

ASPCA #AdoptAFosterDog Media Talking Points for Shelters and Rescues

These ideas can help you pitch the media and engage your local community while participating in the ASPCA #AdoptAFosterDog campaign to increase exposure for your organization and raise awareness about adoption. We recognize that every community has been uniquely impacted by the recent unrest that has developed across the country and recommend being mindful of the current news cycle of your local community before proactively reaching out to media and adjusting your outreach strategy as needed.

Look for the Hook:

- When pitching the media, tell a gripping story of one dog who beat the odds or who has a particularly compelling story of how he/she arrived in your care—and then broaden it to the bigger picture focused on the importance of adoption during this time.
- Share interesting backgrounds of staff, volunteers, fosters or adopters—the human-interest angle is compelling, too.
- If you reached a milestone like celebrating a birthday or hitting a record number of adoptions, think about a “Top 10 List” or even a “Top 3” format for your pitch.
- Be creative and have fun! Seizing on what’s trending in popular culture is effective at generating publicity.
- Many local news stations have a “pet of the week” segment to showcase local animals that are available for adoption.
- Use engaging photos and/or short videos in your media pitches. The words you use in your press release and media advisory are important, but a picture may be what gets a member of the media to read your documents in the first place.

Messaging Matters:

- Learn as much as you can about a reporter before making your pitch—and tailor your pitch accordingly.
- When pitching a story over the phone, make sure you identify yourself and your organization—and before giving your spiel, ask if it's a good time to talk.
- When pitching a story via email, keep it short, and make your first sentence the most relevant one.
- Go into an interview with a clear message of what you want the audience to take away—and find a way to share that message repeatedly. If you are asked multiple questions, answer the easiest one that allows you to get your message across. Make sure to include a clear call-to-action to offer a next step.

- The subject line of an email should be ten words or less to keep the reader's attention and to prevent the message from being cut off. And be careful of things that trigger spam filters, like using exclamation points or all capital letters.

ASPCA #AdoptAFosterDog Campaign Talking Points:

- [SHELTER OR RESCUE NAME] is joining shelters and rescues across the country to encourage the local community to adopt a foster dog through the ASPCA #AdoptAFosterDog campaign.
- To address challenges raised by COVID-19, many animal shelters and rescues have been offering minimal-exposure, contact-free adoptions while encouraging their local communities to temporarily foster – and now it's time to help these animals find adoptive families that they can call home for the long term with the help of those foster caregivers.
- At any time – but especially now -- fostering puts shelter animals in safe and loving homes, while helping shelters conserve space and resources. Many animals experience benefits from spending time in a home environment while waiting to find an adoptive home and the process is often a rewarding experience for those who choose to become caregivers.
- The ASPCA #AdoptAFosterDog campaign was created as a response to the effects of the COVID-19 crisis on shelters and rescues across the country and to help place more dogs into adoptive homes through foster-assisted adoptions.
- As many regions of the country continue to be impacted by the COVID-19 crisis, it's expected that foster caregivers will continue to play an important role in seeking adoptive placement for animals.
- To find out more about specific dogs in need of adoptive homes visit [SHELTER OR RESCUE WEBSITE] or use the hashtag #AdoptAFosterDog to see the nationwide campaign in action, including potential shares through @DogsOfInstagram and @ShelterPetProject