes how to respond effectively. It outlines basic processes and provides tips you can follow to deal confidently with media, where you live.

As we provide these guidelines, we are aware that every region and every local GRAN-affiliated group has a unique character and particular resources available to them when it comes to carrying out media activities. Thus, this document truly is a “guide”, with suggestions intended to be adapted to suit your circumstance.

In addition to requests that come from the GRAN Steering Committee, individual GRANadvocates may be alert to GRAN-related issues raised in the local press. Taking an initiative in such an event, for example by sending a letter to the editor, is part of what local advocates can do to move our campaigns forward. Whether the media approach is initiated by the Steering Committee or a local advocate, the purpose of this guide is to help you get media attention for issues we know affect African grandmothers and AIDS orphans.

Scope of the guide

The scope of this guide is media relations around GRAN advocacy issues and events. One of the best ways to get media attention is through newsworthy events or public activities such as a national petition. The scope of this guide is the actions necessary to get media attention; it does not cover other aspects of promotion.

In the guide you will find a step-by-step approach to working with traditional media and selected social media, a description of various media products, and links to templates and examples.

GRAN's definition of advocacy

“To advocate” means: “to plead a case”, “to argue in favour of”, or “to speak on behalf of another.”

Grandmother and grand-other advocates are Canadians who seek to influence policy-makers and the public to support policy initiatives that will improve the lives of the grandmothers of sub-Saharan Africa and of the children in their care who have been orphaned by AIDS. GRANadvocates use a variety of methods to persuade policy-makers and the public that urgent, immediate action and/or long-term solutions are needed.

Advocacy has many levels of involvement that include signing petitions, meetings with policy-makers, public rallies and national media relations strategies. All are valid and further the cause.

In summary, Canadian grandmothers and grand-others have promised to be a voice for African grandmothers. Through advocacy we can fulfill that promise. Advocacy helps to shape policy here in Canada and on the international stage that will change the lives of grandmothers in sub-Saharan Africa.

GRAN media guidelines

When speaking on behalf of GRAN, these guidelines will keep GRAN's position clear, consistent and reputable:

- GRAN is multi-partisan. This is essential to keep the doors of all decision-makers open to us. We salute all parties and politicians for any support they give and avoid condemning any party or party member.
- GRAN's concerns are humanitarian.
- We are authoritative sources on our issues. If you are in doubt about any facts, confirm them on the GRAN web site before you use them.
- We are members of GRAN, a Canadian civil society organization. We are an offshoot of the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign now functioning independently, with the support of many still involved in that Campaign.

GRAN media roles

There are a number of roles required for GRAN get its advocacy messages in the media.

Grandmothers Advocacy Network

- Our Co-chairs act as national spokespersons.
- We sometimes develop national media releases or host press conferences jointly with partner members of the coalitions with which we are associated.

GRAN Steering Committee

- Provides key messaging and information on issues to GRANadvocates at the grassroots.
- Engages in strategic planning around opportune times and content with respect to issues we embrace, in dialogue with our advocacy partners.
- Provides a variety of timely, accurate resources as needed in the context of an ongoing campaign.

GRAN Media Working Group

- Provides support to GRAN on media and communications strategies and activities
- Maintains relationships with national and selected provincial media
- Writes articles and letters for customization by local grandmother advocates for newspapers and letters to the editor.
- Supports GRAN with other media products as required
- Helps build the capacity of GRANadvocates to undertake media relations

Cluster Leaders

- Forward media materials from the Steering Committee to grassroots Advocacy Representatives and other GRANadvocates.
- Make an effort to track GRAN media publication in their regions, where possible.
- In some regions, coordinate the distribution of media products to ensure they are distributed equitably among different media.

Local Grandmother and Grand-other Advocates (including Advocacy Reps)

- Adapt GRAN-drafted letters to editors and articles for submission to local media.
- May choose to create local human interest stories using GRAN key messages.
- Report successful media coverage to the GRAN Steering Committee by e-mail or by using the “Contact Us” form on the GRAN website.
- In some locales, Advocacy Reps or local committees coordinate the distribution of media products to ensure that they are spread among different media.

Media Relations Step by Step

“Media relations” is the term given to the process of building relationships with key media. At the local level, this means engaging with media personnel so that they understand the work and concerns of the Grandmothers’ Advocacy Network and trust local GRANadvocates as a reliable source of information. The goal is to maximize media interest and ensure accurate, complete and credible coverage of our issues so the public becomes engaged in our concerns.

Step 1: Make a media list

A media list is an essential tool. It provides contact information for local media, tracks submissions to them and enables you to manage the distribution of media items effectively. Knowing what your media options are, who to talk to and how to reach them saves time and becomes increasingly effective as you find the right people and build relationships.

How the list is structured, how comprehensive it is, and how you use it is up to you. For example, you may choose to target a few key papers to begin with or you may already have members in your regional cluster or local group who cover radio, television and area-wide newspapers. Whatever your mandate is geographically, a media list is the place to start.

Identify media

The Internet is probably the best source of information to identify local media. Your local library and other GRANadvocates are good sources. When creating your list, don’t overlook local community papers (weeklies and monthlies) and student newspapers in colleges and universities (students tend to be strong allies on our issues). You’ll need names, phone numbers and e-mail addresses and, for newspapers, deadlines for submission. Once you have your list, you can call each one directly or visit their web sites to get the information you need.

These are likely to be your best contacts in media organizations:

Daily newspapers:

Section editors—manage individual newspaper sections such as city, lifestyle and especially relevant to us, politics, health and international development.

Photo editors—will send a camera to take a photo at your event or to whom you might submit a remarkable photo.

Journalists who write about issues related to GRAN’s interests.

Weekly / community newspapers:

Editors – Since these publications are often small with few staff, sending information to the editor is usually appropriate. For commercial community papers with a single editor for multiple community papers, it’s a good idea to call the editor to chat about the best way to work together.

Television

Assignment editors—in addition to often deciding what gets covered, help you to get story ideas to the appropriate person or department at their outlet.

