

Table of Contents

We Can! Media Messages 181
 Sample Print PSA (English and Spanish) 185
 Live Read Script (English) 186
 Live Read Script (Spanish) 187
We Can! Backgrounder..... 189
 Prototype Plan 193
 Timeline and Checklist 195
 Timeline and Checklist for Special Events 197
 Encouraging the Media to Cover Your Event 201
 Sample Media Advisory 203
 Sample Press Release 205
 Sample Proclamation 207
 Consent and Waiver Form 209
 Parent Consent Letters..... 211

We Can! Media Messages

The following are media messages for use in conjunction with local launches of the **We Can!** program. The three overarching key media messages below provide basic information on this new program, including what **We Can!** stands for (acronym), who is behind the program (NIH), why the program is needed, and what the program aims to achieve (at the broadest levels).

Each key media message has multiple submessages, or supporting points, outlined in this document, which provide more specific information related to program messages for parents and youth, desired behaviors, community-based programs, etc.

These messages can be used to inform both internal and external audiences via presentations, media materials (e.g., pitch letters, press releases, talking points), Web site content, and letters to potential partners.

Key Media Messages

1. **Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity & Nutrition**, or **We Can!**, is a national public education program from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to help prevent overweight and obesity among youth ages 8–13.
2. **We Can!** reaches parents and caregivers in home and community settings with educational materials and activities to encourage healthy eating, increase physical activity, and reduce sedentary time. The program outlines five specific desirable behaviors for parents and six for youth.
3. **We Can!** is based on an in-depth review of the leading science-based literature on obesity prevention, an environmental scan of relevant materials from Federal and non-Federal agency programs, and the demonstrated capacity of community-based settings.
4. For more information, visit <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov>.

1. Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity & Nutrition!, or *We Can!*, is a national public education program from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to help prevent overweight and obesity among youth ages 8–13.

- Nearly 9 million U.S. children and teens ages 6–19 (16 percent) are overweight. In addition, another 15 percent are considered at risk of becoming overweight. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Center for Health Statistics. Prevalence of Overweight Among Children and Adolescents: United States, 1999–2002. Atlanta: CDC; 2005. (Available at: www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/pubs/pubd/hestats/overwght99.htm.)
- In just three decades, overweight has more than doubled among children ages 2–5 years and adolescents ages 12–19 years, and more than tripled among youth ages 6–11 years. (Ogden CL et al. Prevalence and Trends in Overweight Among US Children and Adolescents, 1999–2000. *Journal of the American Medical Association*. 2002;288(14):1728–1732.)
- Overweight children are more likely to become overweight adults.
- Overweight children are at an increased risk for chronic illness such as heart disease,

diabetes, asthma, and high blood pressure. The growth in overweight has contributed to a dramatic increase of type 2 diabetes in children. Though once considered rare in adolescents, type 2 diabetes now accounts for 8 to 45 percent of newly diagnosed diabetes cases in children and adolescents. (Fagot-Campagna A et al. Type 2 Diabetes Among North American Children and Adolescents: An Epidemiologic Review and a Public Health Perspective. *Journal of Pediatrics*. 2000;136(5):664–672.)

- ***We Can!*** is a collaboration among four Institutes of the National Institutes of Health, namely the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI); National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK); National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD); and National Cancer Institute (NCI).
- ***We Can!*** complements the 2005 recommendations from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, as well as other Federal initiatives targeted to children to reduce the burden of preventable disease.

2. **We Can!** reaches parents and caregivers in home and community settings with educational materials and activities to encourage healthy eating, increase physical activity, and reduce sedentary time. The program outlines five specific desirable behaviors for parents and six for youth.
- **For parents and primary caregivers, We Can!** encourages the following behaviors:
 - Increase the availability and accessibility of healthy foods in the home.
 - Enjoy small portions at home and at restaurants.
 - Limit the availability and accessibility in the home of sweetened beverages, high-fat foods, and energy-dense foods that are low in nutrients.
 - Support and enable family physical activity.
 - Support and enable reduced screen time.
 - **For youth, We Can!** specifically aims to enable the following behaviors:
 - Choose a sufficient amount of a variety of fruits and vegetables per day.
 - Enjoy small portions at home and at restaurants.
 - Decrease consumption of high-fat foods and energy-dense foods that are low in nutrient value.
 - Substitute water, fat-free milk, or low-fat milk for sweetened beverages.
 - Engage in at least 60 minutes of moderate physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week.
 - Reduce sedentary activity by limiting screen time to no more than 2 hours per day.
 - **We Can!** provides parents, caregivers, communities, and health care providers with numerous resources:
 - A consumer Web site, <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov>, providing parents, caregivers, communities, national partners, and media with up-to-date health information tips on maintaining a healthy weight for families. The Web site will be updated continually and refreshed with new tips for parents, updated materials from NIH, and information about community events conducted by the **We Can!** Intensive Community Sites.
 - A parent handbook titled *Families Finding the Balance* with helpful tips on maintaining a healthy weight.

