



UNITY IN ACTION: WORKING WITH OTHERS TO BUILD OUR EVENTS

Organizing an event is an opportunity to establish and strengthen alliances, develop leaders and deepen community involvement with your organization. *Don't miss this opportunity by doing all the work yourself!* Involving organizations, leaders and even businesses outside your core group in the organizing of the event can bring you closer to reaching your larger goals and building a stronger movement to end AIDS...and it will put an end to the plaintive cry of "why do I have to do everything myself!!!"

Remember, some of the most successful social justice and community efforts have a core of just five to seven people who are the most deeply involved. If we look around to our small core group and moan "no one is here!" we are disregarding our most loyal and committed supporters. Let's not take each other for granted. Instead, let's expand the circle by finding other ways (less intensive but still meaningful) for others to be involved.

Endorsements and Event Sponsors

Identify the organizations, leaders or constituents who you want to be involved with your organization. Target the key well-respected or influential players, ask them to endorse the mobilization, sponsor the event and take on an important but manageable role in planning the event.

Ask each event sponsor to identify a *representative or contact person* who will be responsible for carrying out the agreed upon tasks. Your core working group should work closely with these representatives and bring them together to form an organizing committee.

Roles in Event Planning

Brainstorm a list of all the roles involved in your event. It could include:

- *Program: what should happen and when and by whom (remember that your program must reflect your goals – a networking event must allow people to talk with each other; an accountability session must include people in positions of power on the hot seat, etc..)*
- *Turnout (getting people to come – and this could involve a lot of different roles and tasks...)*
- *Publicity*
- *Set up/Clean-up*
- *Media Liaison*
- *Greeting and Sign-in*
- *Materials*
- *Refreshments*
- *First Aid and Emergency planning*
- *Time-Keeper*
- *For rallies: Marshals, Police Liaison*
- *Master of Ceremonies / Welcoming Speech*
- *Closing remarks*
- *Follow-up after the event: call people to thank them for coming, etc*

This is just a start, and it's already a big list – but it will give people a meaningful reason to be involved in the planning.

You can also include goals in your planning process itself. What if planning meetings are an opportunity for networking, alliance building or open dialogue? What if working meetings included a short “teach-in” where people took turns presenting about their program or issue of concern? Interactive meetings are more lively and fun for all!

Developing a Program that Meets Your Goals

The program is going to be designed according to the purpose and goals of your event and will be strongly influenced by the targeted audience. For example, if there will be many different kinds of people there, you will want to have a planning and event structure that honors *difference* while highlighting *themes that unite people*.

You have your set of goals, but it might be helpful to also think about the goals and purposes of your audience. In your planning, brainstorm what people want out of events, and try to meet *their* goals, not just yours. If you do address their self-interest, your audience may be more likely to attend, get involved or respond to your event.

What Makes A Powerful Program?

Here’s a useful interactive exercise for a planning meeting: Ask everyone to say what was the worst and best events they have ever been a part of. What made the worst the worst, and the best the best? This can help you identify the core components of a powerful program – as well as things to stay away from! A starter list can include:

Inspiring Speakers: Some speakers are inspiring by just reading the phone book aloud! Who is the favorite speaker in your community, and how can they fit in your program? Diversity of voices can also inspire people – and a balanced program that represents different perspectives or communities will help to demonstrate the breadth of the mobilization. This may include a youth activist, religious leader, people who can share personal experiences, a political leader, or pair a more radical organization with a more mainstream organization. You may want to get speakers who are well known and well respected.

Cultural Performances: Art, film, music, theater are often the most powerful and effective communicators. You don’t necessarily need a litany of speakers to get your message across. Cultural components also show solidarity by having different types of dance or music performances during the program. If you have a number of speakers, this also helps to avoid monotony – but also you’ll need to ensure that the performances are quick and don’t wear out the welcome.

Make it Fun: Incorporate interactive activities that create space for people to share their knowledge, perspectives, meet other people, stay awake, and get involved. Parents are more likely to come if there are fun activities for kids.