Morning, noon and/or evening producers—book interviews and decide whether you or your story is of interest.

Journalists, including freelancers as well as those who cover certain issue areas, such as health, international development, and national politics

News anchors (if you have an established relationship with the media outlet)

Radio

News directors—shape the news stories for the day and are good targets for your story “pitch.”

Morning, noon and/or evening producers—book interviews and determine whether the program will cover your event or interview your spokespeople.

Journalists

Newsreaders

Match GRANadvocates with specific media

You will need volunteers to be interviewed by reporters and radio and television hosts, as well as volunteers to submit articles and letters to newspapers. For interviews, decide who are your best spokespersons and enlist their help. Ask them for contact information and brief bios that you can submit to media as needed.

City and community newspapers look for a story connection with their communities. This means you may need to find GRANadvocates who live in the papers’ delivery areas who are willing to adapt and submit articles prepared by GRAN. Ask members of your local group, or other groups in your region, to see who would be willing to customize and submit articles from time to time. It may take a bit of effort to match people to newspapers, but once they are in place, you have a network you can quickly tap into when needed. It is ideal, though not always possible, to find more than one person willing to submit material to each newspaper so that GRAN articles don’t always come from the same person.

MEDIA LIST SPREADSHEET—APPENDIX A

Step 2: Prepare

For each advocacy issue that GRAN addresses, the GRAN Steering Committee will provide templates for newspaper articles for commercial and volunteer-run community papers and letters to the editor (generally via the monthly Update newsletter) – all of which you can adapt. These will be timed to coordinate with newsworthy events and are intended to create a groundswell of public support for the advocacy campaign in progress.

If you are drafting your own article, remember to link it to current news and try to incorporate some of these media enticements:

TIP

Some radio stations (including CBC) provide either a “Contact us” or “Pitch a story” link on the web pages of individual shows. This is a quick way to reach individual producers.

1. A controversial or unusual angle. Dog bites man is not news....however man bites dog will get attention, as might grandmothers doing un-grandmotherly things or the inconsistency between Canada's commitment to mothers and children in developing countries and non-support of amendments to the Access to Medicines bill.
2. A local angle on a national or international news story
3. A new angle that hasn't been explored
4. A human interest story that profiles a local GRANadvocate
5. A connection to a prominent local personality
6. A connection with a special day or event such as World AIDS Day or the G2G National Walk
7. A great visual to underpin a story. Create a scene and set up a photo opportunity.

Prepare your spokespersons

A spokesperson is someone designated to speak on behalf of others. It is the job of a GRAN spokesperson to represent and advocate for GRAN's positions. All spokespersons must be cognizant of [GRAN's approach](#) as an organization and its positioning with respect to the specific issue involved.

The co-chairs of the GRAN Leadership Team serve as national spokespersons and convey the official position on issues of significance or situations that are of a particularly controversial or sensitive nature. Others on the GRAN Steering Committee, the Leadership Team, Hill Team, chairs of Steering Committee sub-committees, or local advocates who are knowledgeable about issues may also be asked to serve as spokespersons.

At the local level, you will need to assign appropriate spokespersons prior to each media activity. Spokespersons play a key role in getting GRAN's messages out. Preparing them is vitally important. Always equip your spokespersons with a media kit and:

- Briefing notes that include key messages. (Key messages and current information on each issue will be provided through and with the monthly GRAN Update newsletter and/or on the GRAN website.)
- Anticipated interview questions and answers
- Details about the media who will be covering the event
- For events, an event script (an outline of the activities and schedule)

When you land an interview, whether it will be by phone, in person or on radio or television, here are some tips to make it successful:¹

Tips for successful interviews

Before

- Find out if the show is live or taped.
- Ask about the format: news, chat show, satellite feed (host is not in studio but speaks

¹ Adapted from *Stride to Turn the Tide. Public Relations and Media Handbook*, 2011.

to you through an earpiece and you answer to camera).

- Find out who will be interviewing you. If you are not familiar with the program, look it up online or watch it prior to your appearance to get a feel for the show and the interviewer.
- Find out whether any other guests will be on the show with you.
- Arrive in good time.
- Request a glass of water before you go on air if you think you'll need it.

During

- Speak with passion.
- It's not the question – it's the answer. Your response doesn't always have to mirror the question. You can shape the story through your answers.
- It's not the reporter – it's the audience you are speaking to. Think of what will inspire viewers or readers.
- Prepare. Before each interview, decide on three key points you want to make. This will make you less nervous during the interview.
- Get your messages across. If the reporter doesn't allow you to make an important point, tell them that you would like to add something at the end of the interview. Areas you should always cover: what GRAN is and does, what your group does (local angle), and how people can get involved.
- They can't use what you don't say. If you don't want to see something in print, don't share it!
- Never ever speak "off the record". Treat everything you say as quotable.
- Don't feel rushed. Take your time before you answer. Even though a few seconds may feel like an eternity to you, it's OK to pause and reflect.
- If you don't know, say so. It's OK if you can't answer every question. You are not an expert; you are a concerned citizen. You can refer the interviewer to the GRAN web site, the GRAN co-chairs via our e-mail address (grandmothersadvocac) or promise to get back to them with an answer, as appropriate.
- Never say "no comment." It looks like you have something to hide.
- Journalists are not your enemies. Treat the interview like a respectful conversation. Try to be relaxed, but always think before you speak.

TV interviews

What to wear

- Bright or pastel colours
- A blazer or jacket
- A solid-coloured top
- A bit of make up

What not to wear

- Dead white or black
- Patterns – like stripes, plaids or dots
- Jewellery that is distracting or that you'll play with

What to do/not to do

- If an interview is taped and you make a mistake, repeat your entire statement. TV tapes are edited using breaths, rarely individual words. You want a clean, clear version of your entire point.
- Don't forget: the camera sees everything. Keep your legs demurely together try not to fidget, put your hands on your face, or play with buttons.
- Don't nod at everything being said. While you might nod to indicate understanding, it may seem that you are agreeing, or worse, bouncing.
- Be aware at all times of the microphone on your lapel. Don't touch it when gesturing.

