

Student Youth PIRGs Earth Week

Youth Earth Week Media Toolkit

*This toolkit is intended to provide samples, best practices and guidance to uplift the Youth Earth Week events in the media. For questions or comments contact:
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Context:

Media is one of the best opportunities to get visibility for the work we are doing on [Youth Earth Week](#). By inviting media to our events, sending them summaries of the week through media releases, and submitting Letters to the Editor, we can show the public that students are at the forefront of change to protect our environment. With hundreds of events across the country to call for bold action to protect our environment and public health, this is a great opportunity to get coverage for the great work you all have planned for Youth Earth Week!

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Additional Resources

[Activist Toolkit](#) (information on Working with Media on page 42)

[Letter to the Editor Toolkit](#)

[Social Media Toolkit](#)

Key Messages

- Think Global. Act Local. Organize Everywhere
- Since Earth Day was founded in 1970, students have been on the forefront of change to protect our environment. Today, we face numerous environmental crises, from climate change, to air and water pollution, to the destruction of ecosystems critical to all life on Earth. That's why we're organizing events across the country to call for bold action to protect our environment and public health.
- This generation is leading the charge to ensure we protect our water, air, and open spaces. Climate change and protecting the environment is one of the top issues young people care about. Coming out of record breaking voter turnout in 2020, young people believe they have the ability and responsibility to continue to create change in their communities.
- We're organizing hundreds of events across the country to call for bold action to protect our environment and public health.
- Youth Earth Week is a project of the Student PIRGs. For nearly 50 years we've helped students to get organized, mobilized and energized so they can continue to be on the cutting edge of positive change. Student PIRGs have a rich history of local organizing leading to big wins for the environment. Despite being separated due to the pandemic, they are still organizing their communities in a big way on Earth Day

Writing a News Advisory

A news advisory is designed to inform a reporter or editor about an upcoming news conference. It is like an invitation to a party.

The advisory should include the date, time, place, and purpose of the news conference. If there are important speakers or exemplary visuals, the advisory should mention those as well. The advisory, however, should not tell the whole story. If it does, nobody will bother to come to the conference itself.

Writing the advisory should take about an hour. Like a news release, it should be proofread before being distributed. The advisory should be emailed out 3 days ahead and then re-emailed the day before. Follow-up calls should be made in between distribution of the advisory and the event itself.

Sample media advisory

Student PIRGs Youth Earth Week

MEDIA CONTACT:

NAME, GROUP, EMAIL, PHONE

Students Celebrate National Youth Earth Week

ORGANIZATION *participates in week of action to call for environmental protection across the country*

WHAT:

At [00:00 p.m. EST / PST], **DATE**, **ORGANIZATION** is [hosting a description of event] as a part of hundreds of actions nationwide to celebrate Youth Earth Week

WHEN:

DATE

[00:00 p.m. EST / PST]

WHERE:

[LOCATION NAME]

[Address]

[City, State Zip Code]

If virtual event - include call/video information or RSVP form

SPEAKERS (if applicable)

[Include names and titles of VIP speakers that are participating in the event]

WHY:

Since Earth Day was founded in 1970, students have been on the forefront of change to protect our environment. Today, we face numerous environmental crises, from climate change, to air and water pollution, to the destruction of ecosystems critical to all life on Earth. That's why young people are organizing hundreds of events across the country to call for bold action to protect our environment and public health.

[Youth Earth Week](#) is a project of the [Student PIRGs](#) that has worked for nearly 50 years helping students to get organized, mobilized and energized so they can continue to be on the cutting edge of positive change.

Learn more about Youth Earth Week and more actions around the country on our [website](#) or follow us on social media using #YouthEarthWeek

Writing a Media Release

Why Write a Media Release?

In the world of media, a news release is the equivalent of a standard rap. It is your way to get a clear, concise, standard message across to any and all interested reporters. It is designed to answer their questions before they are asked and to frame the issue as you want it to appear. In addition, it provides the basis for determining whether a particular media person is interested in our campaign.