Strong, Inspiring Facilitation: The flow of your event will depend who facilitates it. Pick your facilitator or MC carefully. Who is well respected? Dynamic? Efficient? You don’t want a facilitator who going to turn the podium into a soapbox. A strong MC/facilitator should keep speakers/presentations within their allotted time limits and make sure that one voice does not dominate the event. Consider what kind of tone you want set for the event and select your MC/facilitator accordingly.

Timing: The MC/facilitator keeps time and makes it move at a reasonable pace. *Shorter is better than longer*. The MC/facilitator’s job is to make the transition between different speakers

and presentations smooth and to tie it all together. If you want speakers to talk for 5-10 minutes, tell them to speak for three minutes as everyone always goes over time!

Contentious Issues: Events like accountability sessions, dialogue sessions, or alliance building forums may generate conflict. This is not always a bad thing! Conflict can build energy, foster a mutual understanding and deepen people's commitment. However, it is important to have good facilitation that can ensure that the conflict is productive. As event planners, it is your responsibility to identify contentious issues ahead of time, and plan out how to deal with them in a way that respects all those involved. Contact the Mobilization if you need help finding a facilitator.

Recognition: People like to feel appreciated and important. For example, it might encourage organizations to help with your outreach event if they will have the opportunity for some positive publicity or to attract new clients or members. Be sure to recognize the organizations or groups of people who are in attendance, not just celebrities or politicians. It also can be important to honor who is *not* there. Events can start or end with moments of silence to honor those we have lost to HIV/AIDS or who are too ill to attend.

Call to Action: If one of your goals is to involve people with PJM or your organization, the **call to action** will be the part of the program that will directly pitch this goal. Though it depends on the purpose of your event, the call to action part is often the most important aspect of your event.

Don't leave it to the end and let it get cut short! *Make sure to incorporate your call to action throughout the program.* You may want to ask the celebrity speaker, well-loved performer, or well-respected community leader to pitch the call to action. Whoever it is, ask them to say it with passion! The call to action should excite and move the audience to do something.

What Makes An Effective Call To Action?

An effective call to action should have similar qualities to your goals. The call to action should also be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time Specific.

Make it clear how the call the action will help the mobilization. People should feel that the action is meaningful and worthwhile. If at all possible, make the call to action fun!

The call to action could also have an outreach component, such as petitions signing or recruiting others to engage in the action. Your call to action should be designed to spread beyond the audience at your event and incorporate their friends, family, and co-workers.

Create Networking Space: Whether it's a group of organizations or a group of individuals, people often like to meet new people when they go to events. Building relationships is an essential part of building a movement. Depending upon the kind of event you organize, you might want to make space in the program for people to introduce themselves and/or interact.

Event Tip:

Make sure that members of your group reach out and speak one-on-one to audience members. It's an opportunity to find out the priorities, interests, resources, and ideas of audience members. It's also an opportunity to get them more excited about the mobilization and to get them involved.

Logistics To Consider

A Caution About Costs: Even if your event is not designed to be a fundraiser, it is important to consider the financial aspects. A concert can be expensive to produce. Always make sure that the bottom-line costs are clear when working with sponsoring bars or venues so you don't get a nasty surprise at the end of the night!

Location, Location, Location: No matter what type of event you choose, location is a crucial component. If it is your first event, try to pick a small space unless you are sure that it will have a large turnout. It is better to have a room crowded and packed with energy than one with a lot of empty space making people feel small and isolated. Pick a well-known location that people go to often. You might want to consider parks, churches, schools or community centers. There must be transportation available, and it should be accessible to people in wheelchairs or who have other mobility issues.

Timing: Events should be held at a time when people are available to come when they are not at work or school and also when they feel it is safe to travel. Sometimes, if your purpose is to engage people who work on HIV/AIDS issues during the day, you may choose to have a meeting during the day. This will enable people to come during work hours, but this will limit participation from others. It all comes down to knowing your audience.