- Also available in Spanish and downloadable from the **We Can!** Web site.
- The **We Can!** *Energize Our Community Toolkit for Action*, a community “how-to” guide on planning and implementing community events, developing local partnerships, and media visibility for the program.
 - Parents/caregivers and their children can participate in classes and activities being organized at **community sites** around the country:
 - **We Can!** has engaged **community sites** around the country, **including [INSERT YOUR ORGANIZATION’S NAME] in [INSERT YOUR CITY/REGION]**, to take an active role in creating healthier hometown environments that promote a healthy weight.
 - As a **We Can!** site, **[INSERT YOUR ORGANIZATION’S NAME]** has agreed to implement parent programs, youth programs, and community events. Each parent and youth program will consist of a minimum of 15 participants.
 - Any community organization can adapt the program materials from the **We Can!** Web site for its use. The reach of **We Can!** is limitless.
 - **We Can!** is joining forces with other national organizations, including health professional associations, corporations and the media to provide parents/caregivers with the most up-to-date information on prevention of overweight in children.
 - **We Can!** is designed to be a one-stop resource that parents and caregivers, as well as their health care providers, can use to find information to help children maintain a healthy weight.
 - **We Can!** materials, activities, and details of specific community programs are available at the program Web site, <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov>.
3. **We Can!** is based on an in-depth review of the leading science-based literature on obesity prevention, an environmental scan of relevant materials from Federal and non-Federal agency programs, and the demonstrated capacity of community-based settings.
 4. For more information, visit <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov> or call **1-866-35-WECAN**.
 5. For the Healthy Weight Community Outreach Initiative Strategy Development Report, visit www.nhlb.nih.gov/health/prof/heart/obesity/hwcoi

Sample Print PSAs

Who can make **it** happen?

we can!
Ways to Enhance Children's Activity & Nutrition

choose fruits & vegetables

play active games

ALL PARENTS CAN!

For a free handbook with food, activity and screen time tips, visit <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov> or call 1-866-36-WE CAN.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
National Institutes of Health

B&W English

¿Quién puede lograrlo?

we can!
Ways to Enhance Children's Activity & Nutrition

compartir comidas bajas en grasa

¡TODOS LOS PADRES PODEMOS!

Para obtener un manual gratuito con consejos sobre cómo tener una alimentación adecuada, mayor actividad y pasar menos tiempo delante de la pantalla, visite <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov> o llame al 1-866-366-3226.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
National Institutes of Health

B&W Spanish

Additional print sizes and color available at <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov>

NHLBI *We Can!* Live Read Script (English)

:10

LIVE: Help your kids stay at a healthy weight. **We Can!** do it together. For a free handbook from the National Institutes of Health, call 1-866-35-WECAN.

:20

LIVE: Who can help your kids to a healthier future? Together, **We Can!**

“**We Can!**” stands for Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity & Nutrition.

For a free handbook with tips on eating well, moving more, and decreasing screen time, call 1-866-35-WECAN.

ALTERNATIVES:

Who can help your kids to a healthier future? Together, **We Can!**

“**We Can!**” stands for Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity and Nutrition.

For a free handbook from the National Institutes of Health, call 1-866-35-WECAN.

Worried about your child’s weight? Together, **We Can!** helps them avoid becoming overweight. “**We Can!**” stands for Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity & Nutrition.

Get tips on eating well, moving more, and decreasing screen time from the National Institutes of Health. Call 1-866-35-WECAN.

Parents, prevent your child from becoming overweight and give them a healthier future. **We Can!** help! “**We Can!**” stands for Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity & Nutrition.