To support spokespersons, information on issues is available on the GRAN web site and, for additional advice and guidance, chairs of GRAN issue-focused working groups (e.g. the CAMR Working Group) may be reached through the GRAN web site.

Prepare your media tools

MEDIA PITCH

A media pitch is a way to introduce the media to GRAN and an issue and to persuade them to cover the story. Your initial pitch to the media may be made by phone or e-mail, but at some point you will be called on to persuade a media person that your issue is of interest to their public.

The GRAN Steering Committee will provide you with the facts and information you need. Here are a few tips to make your pitch successful:

- BE SUCCINCT.
- Put the critical information first– the newsworthy content and why it matters
- Tailor your pitch to appeal to what the editor or reporter write about (e.g. health, international development, or industry). Or tailor it to the target audience of the program.
- Talk about what is unique about GRAN and how GRAN is making a difference. Perhaps use an actual African grandmother's story if appropriate.
- Connect your issue to current news stories or to annual events such as World Aids Day, the spirit of giving at Christmas
- Make a specific “ask” such as:
 - a meeting

TIP

E-mail is your friend. Most of your initial contact with the media will be via e-mail, whether it be a media pitch, a media advisory or a news release. In almost all cases, you will need to follow up the e-mail with a telephone call – often a couple of calls – to reach a journalist, editor or producer. Keep the text no longer than one page.

- an interview with your spokesperson(s)
- a reporter to cover an event
- publishing an article you have ready
- Indicate that you will follow up with them and leave your e-mail and a phone (preferably a cell phone) number.

Tips for pitching radio and television²

- Pitch the producers and program managers, NOT the hosts, unless it's a smaller market. If you're not sure just call the station and ask who books the interviews for that particular show.
- Don't call them - they don't have time to listen to a pitch even if it's just five minutes.
- Use a pitch that is filled with CONTENT. Show that listeners will learn something.
- Get to the point right away in your pitch. Write it in 200 words or less if you can. Use BOLD to highlight the important stuff. If you can, offer a giveaway such as a free ticket or a book.
- Make sure your e-mail subject line has no SPAM words. Lists of these are available on the Internet. Don't be afraid to re-send if you think it might not have gone through or been read.
- Pitch about a week ahead of time for commercial drivetime segments. Pitch 2-3 weeks for talk shows and interview-based programs.
- For events you want covered, know the assignment editor's name and when decisions are made so that your request is made in time.
- Ideally, send your press release after you make contact so that it has a better chance of being read.
- Help television producers by offering possible interview questions and responses, and identify people to appear on the segment. If GRAN has been featured in the media before, include it in the pitch. Producers always want to know whether the spokesperson is eloquent, easy to understand, and in touch with the public.

MEDIA PITCH EXAMPLE—APPENDIX B

² The Wax Blog. *10 Tips for pitching radio*. <http://blog.waxmarketing.com/2009/06/01/10-steps-to-pitching-radio/>. May 2, 2012 and Open Society Foundations. *How to pitch your health story to TV*, <http://blog.soros.org/2012/04/how-to-pitch-your-health-story-to-tv/> May 2, 2012.

MEDIA ADVISORY

A media advisory is a “heads up” and invitation sent to the media prior to an event. The advisory is issued a week or, at the very least, a couple of days prior to the event. It includes:

- “who”, “what”, “where” and “when” headings
- RSVP contact information so media can confirm attendance, follow-up with you regarding questions and know whom to contact when they arrive.
- Contact information for the person who will be liaising with media at the event
- Names of spokespersons and their roles or titles who are available for interviews before, during and after the event. National media want brief bios, but this is usually not necessary for local media.
- Web site address(es)
- A photo advisory. This describes a unique visual opportunity for media and adds impact to your invitation. If your event features a photo opportunity, describe why it will be interesting or dramatic.
- At the end, a brief “boilerplate” paragraph describing GRAN and your group.

Follow up your media advisory with a phone call or e-mail the day before your event.

MEDIA ADVISORY TIPS

Keep the text no longer than one page

Put the important information first, least important last

Develop an attention-getting headline

Where applicable, include sponsor/partner names and logos to add importance and credibility

NEWS RELEASE

A news release is newsworthy information supplied to the media in the form of an official announcement or an account of an event or news story. The GRAN Steering Committee will provide customizable news releases for nation-wide media campaigns on key GRAN issues.

State facts only and state them clearly.

With the Internet growing in prominence, news releases for on-line publication are often written as finished articles in journalistic format with an interesting story line and quotes to save on-line editors time. A news release is best kept to one page and includes these elements:

- Headline that summarizes the “news”
- Dateline (release date and originating city)
- Introduction: who, what, when, where and why
- Body: further explanation, statistics, background, or other details relevant to the news and, if possible, a quote
- Boilerplate: a brief section that provides information about GRAN and/or your local group.

- Close: traditionally the symbol "-30-"³ or the ### symbol appears after the boilerplate
- Contact: the person media can contact for more information.
- Spokespersons: their names and roles or titles

NEWS RELEASE SAMPLE—APPENDIX E

HEADLINES THAT WORK—APPENDIX F

MEDIA KIT

A media kit is a prepackaged folder of information about GRAN combined with details of a newsworthy event. It is provided at an event or distributed to journalists immediately afterward by e-mail, courier or hand. Its intent is to get media attention and provide accurate information. Although a media kit should be comprehensive, include only information that is current and most relevant. Be aware that media recipients have limited time to review your kit and decide whether they are interested. Anything unique in the presentation or packaging of the kit will help to get it noticed.