Food and Refreshments: Try to have food/refreshments at your event and make sure you advertise this. People like free food. Think of what kind of food your audience eats when deciding what business to ask for donations. Food is another way to show solidarity with various groups. Food and refreshments also create more opportunities for outreach. For example, a local bakery isn't just good for donations of pastries for the event. It is also a place for spreading the word about the PJM to staff, customers and vendors!

Transportation: Part of your turnout plan should include ways of getting people there. Make sure that public transportation is accessible. If it is possible, encourage people to come as a group by car-pooling or traveling together on the bus – it's a way to encourage networking!

Child Care: Parents may be more likely to come to events with childcare and/or kid-focused activities. Sometimes it is not possible to offer childcare if the location is not insured to do so, so be sure to check ahead of time or work with local providers to arrange childcare.

Sign in: Make sure that you get people to sign in with **full contact information**. Have a database or a system of organizing that information ready to go so that you can use it right away. Make sure that all of the participants get informational and educational materials to prepare them for the next step.

Follow-Up: Make sure that your group meets soon after the event to evaluate whether you accomplished your goals for the event and plan follow-up to the participants. You should evaluate who was there and who wasn't there. Plan to do follow-up for both the participants and the people who didn't show up.

Contact the participants soon after the event to encourage them to follow through with the call to action and explore how they can get involved with the mobilization. Try not to let too much time lag between the event and the follow-up so that you don't lose the energy and momentum created by your successful event!



IDEAS FOR PREVENTION JUSTICE EVENTS

Why Should We Do Local Events?

Local events should bring us closer to reaching the goals in our local mobilizations.

Public events can be effective organizing tools in our local mobilizations. The planning of the event is an opportunity to increase involvement of different groups and community leaders and also to strengthen and train your local advocacy network. The event itself can help build momentum by helping to establish new alliances, increasing public interest and awareness, attracting media attention and putting pressure on elected officials.

There are many types of events your group can organize. These events may be rallies or protests, community forums, accountability sessions, faith-based vigils, youth speak-outs, cultural performances or direct actions. (However, every event should have one or more goals, as noted above....)

Choosing a Theme

It's best to have a theme for your event. If you're doing a World AIDS Day event, you have a built-in theme that will make the event newsworthy. If you want to do a different type of event, we have some ideas for you as well. Based on some of the main messages we've developed for PJM, here are some ways to frame an event around these messages:

***IT'S NOT ONLY WHAT YOU DO, IT'S ALSO ABOUT WHO YOU ARE.
HIV/AIDS ISN'T JUST A VIRUS HIV/AIDS ISN'T JUST A VIRUS – HIV/AIDS AS PROOF POSITIVE
OF INJUSTICE.***

Your World AIDS Day / PJM event could focus on this idea. Many people think of HIV as a virus of "blacks, gays, poor people, drug users, sexually promiscuous people, men on the down-low," etc. But most people don't really understand why certain groups have higher levels of HIV than others. Your event could help to educate the public on the structural factors that put certain groups more at risk.

***THERE'S NO SECRET CONSPIRACY TO GIVE PEOPLE HIV.
IT'S RIGHT IN THE OPEN. HERE'S WHAT'S GIVING PEOPLE HIV:***

If you chose this theme, your event could focus on the ways different government agencies have not provided the proper funding, research, or programs to sufficiently decrease new infections. For example,

- having a policy expert explain how HIV prevention programs get funded, or
- speak out about the politics that have stood in the way of funding syringe programs or comprehensive sex education in schools.

You can take a national or local approach. What's happening on these issues at the federal level? What about in your state or city? How do the two influence each other? Is there legislation happening locally or nationally that you want your community to act on? This is the time to tie it into this event. People almost always want to know something they can do to affect change.