For a free handbook with tips on eating well, moving more, and decreasing screen time, call 1-866-35-WECAN.

:30

LIVE: Parents, who can help your kids to a healthier future? **We Can!**

“**We Can!**” stands for Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity & Nutrition.

It’s a new program from the National Institutes of Health that offers families tips about eating well, moving more, and decreasing screen time.

For free tips and tools, visit wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov. That’s w-e-c-a-n [dot] n-h-l-b-i [dot] n-i-h [dot] g-o-v. Or call 1-866-35-WECAN.

iPodemos! de NHLBI Guión en vivo (en español)

:10

EN VIVO: Ayude a sus niños a mantenerse en un peso saludable. **iPodemos!** hacerlo juntos. Para obtener un manual gratuito de los Institutos Nacionales de la Salud, llame al 1-866-359-3226.

:20

EN VIVO: ¿Quién puede ayudar a sus niños a tener un futuro más saludable? Juntos **iPodemos!**

“**iPodemos!**” viene del inglés **We Can!** o “Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity & Nutrition” (Sugerencias para Mejorar la Actividad y Nutrición de los Niños).

Para obtener un manual gratuito con consejos sobre cómo tener una alimentación saludable, mayor actividad y pasar menos tiempo enfrente de la pantalla, llame al 1-866-359-3226.

ALTERNATIVAS:

¿Quién puede ayudar a sus niños a tener un futuro más saludable? Juntos **iPodemos!**

“**iPodemos!**” viene del inglés **We Can!** o “Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity & Nutrition” (Sugerencias para Mejorar la Actividad y Nutrición de los Niños). Llame al 1-866-359-3226.

¿Le preocupa el peso de su niño? Juntos **iPodemos!** ayudarlos a evitar el sobrepeso. “**iPodemos!**” viene del inglés **We Can!** o “Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity & Nutrition” (Sugerencias para Mejorar la Actividad y Nutrición de los Niños).

Obtenga consejos de los Institutos Nacionales de la Salud sobre cómo tener una alimentación saludable, mayor actividad y pasar menos tiempo enfrente de la pantalla . Llame al 1-866-359-3226.

Padres de familia, eviten que su hijo tenga sobrepeso y déle un futuro más saludable. **iPodemos!** ayudarles. “**iPodemos!**” viene del inglés **We Can!** o “Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity & Nutrition” (Formas de Mejorar la Actividad y Nutrición de los Niños).



Para obtener un manual gratuito con consejos sobre cómo tener una alimentación saludable, mayor actividad y pasar menos tiempo enfrente de la pantalla , llame al 1-866-359-3226.

:30

EN VIVO: Padres, ¿quién puede ayudar a sus niños a tener un futuro más saludable? **iPodemos!**

“**iPodemos!**” viene del inglés **We Can!** o “Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity & Nutrition” (Sugerencias para Mejorar la Actividad y Nutrición de los Niños).

Es un nuevo programa de los Institutos Nacionales de la Salud que les ofrece a las familias consejos sobre cómo tener una alimentación saludable, mayor actividad y pasar menos tiempo enfrente de la pantalla. Para obtener consejos y herramientas gratis, visite <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov>, w-e-c-a-n [punto] n-h-l-b-i [punto] n-i-h [punto] g-o-v. O llame al 1-866-359-3226.

We Can! Background

The United States is facing a potentially devastating public health crisis of overweight and obesity. Nearly one-third of all adults are now classified as obese, a figure that has more than doubled over the past 30 years. Perhaps even more alarming is the staggering effect the epidemic has had on children. In just 30 years, obesity has more than doubled among children ages 2–5 and adolescents ages 12–19, and more than tripled among youth ages 6–11. This phenomenon has contributed directly to outcomes such as the dramatic rise in the incidence of type 2 diabetes in children—an illness that, once considered rare in adolescents, is now estimated to account for 8 to 45 percent of newly diagnosed diabetes cases in children and adolescents.

To address this increase in overweight and obesity in children, the National Institutes of Health’s (NIH) National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), in collaboration with the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), and National Cancer Institute (NCI), have come together to promote **We Can! (Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity & Nutrition)**—a national public education outreach program on maintaining a healthy weight. Intended to extend the success of Hearts N’ Parks, NHLBI’s 3-year collaboration with the National

Recreation and Park Association, **We Can!** will provide activities and programs that encourage improved nutritional choices, increased physical activity, and reduced screen time in youth ages 8–13.

