



## The Organizer's Guide to Media Terms

**Angle:** This is media lingo for whatever makes a story fresh, interesting and relevant for readers. For example, a story about children's play wouldn't normally make the front page, but if those children are ex-gang members playing together after months or years of violence, that's news. A news angle often highlights a particular point of view or segment of the community that has been overlooked. It might also place a local story within the context of regional or national trends.

To give your project a newsworthy angle, go back and think about the inspiration for your project. What problems will it solve? Who will benefit? Highlight the human side of your work. Make it relevant to readers' lives. Potential angles for a playspace feature story might be:

- State and local budgets don't provide enough money for children's play, so parents are taking matters into their own hands.
- Physical activity among children is on the decline, and obesity is on the rise; community leaders are taking a positive step to encourage daily exercise.
- The community is building a playspace in order to heal from and commemorate a local tragedy.
- City officials, police, business owners and local citizens often fight over how to run the city, but they are setting aside their differences to build a playspace and put children first.
- The surrounding neighborhood has been fragmented by crime and violence, but a new playspace represents fresh hope for the next generation.
- Children in your neighborhood have never had a safe place to play; without one, their physical, social and mental development is in jeopardy. Their "unemployment" rate is unacceptably high.
- The population of your town is aging, and a new playspace will help attract young families.
- Local businesses are investing in community infrastructure, and not just with their money – they're also lending the "sweat equity" of their employees. (Corporate philanthropy is a hot topic in business journalism these days!)

**Talking Points:** These are facts, sayings, or short sentences that sum up an organization's campaign or position on a particular issue. (When politicians go on television and repeat the same phrases over and over, they're using talking points.) They should communicate who you are, what you do, why you do it, and who your partners are. Reporters love to hear talking points (aka "sound bites") because they're memorable, easy to record, and they grab people's attention – all while making an important point. They are also a way for you to tie your project into larger issues and nationwide trends. Here are a few examples:

- "Most adults spend their entire lives wishing they were kids again. With the help of [XYZ Sponsor], we're making sure that our children have fun, safe childhoods that stay with them for a lifetime."
- "Did you know that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has called for the creation of more parks and playgrounds to help fight the epidemic of childhood obesity? Today we've demonstrated that we are a part of that fight, and we care about our children's health."
- "Play is the work of children. We know what happens when adults in this country are unemployed, and the same is true for children."

**TIP!** The news media love famous people and colorful characters. Try your best to involve local celebrities or dignitaries, and you'll almost guarantee coverage.