**INVOLVE COMMUNITIES IN RESEARCH AND MONITORING:
DON'T BLAME US OR SHAME US FOR WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW.**

Another way to frame an event is to simply ask the question, **HIV Prevention: What DON'T We Know?** You could do an event with researchers, public health and policy experts, youth, activists, etc, to talk about the lack of adequate research or the unanswered questions in HIV infections.

If you wanted to do something more action-oriented in this area, you could also do a rally or demonstration demanding answers to the questions we don't know about HIV prevention.

Do you live in a city where the departments of health or other agencies do not have transparent planning processes? Or, perhaps they do not involve community members in decision-making bodies that decide funding allocation or the focus of research? You could use your event to demand increased community involvement.

Choosing Your Event

After defining your goal or goals, choose what type of event would help you accomplish your goal(s). Any event is about bringing people together. Here are some possible goal-oriented events:

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION EVENTS

Hold a teach-in, town hall meeting or multimedia presentation (including film showings) during or around World AIDS Day to educate those in your community. These events are powerful ways to educate members of your community about HIV on a deep and substantive level.

Film Screening: Starting the Conversation

Film screenings are a great way to open a dialogue about lots of subjects. In order to do a successful film screening, it's essential to do it in a location that will be suitable for viewing the film and then having a discussion afterward. Libraries, community centers, churches, and local universities make great places to screen films because they usually have a television or screen, VCR/DVD player, projector and a large seating area. They also usually have a lot of people who already go to the facility for some purpose or another, and it's easier to get an audience.

Setting up the event: If you're doing your event during the week, it's best to do a film showing as early as you can. You want to give people who are coming from work an opportunity to get there, but you also want to have enough time to discuss it without losing the audience. For a film that's 90 minutes or longer, begin a film screening no later than 6:30 pm.

Once you've sent out flyers and you get the event set-up, it's also good to introduce your organization(s), the goals of the event, and why you're screening it. Also introduce the film. Find out information about the film and filmmakers, and tie it into your event. Remind your audience there will be a discussion afterwards.

Recommended film for your PJM Event: One documentary that ties together the themes of Prevention Justice that we recommend is called **Love & Diane**. It deals very well with one family and the intersection between poverty, sex work, drug use, foster care, violence and HIV/AIDS. You may be able to get the film from your local library. But you can also order it online at www.wmm.com/filmcatalog/pages/c603.shtml.

Love & Diane Synopsis:

“*Love & Diane* tells the epic story of a family over three generations. At its heart lies the highly charged relationship between a mother and daughter, desperate for love and forgiveness but caught in a devastating cycle. For Love, the world changed forever when she and her siblings were torn from their mother, Diane. Separated from her family and thrust into a terrifying world of institutions and foster homes, the memory of that moment is more vivid to her than her present life.

Now Love is 18 and HIV+. And she has just given birth to a son, Donyaeh. For *Love & Diane* this baby represents everything good and hopeful for the future. But that hope is mixed with fear. Donyaeh has been born with the HIV virus and months must pass before his final status is known. As Diane struggles to make her family whole again and to realize some of her own dreams, Love seems to be drifting further and further away from her child. Diane, torn by her own guilt over her children's fate when she was an addict, tries to help and to care for her grandson. But when Diane confides her fears for her daughter to a therapist, the police suddenly appear at the door. Donyaeh is taken from Love's arms and it seems to the family as if history has repeated itself.

Now Love must face the same ordeal her mother had faced years before. She is charged with neglect and must prove to a world of social workers, therapists and prosecutors that she is a fit mother. And Diane must find the courage to turn away from her guilt and grasp a chance to pursue her long-deferred dreams. While the film takes us deep into the life of a single family, it also offers a provocative look at the Byzantine "system" that aims to help but as often frustrates the family's attempts to improve their situation. The film differs from many documentaries that deal with the problems facing poor communities in that it eschews "talking heads" and interviews with "experts" and aims instead to immerse the viewer in the experiences and thoughts of a family trying to survive and retain autonomy in the face of terrible challenges.”