Essential contents of a media kit include:

- News release
- Media advisory
- Backgrounder on GRAN
- Backgrounder on the issue provided by (the GRAN Steering Committee), including names and logos of partners
- Contact information for the person liaising with media (make this easy to find)

Other information you might include:

- Links to audio and video files of radio or TV interviews, speeches, performances or any other media-covered event
- A sample news story. Ready-to-print articles may be welcomed by community newspapers, specialized publications and magazines as an easy way to fill space. Not appropriate for mainstream media.
- An African grandmother's story
- Photos

NEWS ARTICLE

A news article in a city or national newspaper is the result of a successful media pitch. Although mainstream papers generally prefer a news release format, community newspapers often welcome a story written by

³ Some media trivia: “The “-30-” is the traditional journalistic closing which probably came to be during the Civil War when telegraphers tapped “XXX” at the end of a transmission, which is the Roman numeral for 30.” (From *Press Releases Writing* at <http://www.press-release-writing.com/press-release-distribution-frequently-asked-questions/#28>)

their readers. To take advantage of this, the GRAN Steering Committee will from time-to-time provide an article on a specific issue that you can modify for community newspapers.

OP-ED ARTICLE

An op-ed is a newspaper article that expresses the opinion of a writer who is usually unaffiliated with the newspaper's editorial board.⁴ In an op-ed, you state your conclusion first then provide facts to back it up.⁵

Op-ed Tips

- Be timely – your op-ed must relate to current news.
- Be brief (maximum of 750 words).
- Focus on a single issue and state your point of view firmly. (A touch of outrage adds interest.)
- Support your opinion with unassailable facts and data.
- Write simply, clearly and conversationally. Choose active verbs. Avoid adjectives and adverbs.
- Educate, don't preach.
- In closing, restate your position and issue a call to action.
- End with a brief bio of yourself as well as contact information, including your mailing address.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A Letter to the Editor is a mainstay of citizen activist work. Every letter received by the media makes a difference, whether published or not because it alerts the media to public concerns. During a media campaign in support of a GRAN issue, you will be provided with a sample letter to the editor to customize and make your own as well as key messages to keep in mind when making the letter your own.

At other times, you may see an opportunity to respond to something in your local press. Here are some tips to improve the chances of your letter being published:

Tips to improve the chances of your letter being published

1. **Find a 'hook.'** You will increase the likelihood of being published if you link your comments to something that recently appeared in the newspaper or a significant date; for example, a story about human rights or maternal and child health, World AIDS Day or International Women's Day.
2. **Keep it short and snappy.** Most newspapers across Canada welcome letters on any subject but will reserve the right to edit them. Consequently, a word count of less than 200 words is ideal – this reduces the likelihood that your letter will be edited and key points removed. Make it lively and sharp and conclude with a demand.
3. **Adopt the proper tone.** Be respectful and polite. Don't let anger or slander get in the

⁴ Wikipedia. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Op-ed>, February 26, 2012

⁵ GRAN will arrange for op-eds to be sent to national newspapers. Grandmother advocates may also initiate op-eds if they are moved to do so.

way of a good opportunity to get your point across. Wit and humor can increase your chances of being published.

4. **Expand your reach.** If you are going to the trouble to write one good letter, why not modify it and try to get it published several times? You may not have time to research how to “hook it” in every case but don’t let that prevent you from distributing your letter more widely.
5. **Don’t discriminate.** Local community papers are underutilized and often go begging for good, publishable letters. Consider writing to them as well as larger papers.
6. **Make it your own.** The strength of a letter to the editor is that it represents the view of an ordinary citizen. Learn about an issue and then write from your heart and with your own “voice.”
7. **Dynamite title.** Once you have completed your letter, give it a title that will draw attention. Newspapers reserve the right to change your title and often do so. However, if the title you are proposing attracts the attention of the editor, your chances of getting your letter published are higher.
8. **Identify yourself.** Include your name, mailing address and daytime phone (preferably cell phone) number. Except for your name and possibly your city, these personal details will not be published.
9. **Share it!** Letters to the Editor have impact beyond their publication date. After, or even before you are published, don’t hesitate to share your letter with colleagues, friends, and decision makers. We know that letters and opinion pieces are tracked and monitored by government officials. Use your letter as your personal calling card and take the time to broadcast your message beyond the printed page.
10. **Don’t give up.** If your letter hasn’t been published after a couple of days, call the letters editor and find out what it would take to get published next time. Remember, even if your letter doesn’t get published, you are helping to alert the media to an important story.
11. **Track it.** When you are published, share that success with your cluster leader and the Grandmothers Advocacy Network via the [GRAN web site](#) or by [e-mail](#). In both cases, mark the Subject line “Media” and provide a link to the published piece or attach a copy of it.

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR—APPENDIX F

PHOTO OP AND VIDEO

Creating a compelling photo opportunity encourages media pick up. A photo op is brief and is reserved for a memorable and effective photograph at an event.

A compelling photo:

- Is visually dynamic, showing people interacting with one another and doing something interesting.
- Has a “surprise” feature relating to the uniqueness of the location, the mix of people involved or an object around which the people are gathered.
- Tells a story

You can also send media your own photos and videos.

When e-mailing photos to the media, they must be sent as attachments and be print quality (300 dpi). Your photo captions or “cutlines” explain who is in the picture from left to right (L to R), give background on the event (include one or two key messages) and identify where the picture was shot.

If your photo doesn’t make it into the local media, GRAN would still welcome a copy. Send it via the [web site](#) or by e-mail with all the details.

SOCIAL MEDIA - TWITTER

Twitter is a type of social networking that enables you to send and receive brief messages or “Tweets.” If you open a Twitter account, you can “follow” GRAN, journalists who write on GRAN issues and politicians who have opinions about them. This gives you up-to-the-minute information you can use in your media relations. When you “tweet” your own messages or “retweet” those you receive to other people, information is spread widely and immediately as issues develop.

TWITTER BEGINNERS’ GUIDE—APPENDIX G

Step 3: Working with the Media

Building media relationships

Building good relationships with media is essential to creating awareness of GRAN and its concerns. Media are bombarded with story requests and their time is precious, so here are a few tips to help you get their attention and cooperation.