We Can! is unique among existing youth obesity-prevention initiatives in its focus on programs and activities for parents and families as a primary group for influencing youth audiences. **We Can!** will be implemented through the following strategies:

- **COMMUNITY OUTREACH.** **We Can!** will collaborate with 13 Intensive Community Sites around the country to take an active role in creating healthier hometown environments that promote a healthy weight. Sites participated in an orientation training and will be provided with materials and resources to implement and evaluate **We Can!** Sites also will receive technical assistance to support local partnership and media outreach. An unlimited number of General Community Sites will receive online access to all materials, including the program poster, its parent brochure in both Spanish and English, local press releases, and other useful **We Can!** tools. These sites will extend the reach of **We Can!** messages throughout the country.
- **NATIONAL MEDIA AND MESSAGES.** National promotion will target key constituencies with messages that announce **We Can!** and motivate

youth and their parents or primary caregivers to take individual and community action to maintain a healthy weight. Messages will engage the public in recognizing both individual and environmental factors that influence persons' attempts to achieve and maintain a healthy weight and ultimately reduce their risk of heart disease and other serious conditions. Toward these ends, **We Can!** will offer English and Spanish materials, such as radio and print public service advertisements, a parent handbook, and a consumer Web site.

- **PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT.**

Providing an umbrella theme, materials, and support, **We Can!** will strategically engage a select group of national organizations (including health professional associations as well as corporate, media, and Federal partners) that have an infrastructure to reach target populations. The program will seek to enable partner organizations to tailor their programs and promotions to include **We Can!** materials, messages, and activities.

We Can! will encourage youth to

- Choose a sufficient amount of a variety of fruits and vegetables per day.
- Decrease consumption of high-fat foods and energy-dense foods with low nutrient value.

- Enjoy small portions at home and at restaurants.
- Substitute water, fat-free milk, or low-fat milk for sweetened beverages.
- Engage in at least 60 minutes of moderate physical activity on most—preferably all—days of the week.
- Reduce sedentary activity by limiting screen time to no more than 2 hours per day.

To support youth in this program, **We Can!** will encourage parents and primary caregivers to

- Increase the availability and accessibility of healthy foods in the home.
- Limit the availability and accessibility in the home of sweetened beverages, high-fat foods, and energy-dense foods with low nutrient value.
- Enjoy small portions at home and at restaurants.
- Support and enable family physical activity.
- Support and enable reduced screen time.

We Can! was designed based on a strategy development workshop, convened in February 2004, with leading researchers, public health experts, nutritionists and dietitians, youth marketing experts, and community center representatives from around the country; a review of the science-based literature on obesity prevention; an environmental scan to review other agency work on overweight and obesity; and an assessment of Hearts N' Parks.

We Can! launched in spring 2005. The initiative will build on the solid foundation established by Hearts N' Parks and will complement other community-based efforts under way by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to reduce the burden of preventable disease.

For further information, please contact:

Karen A. Donato, S.M., R.D.
Coordinator, NHLBI Obesity
Education Initiative
301-496-1051
donatok@nih.gov
<http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov>
1-866-35-WECAN

Prototype Plan for Launching Your Program

SITUATION: Healthy County Department of Parks and Recreation is taking steps to become a **We Can!** community. Staff members are developing a plan to launch this initiative.

Goals

1. To announce the launch of **We Can!** in Healthy County.
2. To inform community members about upcoming **We Can!** activities.
3. To inform local policymakers about participation in **We Can!**
4. To encourage partnerships with other community organizations and potential sponsors.
5. To increase the number of children participating in recreational programs.

Target Audiences

1. Local newspapers, radio and TV stations, corporations, and organizations that have appropriate communication vehicles
2. Local media, clubs and other organized groups, community calendar editors
3. Local policymakers
4. Community organizations and businesses
5. Schools, daycare centers, summer camp programs, parenting groups, and businesses that are geared toward children in the community. Media that reach these groups.

Key Messages

1. Healthy County is becoming a **We Can!** community.
2. Planned activities as part of Healthy County's **We Can!** initiative will include [LIST].
3. **We Can!** is an innovative, nationwide initiative that aims to reduce the growing trend of overweight among youth ages 8–13 in the United States, by educating and encouraging parents and caregivers to create healthy home environments.