How to get the film: You can purchase the film from Women Make Movies at www.wmm.com/filmcatalog/pages/c603.shtml. For individuals, the film is \$29.95.

Facilitating conversation after the film: The PBS series P.O.V. has a resource guide for *Love & Diane* that you can download, but it oddly enough doesn't include any info on HIV/AIDS. But it may be useful to you for the other discussion points: www.pbs.org/pov/pov2003/loveanddiane/discussion_guide.php

For your event, you could do one of two things.

1. You could have a panel discussion with women living with HIV, different policy experts, housing/welfare rights activists, sex workers or others related to the topics of the film
2. Have a facilitated discussion. Appoint a moderator from your group to lead the audience in discussion. Perhaps your moderator could read from the Prevention Justice Endorsement Statement, and ask the audience to respond to the questions:
 - How do we see the PJM analysis reflected in the film?
 - What were the structural factors in Love's life that increased her risk of contracting HIV?
 - What do you think are some things that could be done on an institutional level to decrease the likelihood that someone like Love would contract HIV?
 - How do these same issue play out in the HIV epidemic in your community? How are they different?

Panel Discussion: Getting our Questions Answered

Panel discussions are good ways to inform the larger public about issues, and also to provide a forum for community members to ask questions of “experts” they would not normally have access to. A panel usually consists of 3-5 panelists and a moderator, who carry on a guided and informal discussion before an audience as if the panel were meeting alone.

A Prevention Justice panel discussion could feature city and state AIDS officials reporting to the community on how they are changing programs to truly address the underlying inequities that fuel the epidemic. It could be a forum for researchers to present their work to make sure it is responsive to community priorities and incorporates community knowledge. Leaders from social justice movements could learn about the relevance of HIV/AIDS in their work, and share tips for overcoming difference for more united efforts. Or you could invite members of the media to discuss how they decide to cover stories and how people from the community could better work with them to improve coverage of prevention justice issues. Here are some things you should do when organizing a panel discussion:

Pick a variety of panelists. You want to have a diversity of panelists. You want a range of voices on the panel from different areas of expertise. If you’re doing a Prevention Justice panel, it might be a good idea to have someone from a traditional AIDS organization/activist, a public health expert, a person from a harm reduction organization, a prisoner rights group, etc. Even if you want to do something focused, say, on Prevention Justice in a particular community, you could have someone representing women, gay men, the transgender community, etc.

Know your goal, and communicate it to your audience and panelists in advance.

Is your panel designed to encourage dialogue between community members? Make sure your panelists are truly rooted in the community, and that they will keep their comments brief. Plan on going into the audience to share the microphone, and in all your publicity materials invite the public to prepare to enter the dialogue. Is the emphasis on getting questions answered from researchers, politicians or members of the media who can be hard to access? Work ahead of time with community members to shape your questions and prep your panelists ahead of time to let them know you are expecting informed responses.

Find out what your panelists are going to talk about ahead of time. In fact, you can ask them to talk about a specific aspect of their work, or ask them for specific information that will meet the goals of your event. And you want to give them a specific time to speak, usually 10-20 minutes, depending on how many panelists you have.

Ask your panel for updated bios. Don’t simply take them from a website online, because sometimes they can be terribly outdated, and your panelists won’t be happy.

Think about the order of your panelists. Depending on who they are or what subjects they’re tackling, you want to have someone who is giving a broader overview up front. Also try to put less charismatic speakers closer to the front of the order if possible. You want to end with a bang!

Use your moderator to moderate, not as another panelist. There’s nothing more annoying to panelists than a moderator who takes up more space than the panel. The moderator can give opening remarks to help frame the discussion, and introduce the panelists. The rest of the time, they should be making sure the panelists stick to time and to field questions from the audience. Sometimes the moderator can pose a question or two to the panelists to spark discussion.

Make sure you give the panelists detailed directions to the venue. People get lost, especially if they’re coming from out of town. Make sure they have all the info they need to get to the location, even if you think they know where it is.