When to Do a Release

You'll need a media release to give reporters who do and who don't attend, to provide them a consistent story about what we're doing. You should send your media release after your Youth Earth Week event.

How to Write a Release

- 1) Use the sample below and update the highlighted sections. The key things to update are: a) a clear and concise description of your event and b) updating quotes from people who participate. In addition to getting your thoughts on paper concisely and developing a "quotable quote" you will need to set aside time for typing, proofreading, and producing the release.
- 2) For most media outlets in the country, a media release should follow a standard AP format, which consists of: (but you can use the same below)
 - a) Information at the top of the page letting a reporter know when the news is relevant and who to contact for additional information.
 - b) A title that is catchy enough and accurate enough to get attention.
 - c) An opening paragraph that lays out the who, what, where, when, and why of your news.
 - d) A second paragraph that is generally a quote to add some life and to personalize our position (usually a rep from your organization).
 - e) A third paragraph providing more factual detail on your position – statistics, recaps of recent events, etc.
 - f) A fourth paragraph that provides opportunity for another quote from you or a quote from a coalition partner or legislator.
 - g) Additional paragraphs that provide additional information.

- 3) The release must be typed and no longer than two pages. Generally, your release should be an "inverted pyramid" with the first paragraph providing the most essential information and the last paragraph being the least important to getting your point across. The assumption here is that reporters and editors will tend to cut your story from the bottom up.
- 4) You should email the media release the day of your event and the day after. This will help ensure the reporters see the event and cover it.
- 5) Your release is usually only the first step to getting coverage. You will occasionally be able to email a release and read your story in the following day's paper. In general however, follow-up is required. Call the reporter (or editor) to whom the release was distributed. Make sure s/he understands why what we are doing is so critical. Ideally you can enhance the printed release with some information to help bring the issue home to the reporter. See pitching stories in the previous section.
- 6) Working with the media is a process. Write down the responses you get from each reporter and editor to whom you speak. Keep track of what they like and don't like about your release. Look back at your notes before calling them to help you to frame your story appropriately. In addition, read the papers and watch/listen to the stations that say they will use your release. You should be able to tell what works and what doesn't by which parts of the release they actually use.

Sample media release

Student PIRGs Youth Earth Week

For Immediate Release:

DATE

For More Information:

NAME, GROUP, EMAIL, PHONE

Manny Rin, PIRG Campus Action Organizing Director, manny@studentpirgs.org,
925-234-1457

Students host hundreds of local actions for Youth Earth Week

XXPIRG *Students participates in week of action to call for environmental protection across the country*

CITY - CALPIRG Students, a local student environmental organizing group, is partnered with local organizations, student government, and elected officials to host actions to celebrate [Youth Earth Week](#), a national effort of more than 250 actions around the country to protect the environment. **At SCHOOL**, students [add description of your Earth Week Events - include specific details around what you did, who was involved, and why relevant locally]

SAMPLE QUOTE:

"As a young person, I am inspired to see so many of my peers take bold action to protect our environment and public health for years to come." said Manny Rin, campaign coordinator with COPIRG Students, "This week we collected more than 500 signatures asking our elected officials to ban single-use plastics here in Denver, CO."

Today, we face numerous environmental crises, from climate change, to air and water pollution, to the destruction of ecosystems critical to all life on Earth. That's why we're organizing events across the country to call for bold action to protect our environment and public health.

Since Earth Day was founded in 1970, students have been on the forefront of change to protect our environment. In the midst of numerous environmental crises, from climate change, to air and water pollution, to the destruction of ecosystems critical to all life on Earth, students at **SCHOOL** are taking action.

“Our generation is leading the charge to ensure we protect our water, air, and open spaces,” says **NAME, ROLE, SCHOOL**, “Climate change and protecting the environment is one of the top issues young people care about today.”

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