4. By becoming a **We Can!** partner, local organizations and businesses can demonstrate their commitment to the well-being of citizens of Healthy County, share resources for implementing worthwhile programs, and gain exposure for their own programs and services.
5. The sooner we can teach our children how to prevent overweight, the faster we can reduce their risk.

Special Event

1. Hold a special event to launch **We Can!**. The event should include a news conference featuring prominent community leaders and policymakers, including someone representative of the community; activities for children; exhibits or screenings by local organizations and businesses; and sponsorship opportunities (such as paying for T-shirts).
2. To maximize coverage by the media, request an official proclamation by policymakers and hold the event during March (National Nutrition Month) or on a relevant “health holiday.” Access the 2005 National Health Observances calendar at www.healthfinder.gov/library/nho/nho.asp?year=2005.
3. Invite local hospitals, daycare centers, pharmacies, and radio or TV stations to join a task force and/or participate in the event.

Timeline and Checklist

6–8 weeks before the event

- Request permit and reserve park area by town square. Weather contingency plan to include ordering canopy for space. Work with adjacent city offices to identify available space for individual interviews with the media, if needed.
- Invite speakers.
- Request proclamation from local government officials.
- Order brochures on heart disease, and other serious diseases, information on risk factors, banners, and T-shirts.

4–6 weeks before the event

- Prepare and send calendar announcement.
- Assign responsibilities to staff and volunteers. Hire photographer, contractor to provide staging area, sound system, etc.
- Invite guests, including policymakers, county agencies, wellness directors at area health care facilities, prominent business people, leaders in the community, etc.

2–4 weeks before the event

- Prepare the following media tools: media advisory, news release, backgrounders on the Healthy County **We Can!** program, speakers list for news conference. Copy backgrounders included in **We Can! Energize Our Community: Toolkit for Action**.
- Discuss media list with county communications office, and review and update for special event. Target local media that reach community at large, policymakers (newsletters, etc.), parents and caregivers of children, local businesses.

1 to 2 weeks before the event

- Send media advisory.
- Update Web site.
- Send event schedule, list of responsibilities, and directions to the site to staff and volunteers. Provide copies of all materials to county communications staff, administrative staff, and others who might receive inquiries about the event.
- Gather biographic information from speakers for media and for the moderator's introductions. Provide information to help speakers with their remarks.
- Supplies you'll need onsite: pens, sign-in sheets (for media), business cards, brochures on Healthy County Parks and Recreation programs and other programs.

1 week before the event

- Confirm space, volunteers and equipment.
- Distribute letter and consent form to parents of children who will be participating through their regular programs.
- Call key media to encourage them to attend.
- Collate media kits.

1 or 2 days before the event

- Resend media advisory to entire media list.
- Keep calling media targets.
- Gather and pack supplies.
- Arrange for designated staff person to field calls on the day of the event; update outgoing voice mail message.

At the event

- Greet media; have them sign in. Give every attending media person a press kit to take back to his or her office. Introduce media representatives to your spokespersons for interviews.

After the event

- Follow up on special requests made during the event by the media or speakers.
- Send press kits to reporters who expressed interest but did not attend.
- Check for coverage in newspapers, on TV and radio, and on the Internet.
- Obtain contact sheets or prints from the photographer and order photos for internal publications, as well as to send to partners or sponsors, speakers, special guests, etc.
- Write article about the event for your organization, and encourage partners and sponsors to do the same.
- Send thank-you notes to reporters who attended.
- Send letter to editor of your daily newspaper to publicly thank your volunteers for making the event a success and ask editor to consider it for publication.
- Send thank-you notes to sponsors, partners, and volunteers directly.
- Prepare evaluation of the event.

Checklist and Timeline for Special Events

As soon as possible

- Identify your goals, target audience(s), and key messages.
- Develop an agenda for the event, identify potential speakers, and prepare a budget and timeline to include promotion of the event and logistics (e.g., renting space or equipment).
- Identify and contact potential partners and cosponsors.
- Assemble a task force or committee for building your event.

6–8 weeks before the event

- Reserve space. If your event is likely to draw media, be sure to identify a quiet space for individual interviews.
- Invite speakers.
- Request proclamation from local government officials.
- Order educational materials, signs or banners, awards, and T-shirts or other giveaway items you will need.