Tell you panelists to arrive 15 minutes early. It's useful if the panelists can meet each other ahead of time, and the moderator can check in with them to go over the format, and make sure she/he can pronounce everyone's name correctly.

Get a contact number for your panelists, preferably a cell phone number in case of emergency, and they all should be given a contact cell phone number to reach someone on the site of the panel.

Getting the media to a panel discussion: This is difficult to do. Many large mainstream outlets won't send press to cover a panel discussion unless there is a very notable person on it (like the City Health Commissioner, a celebrity, an advocate from a large organization) – but the ethnic press, gay press and other independent press will. You should tell the media exactly what time the panel will start, and they will stay through the panelist presentations, and sometime after. Sometimes if you frame the panel discussion as a "Town Hall Meeting" the press will think that there will be more drama – people expressing anger at city officials, etc. They may be more likely to come. But remember: sometimes it is not necessary to have press at a panel to have an impact – be clear on what your goals are.

INSPIRATIONAL EVENTS

Candlelight Vigils and Commemorations

These events allow us to remember the lives of those lost to HIV, and can include an activist speaker who reminds the audience and the press about what could have prevented these tragedies. It is an opportunity for people to come together who are involved in this struggle, and to re-commit ourselves to staying in the fight.

In order for people to hold their candles safely, you will need to get the kind with paper shields at the bottom to prevent hot wax dripping onto hands. A windy night can really wreck a candlelit plan, so consider locations with wind-shielding walls, courtyards, or indoor alternatives.

Another idea to create candlelight despite wind is to fill paper bags with sand and use votive candles inside to create pathways of candlelight throughout your event. You could create a walking memorial where people slowly travel through lit paths and stop at different "stations" to read memorial statements and add their feelings to large scrolls or banners, or you could have a procession through the paths using our PJM signs and slogans as visual markers of the call for justice.

MOMENTUM-BUILDING EVENTS

Rally or Demonstration

A Rally or Demonstration is a display of public support for or opposition to an issue, a position, or a decision maker. In general, rallies and marches are a good way to demonstrate power by being able to mobilize large groups of people into public spaces. A rally should be exciting and have a clear message and policy recommendations. The location of a rally must also be large enough for the crowd. An area that dwarfs the demonstrators should be avoided. Legislators with a record of support can be asked to speak as well as community leaders like clergy, union leaders, or directors of large service agencies. People living with HIV/AIDS are often very powerful speakers.

The most effective rallies and marches are tied to a long-term organizing strategy towards a particular goal. They are also effective if they are tied to a series of rallies or marches being held nationally or globally – much like the recent marches across the country held in solidarity with the Jena 6 demonstrations or the 2002 anti-war demonstrations, which were held worldwide.

Many groups around the country hold rallies and marches to raise awareness about HIV on World AIDS Day and to bring their communities together to make a strong statement demanding action to stop the spread of HIV. These events can be very meaningful solidarity-building activities for your group, and they are also a great way to get the attention of decision-makers and media in your area. Rallies, marches and vigils:

- Are great ways to unite your community around HIV as a social justice issue
- Work best for larger crowds
- Almost always require permits – work with your local government to apply for permits and discuss any law enforcement presence.
- Work very well when you have a cultural aspect to them – a New Orleans-style second line, drummers, a marching band, puppets or interesting visuals, etc.

For the PJM, there will be a Unity Rally in Atlanta on December 4, right outside the National HIV Prevention Conference. One of the goals is to directly link Prevention Justice as being in the civil rights tradition and other struggles for social justice.

The late Coretta Scott King understood that. She said in 2003, “The real shame falls not on the people with AIDS, but on those who would deny their humanity. AIDS thrives on ignorance, bigotry and fear. In fact, I have no doubt that homophobia has worsened and prolonged the AIDS crisis. We don't have to search for the cure for ignorance, because we know that it is education.”