- **Get to know the key media in your area.** Watch for opportunities such as special features, short-term series, themed call-in shows, debates and special supplements that give you a reason to approach media about a current GRAN issue.
- **Know your key media contacts.** Understand what issues they cover and how they approach them. Building relationships with individual reporters and newscasters is very helpful in securing coverage and ensuring that issues are discussed and fully understood. Don’t hesitate to take a reporter or newscaster for a coffee and explore your issue.
- **Write good media releases** and don’t send them until you are sure they are complete and final.
- **Follow up.** Wait a couple of days then follow up. Don’t become a nuisance.
- **Know your facts.**
- **Give them what they need.**
 - Be available by cell phone
 - Have all details at your fingertips for a media call – they don’t want to wait for you to call back.

- Help when they need a favour and they'll remember
- Caption all photos accurately.
- **Be upfront and honest.**
- **Respect deadlines.** Submit promised articles on time and arrive for interviews with time to spare.
- **Follow up with a thank you** to your contact, and stay in touch.

Tips on working with newspapers

Larger newspapers (i.e. city and regional dailies) generally like to do their own stories so, when it comes to these outlets, our emphasis will be on getting pick-up on stories of broad interest and having letters to the editor published.

Community newspapers, specialized publications and magazines are often receptive to pre-written submissions, but they must include a local interest element. They are always pleased if you can provide good photos.

There are often two types of community newspapers in a region: those that are commercial and those put out by community volunteers. In larger centres, the commercial enterprises generally have a single editor for a group of community papers. In this case, it's best to contact the editor, to find out whether the paper prefers to have a journalist do an interview and, if they will consider publishing a pre-written article, to find out under what circumstances they would publish it in all papers and when targeting individual papers in the group is preferable.

Where there are competing community newspapers, it is a good practice to select a set of different papers each time there is a story to place so as not to over-use any one resource. A caution: don't submit the same article to competing news organizations.

Tips on working with radio and television⁶

- Follow up, but don't overdo it. Media people are deluged with e-mail so it may take a few tries to receive a response. Be patient but not a pest. If there is initial interest but you don't hear back, call to ask the producer what you can do to help.
- Be available and respond IMMEDIATELY to a request for information or an interview. If you wait even a couple of hours you are may lose the spot.
- Send a confirmation e-mail right away with all the details and, once you're confirmed, sample questions and backgrounders.
- Don't be late. 30 seconds in radio is a lifetime. You'll miss the spot and risk getting blackballed by that station and possibly others.
- Take advantage of radio call-in programs when the topic is related to a GRAN issue.

⁶ The Wax Blog. 10 Tips for pitching radio. <http://blog.waxmarketing.com/2009/06/01/10-steps-to-pitching-radio/>. May 2, 2012

When the media call you

As you build relationships with local media, they will begin to seek you out. When media requests come in, it is important to respond immediately. Evaluate the request, provide the reporter with background materials and prepare your spokesperson.

EVALUATE

Find out

- The reporter's name, publication and contact information
- The nature of the request
- The deadline

Before saying "yes," consider:

- How will the media coverage reflect on GRAN?
- Is there a good spokesperson to address the request?

PROVIDE INFORMATION

- Provide background materials (bios, backgrounders, fact sheets, images.)
- Add value by adding photos and/or online media
- Offer an alternate angle for the story

PREPARE YOUR SPOKESPERSONS

[Click here to find out how](#)

Media at events

If you have invited media to your event, working with them is critical to ensure that coverage includes your key messages and features great pictures.

- Identify an individual to act as media liaison to book interviews prior to and at the event and to be available to media by cell on the day of the event. Include this person's name and contact information on media advisories and news releases.
- Make sure that event organizers and volunteers are aware of how media is being managed and who is responsible.
- Follow-up a few days after sending your media advisory to confirm which media will attend.
- Provide the media liaison with cell phone numbers for the spokespersons who will speak with journalists at the event. Double check that spokespersons all have their cell phones with them.
- Keep a list of media who attend.

MEDIA REGISTRATION FORM—APPENDIX H

Step 4: Track media coverage

You'll want to know who submitted what article or letter to what paper and when. It's also important to track whether these are published. And what media pitches were made to radio and television and which were successful.

Document the details for future planning and so that you can refer to their published stories the next time you talk to media contacts. Media people are more attentive when you are knowledgeable and appreciative about previous coverage.

When you are successful in getting coverage, find out when the piece will run and get a copy of it. It's not always possible to get copies of radio and television appearances, so a reporting format example is available so you can document them.

When media don't pick up on a story, it is instructive to ask whether there was anything you could have done to improve the chances of getting coverage.

If you [notify GRAN](#) of your media successes, they will be archived for future reference.

MEDIA TRACKER SPREADSHEET—APPENDIX I

RADIO AND TELEVISION COVERAGE REPORT EXAMPLE—APPENDIX J

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES—APPENDIX K

Appendices

APPENDIX A

Media List Spreadsheet

Still to come

APPENDIX B

Media Pitch Sample

PROPOSAL FOR ADVOGRAMS INTERVIEW ON WORLD AIDS DAY, DECEMBER 1, 2011

AIDS

World AIDS Day

- The theme for World AIDS Day this year is “Getting to Zero.” This campaign aims for zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination, and zero AIDS related deaths and will run until 2015.

In Canada

- Number of people in Canada living with HIV/AIDS is estimated to be 73,000 in 2008. Aboriginal persons continue to be over-represented in the HIV epidemic in Canada
- Estimated 4,300 to 6,100 Aboriginal persons were living with HIV/AIDS in Canada in 2008 (8% of all prevalent HIV infections, much higher than the proportion of Aboriginal persons in the general Canadian population which is 3.8%)

Globally

- Disease continues to have devastating consequences for millions of people around the world. Estimated 34 million people living with HIV – 22 million in sub-Saharan Africa
- Over 4 million people newly infected each year – nearly 11,000 a day
- More than 25 million people have died from AIDS since the pandemic began – 16.6 million children have lost one or both parents
- 97% of people who died from AIDS were in low- and middle-income countries – not because life-saving medicines do not exist, but because these medicines are not available to them and to their countries, at prices they can afford.
- In sub-Saharan Africa, roughly half of all children born with HIV will die before reaching their second birthday because they don’t have access to medicines.