4–6 weeks before the event

- Identify community calendar contacts and their deadlines, and distribute your media advisory or calendar announcement.
- Recruit event volunteers, staff, and contractors (such as audiovisual techs if needed, photographer, caterer, etc.), and assign specific responsibilities.
- Arrange for equipment (if not provided by the site). Equipment might include, for example, tables (with draping) for health screenings or exhibits, easels for signs, a podium, a stage or “riser,” microphone(s) and a sound system. For a news conference or event with a celebrity, you might also need a “mult box”, a device that allows broadcast media to record directly from the sound system.
- Create guest list and invite guests.

2–4 weeks before the event

- Determine what media tools you will need and prepare them. These materials include, for example, media advisory, news release, backgrounders or fact sheets, agenda, etc.
- Update or develop your media list (see “Working with the Media” in Chapter 3: Public Visibility).

1–2 weeks before the event

- Send media advisory.
- Update your Web site.
- Send event schedule, list of responsibilities, and directions to the site to staff and volunteers. Provide copies of all materials to anyone who will be responding to inquiries before, during, or after the event.
- Assist speakers with their remarks; be sure to gather brief biographic information for the moderator to use to introduce speakers.
- Check on the status of the materials you've ordered, and make a checklist of supplies you'll need onsite. Examples: pens, sign-in sheets, business cards, brochures or other information about your program or department.

1 week before the event

- Confirm space, volunteers, and equipment.
- If you will be photographing, videotaping, or otherwise recording the event, then distribute consent forms. If children will be participating, signatures from their parents or guardians will be needed. (Note: No consent forms are required for news coverage.)
- Make followup calls to key media to confirm their receipt of the advisory and to encourage them to attend.
- Collate media kits.

1 or 2 days before the event

- Resend the advisory to your entire list.
- Keep calling your media targets.
- Gather and pack supplies.
- Make any necessary arrangements for responding to calls while you are at the event. Brief office staff, update your outgoing voice mail message, distribute your cell phone number and/or inform office staff as to whether you will be calling in to check messages.

At the event

- Greet media when they arrive. Ask them to sign in so you can track who attended.
- Give every media person who attends a press kit to take back to his or her office. It will help the media person to round out the story.
- Introduce media representatives to your spokespersons for interviews.

After the event

- Follow up on any special requests made during the event by the media, speakers, etc.; for example, reporters might ask for a bio or “head shot” photo of a specific speaker, or they might have asked for data or other information that was not readily accessible. (To expedite your response, call your office and have someone else process the request while the event is still happening.)
- Send press kits to reporters who expressed interest but did not attend, because it might still result in coverage or they might come to your next event.
- Check for coverage in newspapers, on TV and radio, and on the Internet.
- Obtain contact sheets or prints from the photographer and order photos for your internal publications and to send to partners or sponsors, speakers, special guests, etc.
- Write article about the event for your organization, and encourage partners and sponsors to do the same.
- Send thank-you notes to the reporters who attended. Tell them that you enjoyed working with them and that you hope to continue to serve as a resource for their reporting.
- Send letter to editor of your daily newspaper to publicly thank your volunteers for making the event a success and ask editor to consider it for publication.
- And, of course, thank your sponsors, partners, and volunteers directly.

Congratulations on a job well done. Now on to the next event...

Encouraging the Media to Cover Your Event

In many cases, sending a news advisory is not enough to get a reporter to attend your event. Following up with key media beforehand might mean the difference between coverage and no publicity.

Here are tips on encouraging the media to participate:

1. Prioritize your calls; review your media list and identify the reporters who are most important to you. Call them first.
2. Try to speak directly to a reporter. Don't be shy. Keep calling, even if you leave a voice mail message.
3. Be prepared to resend the news advisory to individuals several times; they will likely say they didn't receive the information, even if they did.
4. If you are asking staff or volunteers to assist in follow-up calls, prepare a script and a list of possible questions and answers.

To reporters who say...

YES. Work with them to arrange an interview with your spokesperson. Ask if there's anything special they might need from you; for example, a camera crew might need access to an electrical source or a "mult box" that will provide them with sound directly from any microphones you might be using. Record them on a log of expected media attendance with notes on when they will be there, whom they are sending, and whether they will want interviews or other special assistance.

