

Here are some tips for increasing media coverage of your Book Fair.

Tips for Attracting Media Attention

- Ask teachers to create an expert's list of recommended reads or ask students to create a favorite booklist by school-wide vote. Send it to the book editor at your local paper.
- When inviting reporters to cover your event, emphasize the importance of your fair. Describe how it will help raise funds to revitalize your library, purchase new computers or get books to kids who can't afford them.
- Issue a special release about any VIPs or local celebrities attending your fair.
- Plan to recognize a long-time or outstanding employee at your family event. Invite your local paper to cover the ceremony.
- Invite a photographer from your local paper to take a picture of volunteers helping unload boxes from the truck or setting up your fair. This is an interesting visual, especially if tied to a story about how your fair will raise money to buy much needed textbooks and other reference material.
- Tie your fair to a popular trend ("Georgetown Elementary Raises Funds For Media Center Extreme Makeover"); or a critical issue ("Lake Mary Elementary Hosts Book Fair to Help Fund Programs Facing Budget Cuts"); or local topics ("Meadow Bay Community Cookbook Debuts at School Book Fair, March 3.)
- Television stations are interested in images so be sure to let the press know about any unique photo opportunities. Plan a special themed Family Event and include activities that will create interesting visuals, such as students and their pets dressed as pirates, a prominent author giving an energetic book talk, a student talent show, a teacher having his head shaved because his students met a reading goal.
- Deliver information and some free books to the show hosts at your local radio station. Be sure to tell them what you are doing and why and when. They may mention it on their show.
- Invite local radio stations to interview a student "spokesperson" about the book fair. Students could review books that will be offered at your fair.
- Send book fair invitations to reporters and executive staff at your local newspaper and radio and television stations. Invite them to be your guest of honor at your family event. If they are involved, they are likely to promote your event to their readers, listeners and viewers. Even if they don't attend, you may draw their attention to your event. Don't forget to confirm attendance and to send a thank you afterwards.
- Take photographs during the event. Your photos can be used in upcoming newsletters to continue your awareness program. Send them to your local paper, as well.
- Tap into statewide government initiatives designed to raise awareness about the importance of literacy. Invite governors, congressional representatives, mayors or other local dignitaries to show their support by buying the first book at your fair or purchasing books for the classroom wish list (great photo opportunities!) When you involve a local official or celebrity, you are more likely to get media coverage.