TIPS FOR PUBLICIZING SCOUTING FOR FOOD

Contacting community newspapers

By garnering media coverage, you can remind your neighbors of Scouting for Food and encourage them to fill our bags with food.

►**The facts, just the facts.** All of the press releases, flyers and other materials you send to the media should include the answers to these questions: who, what, when, where, why.

►**Change the subject (line).** Newspaper editors and writers are busy, and they receive hundreds of e-mails every day. Include a one-sentence summary of your news as your e-mail subject line (i.e. Scouting for Food takes place in Oak Park on Dec. 13).

►**It's your call.** After e-mailing a press release or other information about your organization, always follow up with a phone call to make sure the reporter or editor received it and to ask if they have any questions.

►**Your own backyard.** Stress the community aspect of your efforts. Community newspapers—and their subscribers—are looking for local news.

►**Run a full-court press.** Don't hesitate to call an editor or writer if your event has not appeared in the paper yet. Persistence often is rewarded.

►**Serve up a story.** Now more than ever, newspapers need reader-generated content. By providing photos, details and even entire stories, you can help newspapers fill their printed and online pages while they operate on shoestring budgets.

►**Practice penmanship.** Aren't getting any coverage? Respond to a local or national issue by writing a letter to the editor about the issue of hunger and the difference Scouting for Food will make.

►**Make things personal.** Everyone has a story. Journalists are looking for features about everyday individuals who do extraordinary things—like providing food for the hungry! Tell the local media about your efforts.

►**Knowledge is power.** Get to know your local newspaper and its writers and editors by getting a subscription and reading the paper as often as possible.

►**Friends forever.** Stay in touch with reporters throughout the year and be sure to write a thank you letter if they do feature your agency.