MAYBE. Put them on your callback list and call again in the final days before the event to encourage them to attend. You might want to add a section to your media log for possible attendees.

NO. Ask if they can suggest someone else on the staff who might be interested in the story. Tell them you'd like to send them a press kit after the event, in case they become interested in the program or topic.

Sample Media Advisory for We Can! Launch at Local Site

[Note: Advisory should never be longer than one page.]

[YOUR ORGANIZATION'S LOGO HERE]

[**WE CAN!** LOGO HERE]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
[DATE]

CONTACT: [NAME], [ORGANIZATION]
[PHONE], [E-MAIL]

MEDIA ADVISORY

Message to Parents: '**We Can!**' Prevent Childhood Obesity

[COMMUNITY SITE] Offers New National Institutes of Health Program
to Families in [REGION] to Address Growing Epidemic

WHAT: (COMMUNITY SITE) is launching Ways to Enhance Children's Activity & Nutrition! (**We Can!**), a national education program from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to prevent obesity among youth ages 8–13. **We Can!** reaches parents and caregivers with educational materials and community programs to encourage healthy eating, increase physical activity and reduce sedentary time.

[INSERT SPECIFICS OF LOCAL LAUNCH EVENT]

WHO: [LIST ALL WHO WILL BE AT EVENT FOR PHOTOS, INTERVIEWS]

- Director of [ORGANIZATION]
- Local partners
- Local celebrities
- Government or community representatives

WHEN: [DATE]
[TIME]

WHERE: [COMMUNITY SITE]
[ADDRESS]
[PHONE]

BACKGROUND: Ways to Enhance Children's Activity & Nutrition!, or **We Can!**, is a national public education program from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to help prevent overweight and obesity among youth ages 8–13. For more information or to download a handbook for parents, visit <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov>, or call 1-866-35-WECAN.

[INSERT LANGUAGE ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION AS APPROPRIATE]

Sample Press Release

[YOUR ORGANIZATION’S LOGO HERE]

[**WE CAN!** LOGO HERE]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
[DATE]

CONTACT: [NAME], [ORGANIZATION]
[PHONE], [E-MAIL]

[COMMUNITY SITE] Launches **We Can!** to Fight Youth Obesity

New Federal Program for Families Comes to [Region]

CITY, STATE – [COMMUNITY SITE] today launches **We Can!** (Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity & Nutrition!), a new program from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to address the growing obesity epidemic among youths ages 8–13. **We Can!** reaches parents and caregivers in home and community settings with educational materials and activities including a new six-lesson course for parents, a new parent Web site (<http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov>), a parent handbook in both English and Spanish, several youth programs, and community events and projects.

“Parents in [REGION] have new resources to help their families maintain a healthy weight,” said [COMMUNITY SITE DIRECTOR]. “With the materials that the **We Can!** program offers, we can help make a difference in the lives of our residents.”

Activities for the **We Can!** program include [LAUNCH EVENT AND/OR PROGRAM DETAILS].

“**We Can!** is designed to empower parents by providing them the tools they need to promote healthy eating, increase physical activity and reduce sedentary time within their families,” said Dr. Elizabeth G. Nabel, Director of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) at NIH.

We Can! reaches parents and caregivers in home and community settings with educational materials and activities. Specifically, **We Can!** encourages parents and caregivers to:

- Increase the availability and accessibility of healthy foods in the home
- Enjoy small portions at home and at restaurants
- Limit the availability and accessibility in the home of sweetened beverages, high-fat foods and energy-dense foods that are low in nutrients
- Support and enable family physical activity
- Support and enable reduced screen time

– more –

We Can! encourages children ages 8–13 to:

- Choose a sufficient amount of a variety of fruits and vegetables per day
- Enjoy small portions at home and at restaurants
- Decrease consumption of high-fat foods and energy-dense foods that are low in nutrient value
- Substitute water, fat-free or low-fat milk for sweetened beverages
- Engage in at least 60 minutes of moderate physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week
- Reduce sedentary activity by limiting screen time to no more than two hours per day

We Can! is based on an in-depth review of the leading science-based literature on obesity prevention, an environmental scan of relevant materials from Federal and non-Federal agency programs as well as the demonstrated capacity of community-based settings. NHLBI is joined by three other NIH Institutes—National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and National Cancer Institute—in promoting **We Can!** to provide a comprehensive Federal government response to the critical issue of childhood obesity.