CANADA’S ACCESS TO MEDICINES REGIME (CAMR)

- These deaths are preventable and Canada can help prevent them – if there is the political will to help make medicines available to those in need, including by fixing Canada’s broken Access to Medicines Regime (CAMR) to supply generic medicines at more affordable prices.
- In the last Parliament, a resounding majority of the House of Commons passed Bill C-393 on March 9, 2011, which would have fixed CAMR so that drugs could be sent to developing countries and lives saved. It was stalled in the Senate – Bill C-393 died on the Order Paper when Parliament was dissolved and the 2011 federal election was called.
- Desperate need to reform CAMR and get medicines to those suffering and dying in developing countries still exists. This is an important humanitarian issue that transcends partisan politics, and it is our hope that we will have another chance to fix CAMR in this session of Parliament.

TREATMENT AS PREVENTION

- Recent studies from researcher Dr. Julio Montaner at the BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS and from the US National Institutes of Health prove that putting people with AIDS on treatment medication of antiretroviral drugs decreases the risk of transmission by as much as 96%
- We now understand that fixing CAMR will not only save the lives of those infected, but will also stop the transmission of the disease, thus turning the tide of AIDS in Africa

ADVOGRAMS

- Group of about a dozen women, one of three Calgary Grandmother to Grandmother groups and of approximately 240 groups across Canada
- Purpose of these groups is three-fold:
 1. raise awareness about the AIDS pandemic in sub-Saharan Africa and about the plight of the grandmothers who are caring for their orphaned grandchildren
 2. raise funds for the work of the Stephen Lewis Foundation in turning the tide of AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa
 3. advocate on behalf of the African grandmothers for governmental policies that will help to address this global crisis (this is the main focus of our group)

GUESTS

Dariel Bateman, Associate Director at Calgary Reads, founder of Advograms, former member of Leadership Team of the National Advocacy Committee

Peggy Edwards, international health promotion consultant (and guest speaker at event in Calgary tonight), co-founder National Advocacy Committee

NATIONAL WEBSITE AND ADVOGRAMS CONTACT

<http://grandmothersadvocacy.org>

advograms@gmail.com

Jane Doe: (306) 453-1234 (Cell)

APPENDIX C

Media Advisory Sample

Grandmothers welcome Elizabeth Mataka, the new UN Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa, to the Grandparents Solidarity March in Ottawa on September 8th

Ottawa, ON August 15, 2007 –The Canadian Grandmothers for Africa welcomes Elizabeth Mataka, to her first official visit to Ottawa. Ms. Mataka is successor to Stephen Lewis as UN Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa. She is a grandmother, a social worker, and the vice-chair of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Two grandmothers from Africa (Darlina Tyawana and Zodwa Ndlovu), Ilana Landsberg-Lewis, Executive Director of the Stephen Lewis Foundation and hundreds of Canadian grandmothers and their families will join Ms. Mataka in a high-profile solidarity march for African grandmothers on Parliament Hill.

BACKGROUND

African grandmothers bury their children and then raise their AIDS-orphaned grandchildren with little to no support. The need is overwhelming – there are some 13 million AIDS orphans in sub-Saharan Africa alone. In some countries, 40-60% of orphans live in grandmother-headed households.

THE GRANDPARENTS SOLIDARITY MARCH

Held on the weekend that celebrates grandparenting, the March is an act of solidarity with African grandmothers and will advocate increased support by Canada and the international community for grandmothers, women and children who are affected by the catastrophic effect of HIV/AIDS in Africa.

What: Grandparents Solidarity March.

When: Saturday September 8th, 1pm until 4pm

Where: Meeting at Festival Plaza, Ottawa City Hall, 110 Laurier at 1 pm, marching at 2 pm for a 3 pm program on Parliament Hill.

Who: Canadian grandmothers and their families from Ontario and Quebec, like-minded citizens, AIDS organizations and other groups, drummers and youth choirs will join the March. Some 500 people are expected.

Program: On Parliament Hill, a *Call to Action* prepared by the National Network will be presented to a representative of the Canadian government, and to Ms. Mataka, representing the United Nations

CANADIAN GRANDMOTHERS FOR AFRICA

The Stephen Lewis Foundation launched the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign in March 2006, in response to the emerging crisis faced by African grandmothers as they struggled to care for millions of children orphaned by AIDS. In just six short years, more than 240 grandmothers groups have been formed across the country and they have raised an astonishing \$13.5 million. The Campaign aims to raise funds and awareness, build solidarity and mobilize support in Canada for Africa's grandmothers.

INTERVIEW AVAILABILITY

Ms. Mataka, UN Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa

Ilana Landsberg-Lewis, Executive Director, Stephen Lewis Foundation (416) 533-9292

Darlina Tyawana and Zodwa Ndlovu, African grandmothers from the Treatment Action Campaign in South Africa

- Saturday, September 8th –
- Sunday, September 9 (morning)

Peggy Edwards, March Coordinator, author, grandmother of 10 and representative of One World Grannies (Ottawa)

Canadian grandmothers

- Sue Bryant: coordinator Capital Grannies (Ottawa)
- Norma Geggie: founder of Wakefield Grannies
- Mary Jane Sterne, co-author Intentional Grandparenting and member, One World Grannies (Ottawa)
- Patti Koeslag: coordinator of Grands and Friends (Ottawa)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Valerie Swinton 613-730-6442; (613) 864-6442 (CELL) OR vswinton@sympatico.ca

www.grandmotherscampaign.org

APPENDIX D

News Release Sample

News Release: DIVERSE FAITH LEADERS RALLY TO SUPPORT HUMANITARIAN BILL AND SAVE LIVES IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

Aussi disponible en français.