Your World AIDS Day rally, march or other event, is linked to a larger group of mobilizations around the country, with all of them being anchored by the Atlanta event. Take advantage of that, and use it as a talking point during your event. Here's an outline for a rally that you can adapt for your PJM World AIDS Day event.

Plan a fast moving event. Consider including roles for event attendees that will to keep the level of enthusiasm and participation high. Place key speakers at the beginning, before the media leave. *Try to have an event that lasts no longer than 35 minutes to an hour.*

Have a Limited Number of Speakers. Reporters need to go back to their office and write the story or edit film or tape, and do voice-overs. They may be covering several other events in the same day. Try not to have more than three speakers. Press will only stay at an event for so long before they will feel like they've captured what's important and will move on to the next thing to cover. More than three or four speakers can lose press as well as participants.

Have Interesting Visuals. Visuals can be anything that creates an interesting picture. Ask yourself, What's the picture I want in the paper (or on TV) tomorrow? Is it a crowd with signs chanting? Maybe everyone wears one T-shirt, or a color to represent the issue. Think about what images you want the press to capture, and help them create something interesting. It will increase your likelihood of getting in the paper. Check out www.PreventionJustice.org for ideas about visuals and signs designs you can download.

Matters of Size: More than any other public event, the size of a rally or demonstration is crucial. Demonstrations are displays of public support (or opposition). If public support is small, or perceived as small, than the issue is actually hurt by a demonstration. There are alternative events that could better utilize small groups of people. However, if a rally or demonstration is a rare event where you live, less people can be seen as more significant. You can also hold it in a smaller space – like a small corner park or in the lobby of a building – so your group will feel as powerful as you are rather than feeling teeny in a big space. Interesting visuals – like a giant puppet, banners or clear, bright signs, can also draw attention to a smaller group.

Sample Timeline of a Demonstration

This make-believe demonstration opposes a call in the legislature for mandatory HIV testing, and uses the theme of “no more bureaucrats on the bandwagon – we need real priorities for HIV/AIDS Prevention Justice.”

Announced Starting Time: 12 noon

11:45 Gather at Announced Location

Hand out flyer with chants, and information about the day’s issue and sponsors on the other side.

12:05 Explain the Issue (five minutes after announced start time)

- First speaker thanks everyone for coming, states demands, and explains why we are angry at the House Speaker for her mandatory names reporting proposal.
- Mention the consensus letter opposing forced testing signed by 97% of state’s service providers.
- Use chants and call-and-response questions to keep the crowd involved and vocal.

12:15 March

- March two blocks to office door. (Plan your route ahead of time! Will you stay on the sidewalk or have a large enough crowd to take to the street?)
- Trained marshals block traffic.
(Contact CHAMP for marshal guidelines and training tips)

12:25 Arrive

Crowd chants, while props people set up a little red wagon and hand out cardboard 'bureaucrats' to people near the front of the crowd

12:30 Spectacle

Speaker #2 reiterates demands, deploys props. Then the crowd plays the “toss the bureaucrats on the bandwagon game” as they toss their cardboard bureaucrats into the red wagon

12:37 Substance

“Public Health Expert” speaker releases report showing that mandatory testing is not a good use of public funds, and that people use voluntary testing when it is offered sensitively, in community settings and in health care settings that they use.

12:45 Confrontation With Target (THIS IS AN OPTIONAL STEP! Contact CHAMP for more information on when and how to use civil disobedience and training materials)

- People risking arrest attempt to enter the legislator’s to deliver the 'bandwagon' and consensus letter.
- If prevented from entering office, civil disobediencers (“CDers”) sit down outside, blocking the doors.
- Marshals keep non-arrestees pushed back from the CDers – media and legal team allowed through.

1 pm Support the CDers

Chant until arrestees are taken away, leaving the “bandwagon” in front of office door, covered in bureaucrats.

1:15 End

Announce next steps. Thank everyone for coming, give interviews to remaining press. Return to buses.