NIH has designed **We Can!** so that any local civic groups, parent groups, churches and others can implement these activities in their communities. To date, 13 Intensive Community Sites and more than 20 other communities have committed to use **We Can!** program materials and organize classes and events. More information on **We Can!** for parents, caregivers and community organizations is available at the **We Can!** Web site: <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov> or call 1-866-35-WECAN.

#

[ORGANIZATION'S BOILER PLATE]

Ways to Enhance Children's Activity & Nutrition!, or **We Can!**, is a national public education program from National Institutes of Health (NIH) to help prevent overweight and obesity among youth ages 8–13. **We Can!** reaches parents and caregivers in home and community settings with educational materials and activities to encourage healthy eating, increase physical activity and reduce sedentary time. The program outlines five specific desirable behaviors for parents and six for youth; for more information, visit <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov> or call 1-866-35-WECAN.

Sample Proclamation

[**WE CAN!** LOGO HERE]

[YOUR ORGANIZATION'S LOGO HERE]

We Can! (Ways to Enhance Children's Nutrition & Activity) Proclamation

*Note: Contact the office of your governor or mayor to set up an appointment with the executive assistant. Explain the **We Can!** program and provide a copy of this form on your community site letterhead. Most will be happy to use it as it stands.*

[State or City] of _____

EXECUTIVE OFFICE PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS childhood obesity is a growing epidemic; and

WHEREAS **We Can!** reaches parents and caregivers in home and community settings with educational materials to encourage healthy eating, increase physical activity, and reduce sedentary time; and

WHEREAS **We Can!** work together to prevent overweight and obesity among America's youth ages 8–13 years old,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, _____ [Name],
_____ [Title], _____,
[City/State]

DO HEREBY PROCLAIM that _____
[city/state] supports **We Can!**, and I encourage all citizens to join in this program and help to create healthier home environments and help children and families maintain a healthy weight.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the _____ to be affixed.

Done at the _____ on this _____ day of _____ two thousand and five.

By:

Title:

Attest:

Title:

Consent and Waiver

I hereby grant permission to [OFFICIAL NAME(S) OF ORGANIZATION(S)] to use, reproduce, publish, distribute, and exhibit my picture, portrait, likeness, or voice, or any or all of them (or those of a child under my guardianship), in or in connection with the production of a photograph, videotape, audiotape, CD-ROM, or in any manner and for any purpose as stated below, and

I hereby waive all rights of privacy or compensation (or those of a child under my guardianship) that I have in connection with the use of my picture, portrait, likeness or voice, or any or all of them, in or in connection with said photograph, videotape, audiotape, CD-ROM, or Web site and any use to which the same or any material therein may be put, applied, or adapted by the organizations designated above.

It is understood and agreed that the above waiver is limited to the use by the organizations listed above or by any of their agencies, departments, or distributors for educational purposes only and not for profit or trade.

It is also understood and agreed that this consent and waiver will not be made the basis of a future claim of any kind against the organizations as noted above or their affiliates.

Participant's Name: _____

Address: _____

*Signature: _____ Date: _____

*If the above is the signature of a parent or guardian (required if individual is a minor), please print the name here:

Sample Cover Letter to Parents of Children for Consent Form

Dear Parent:

On [DATE AND TIME], the [NAME OF ORGANIZATION] will host an event to launch **We Can!**, an innovative program aimed at reducing overweight among children ages 8–13 years by teaching and encouraging parents and caregivers to create healthy home environments. **We Can!** was developed and is supported by four components of the National Institutes of Health: the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), and National Cancer Institute (NCI).

We invite you and your child to join us for this exciting event, which includes a **news conference featuring [LIST PROMINENT SPEAKERS AND TITLES]**.

Heart healthy activities to be held during the event include [ADD DETAILS].

We will have photographers [ADD “and videographers” IF APPROPRIATE] documenting the event. **We would appreciate your signing the attached consent form to grant permission for your child to participate in this exciting event, including being photographed or videotaped. Please return it to [SPECIFY] by [PROVIDE DEADLINE].**

If you have any questions, please contact [PROVIDE NAME AND PHONE NUMBER].

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

[NAME, TITLE, ETC.]