For immediate release – available online at <http://www.aidslaw.ca/publications/interfaces/downloadFile.php?ref=1829>

DIVERSE FAITH LEADERS RALLY TO SUPPORT HUMANITARIAN BILL AND SAVE LIVES IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

Leaders Canada-wide call for Members of Parliament to do the right thing and pass Bill C-393

March 3, 2011 – With Bill C-393 — intended to strengthen and reform Canada’s Access to Medicines Regime (CAMR) — up for its final hour of debate last evening, leaders from faith communities across Canada stand united in purpose: to urge Members of Parliament to pass the bill and reform CAMR into sound legislation with the power to relieve suffering and save lives.

In “*The Price of Life: An Open Letter to Members of Parliament from Leaders of Faith Communities in Canada*”, dozens of faith leaders and organizations representing various faith communities ask that “... elected Members of Parliament reflect upon the awesome power and responsibility [they] now have to make it easier to send essential medicines to developing countries and to help the most vulnerable people worldwide.”

Together, these concerned Canadians of faith appeal —with a single voice — to their elected representatives to act upon intrinsic Canadian humanitarian values and pass Bill C-393, with its critical “one-licence solution” restored and without any “sunset clause” attached.

Among the eighty plus signatories to this open letter to date are many prominent leaders and organizations, including:

- The **Canadian Council of Imams**
- **William Francis**, Commissioner and Territorial Commander, Salvation Army, Canada and Bermuda
- **Mark J. Freiman** and **Bernie M. Farber**, National President and Chief Executive Officer respectively, Canadian Jewish Congress
- **The Reverend John Kapteyn**, Executive Secretary, Regional Synod of Canada, Reformed Church in America
- **The Reverend Brian Kiely**, President, International Council of Unitarians and Universalists
- **Archbishop Fred Hiltz**, Primate, Anglican Church of Canada
- **The Reverend Susan C. Johnson**, National Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada
- The **Mennonite Central Committee Canada**
- **Mardi Tindal**, Moderator, United Church of Canada/ L’Église Unie du Canada
- **The Reverend Bill Burke**, Director, National Liturgy Office, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
- **The Reverend Frances Deverell**, President, Canadian Unitarians For Social Justice
- **John Hopewell**, President, Canadian Unitarian Council

- **The Reverend Dr. Loraine MacKenzie Shepherd**, Member, Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, Past President of the Canadian Theological Society
- **The Reverend Julie Stoneberg**, Unitarian Universalist Ministers of Canada
- **Nancy Mortifee**, Interfaith Committee, United Church of Canada
- **The Reverend Bob Patterson Watt**, former President of the Board, Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America Co-Chair, Toronto Ecumenical Good Friday Walk for Justice, Secretary-Registrar, Gathering of Baptists

To view the open letter online, and for more detailed information on Bill C-393, please visit http://www.aidslaw.ca/EN/camr/documents/FaithLtr_EN.pdf and <http://www.aidslaw.ca/EN/camr/index.htm> respectively.

-30-

Contact:

Janet Butler-McPhee
Director of Communications, Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
Telephone: +1 416 595-1666 ext. 228, jbutler@aidslaw.ca

Christopher Holcroft
Principal, Empower Consulting for the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
Telephone: +1 416 996-0767, chris_holcroft@yahoo.com

APPENDIX E

Headlines that Work

Your headline is the first, and perhaps only, impression you make on a reader. Sometimes you can also have a subheading in which you can introduce an angle or additional information but never repeat the headline message. Here are some headline types you can experiment with:

1. Direct statement

- “Grandmothers pressing for Africa” (about an “extreme ironing” event)
- “Canada passes life-saving legislation”
- “Breakthrough makes AIDS treatment AIDS prevention”

2. Question

- “Can AIDS be conquered?”
- “Do Canadians give a damn about AIDS?”

3. How-to

- “How Canada can make a real difference to Africa”

4. Command

- Vote “YES” for affordable meds!

5. Reasons why

- 5 reasons why we must pass C-398

6. What everyone should know

- What everyone should know about big pharma and affordable medicines

7. Who else ..?

- Does anyone care about millions of orphans?

8. Testimonial

- Members of all parties support humanitarian bill.
- Trade expert gives thumbs up to affordable medicines bill

9. The truth

- The truth about opposition to affordable meds legislation

APPENDIX F

Sample Letter to the Editor

Action needed on affordable medicines

Re: <if relevant, reference the title and author of the newspaper story that prompted you to write>

Millions are dying needlessly every year for want of affordable medicines. A humanitarian bill just introduced in the House of Commons is yet another attempt to deliver life-saving drugs to people in developing countries. It's about fixing Canada's broken Access to Medicines Regime that, despite good intentions when passed more than six years ago, has been hopelessly ineffective in achieving its purpose. It's high time our elected representatives moved to correct the original legislation and make good on Canada's thus-far empty promises. Affordable medicines are an essential pillar in the government's commitment to maternal and child health, so in this session of parliament let's see some concrete action to end this reprehensible delay to an admirable commitment. It's time to put people before patents.

<your name>

<your address>

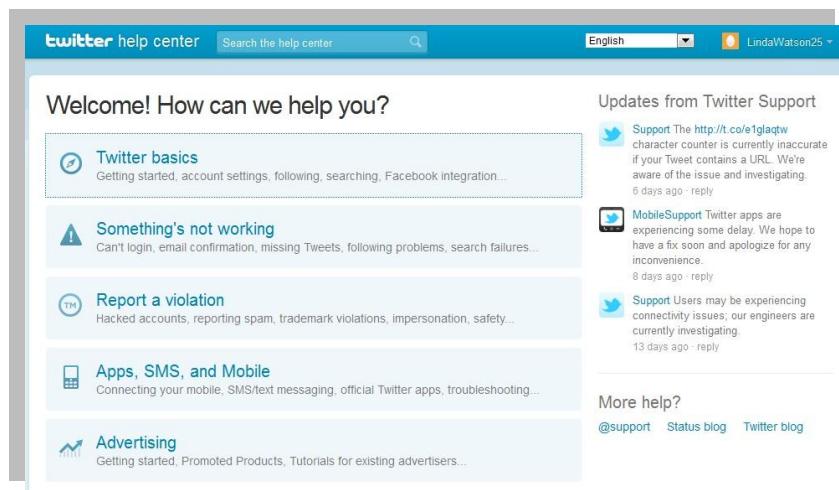
<your daytime phone number>

APPENDIX G

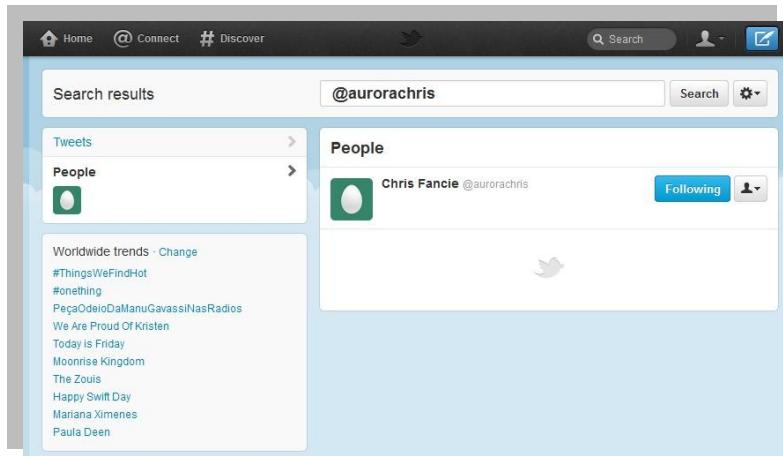
Twitter Beginners' Guide

SETTING UP ON TWITTER—Step By Step

1. Go to <https://twitter.com> and click on the large yellow button labelled “Sign On” which will take you to a series of pages that help you sign on and indicate your preferences. You will need to provide your full name and your email address, and determine a Username and Password—the site guides you through the steps. It is not immediately obvious but at the bottom of every Twitter page is a list of categories including “Help” which can take you to some very useful information if needed.



2. Once you have created your account, look for the “Search” bar at the top right of the Twitter site page, in the narrow dark band at the top. Put your cursor in that Search bar and type aurorachris and then click ENTER. This is how it will look when you have done this and you will begin getting “Tweets” from Chris:



3. You are also free to follow the Stephen Lewis Foundation and other members of GRAN (or anyone else you wish), just to get started.

IMPORTANT: To UNFOLLOW someone, click on “Following” on your own Twitter Home Page and hold the cursor over the button that says “FOLLOWING” opposite the person or group you want to delete. The button should change from blue to red, then click on it and in about 3 seconds they will be gone from your list.

CAUTION:

There are spammers in the Twitter-universe also.
They try to get into your account by sending a message
saying they want to “follow” you.
If a request you were not expecting,
or with a name you don’t recognize,
shows up just click “IGNORE” and it will go away.

TWITTER ETIQUETTE

Social Media will influence the way GRAN is viewed by the outside world. It is important to keep this in mind when we use Twitter, while at the same time giving free reign to our passion, humour and creativity.

Following are some general rules that are important to keep in mind:

1. Etiquette or manners:

- **Be positive.** People on social media platforms respond better to positive messages.
- **Be respectful.** Never use social media as a platform to criticize GRAN, our members or our partners. Have respect for other people’s time. Send only what is important. Beware of TIM (too much information). Remember people have feelings - think about the impact your tweets might have on others.
- **Be helpful.** Become the person others follow for news on the topic you feel passionately about. Contribute helpful information and support others without expecting something in return.
- **Be honest and transparent.**
- **Remember.** Using capital letters can be perceived as ranting – remember the value of being perceived as positive.
- **Acronyms.** Try to avoid them.
- **Never insult people, MPs or Senators.** We can point out errors or support without being critical or supportive of the party. Just criticize or support the message

2. Protocol

- **Remember.** Gran is multi-partisan. We will be trying to win MPs and Senators and citizens to our vision of aid for sub-Saharan Africa with good, solid factual information. We can be critical of a message and correct it,
- **Be factual.** If in doubt about your information, check it out.
- **Never disclose private information** or internal discussions about GRAN’s work, policy positions, membership or partners,

APPENDIX H

Media Registration Form

MEDIA OUTLET	REPORTER NAME	PHONE / E-MAIL

APPENDIX I

Media Tracker Spreadsheet

Still to come

APPENDIX J

Radio/TV Coverage Report Sample

This is an example of a report you can send to GRAN to let everyone know of radio or television coverage you receive.

Media Report

Date: December 1, 2011

Media type: Radio (interview and phone in)

Program or Publication: CBC Alberta at Noon

Host: Donna McElligott

Guests: Dariel Bateman, Advograms, Calgary, National Advocacy Committee

Peggy Edwards, One World Grannies, Ottawa, National Advocacy Committee

Content: Actual conversation not on website but posted as follows:

Grandmothers fighting HIV/AIDS

Today is World AIDS Day. We spoke with two grandmothers, Peggy Edwards and Dariel Bateman, who are part of the Grandmothers to Grandmothers campaign to raise money and awareness about HIV/AIDS.

With links to <http://www.grandmotherscampaign.org> and <http://grandmothersadvocacy.org/>

Of interest: It was World AIDS Day. Host asked Dariel and Peggy what they were reflecting on this day and asked about grandmothers efforts in Canada in advocacy to support African grandmothers. She then asked listeners to comment on the role of grandmothers and what had been said about making progress of the fight to turn the tide on HIV and AIDS. Very positive response including an e-mail from a young mother who said "Grannies rock", then went on to say how her mother (who is a member of the Grandmothers Campaign) is a role model for her children.

The Pitch: The Calgary Advograms pitched the story for World AIDS Day to the producer of Alberta at Noon

APPENDIX K

Additional Resources