MEDIA-ORIENTED EVENTS

Any kind of event can have a media component. However, a press conference is an event specifically designed to brief the media on a substantive issue. Remember though, a press conference that's not focused on a controversy or that's led by celebrities or noted political leaders may not have the power to bring out the press – so we need to plan carefully to make our press conferences “newsworthy.”

Press Conferences

A press conference is a tool designed to generate news – in particular, hard news that can advance the cause of your organization. Hard news is defined as a story in print or electronic media that is timely, significant, prominent and relevant.

Imagine a flock of media reporters coming to an event that you have organized. This can be exciting stuff, and an important opportunity for your organization. If you've never done it before, holding a press conference can be intimidating and scary as well.

More specifically, why hold a press conference? Because:

- You can give more information than in a press release.
- A press conference is interactive. You can answer questions the press may have.
- You can announce something unprecedented, which has significant local implications.
- You can set the record straight if your group received negative publicity.
- When many media representatives are present, it makes your conference seem really newsworthy – the media presence itself adds to the importance.
- A successful media conference can not only generate news, but can also boost the morale of your own group – that is, your group can take pride in knowing that the press will really turn-out to hear what you have to say.

Remember, you don't want to hold press conferences too often. They're special events and should be treated as such. But here are some cases when a press conference might be a good idea:

- When the event includes a prominent individual to whom the media should have access.
- When you have significant announcements to make, such as opening a mobilization or reporting a lobbying victory.
- When there is an emergency centered around your group or the issues it deals with.
- When a number of groups are participating in an action, and the show of support will emphasize that this action is news.
- When you want to react to a related event; for example, a national report relevant to your own issue is released.

Perhaps you can hold a press conference with the goal of local media coverage on different organizations committing to Prevention Justice on the eve of World AIDS Day.

You can talk about the larger mobilization in Atlanta and the work your organizations are committed to locally in the name of Prevention Justice. You could also highlight what it means to come together for World AIDS Day in an election year and highlight the AIDS community platforms. Or this could be a good opportunity to unite traditional AIDS activists/organizations with other social justice groups that may not usually work together – housing/tenants rights, environmental groups, immigration rights, prisoners/former prisoner’s rights organizations, welfare rights, sex workers and others.

Just remember, news organization do not think about HIV/AIDS as much as we do – so we need a focused message and clear information on one particular theme, not every aspect of Prevention Justice. More media tips are available later in the kit...

For this or any other sort of press event, arrange the room carefully. For instance, one might hang signs or banners behind a podium, and/or place the speakers where they will be surrounded by people living with HIV/AIDS and their supporters who are holding the signs and banners.

Town meetings can be powerful events where people fill a room to hear and talk about a new proposal or a big problem they face. Town meetings sometimes have a panel of speakers, and usually will have time for questions from the audience and reporters in attendance. Some event organizers will suggest a few key, targeted questions to audience members in advance.

Accountability Sessions are similar to town meetings, except that one or several decision makers are invited. If one decision maker is invited, it will often be an opponent of your group, especially a vulnerable or potentially wavering opponent. When several policy makers are invited, then some of them should be supporters. Sometimes, groups organizing an accountability session will put a “people’s panel” on one side of the front of the room, and the decision maker on the other.

Honors and Awards Ceremonies can honor activists or volunteers as well as legislators who have championed programs, and can be attractive to TV stations and other media looking to bring a local face to World AIDS Day coverage.

ORGANIZATIONAL EVENTS

Not all World AIDS Day or PJM-affiliated events have to be public events or media-oriented. We can have powerful events within or between our organizations to further our goals of leadership, unity and justice. What about a lunchtime summit that involves representatives from all local groups in HIV/AIDS services in a discussion of the Prevention Justice principles or the presidential campaign platforms? A Prevention Justice speaker coming to a support group? Or a conversation at a staff meeting about what it means to commit to advocacy on prevention issues as a service organization in the heart of the community? Following is one complete workshop plan that includes interactive exercises and that has been used successfully to build alliances and open dialogue: