Media Tips for *Strolling Thunder* Participants

Your personal story about you and your children is one of the most powerful the most important things you can share. Here are a few tips that can help you prepare for an interview with the media.

***Tips for Telling Your Story***

* **Be YOU.** Use language you are comfortable with. Talk in your own voice. If you are emotional, that’s ok! These are powerful and important issues.
* **Keep it short (and simple).** Your story doesn’t have to be long and complicated and neither do your sentences. Keep it short, and impactful. For example,
  + Talk about when you first became parent and the challenges you faced—whether it was the need for time off, extra support to meet your child’s needs, or finding quality affordable childcare.
  + Talk about a challenge your child faced and the help you needed to get for you and your child.
  + Share a success or a challenge that may still exist and explain the help you need.
* **Practice**. Practice the exact story you want to tell before you get on the phone with the reporter. Maybe write it down, practice on your phone, or talk to a friend.

***Tips for Working with Reporters***

* Relax. The reporter wants to write a good story. They are interested in you and why you are coming to [CITY/STATE CAPITAL].
* Remember, the reporter can use anything you say in his/her story.
* If you don’t know the answer to a question, that’s ok! Let the reporter know you don’t know the answer and direct them back to [ORGANIZATION]. You do not have to answer any questions you are uncomfortable with.
* If the reporter contacts you directly and you’re not ready to be interviewed, ask them their deadline and if you can return their call. If something comes up and you need to reschedule or call the reporter back, that’s fine. Just be sure you stay in touch so he or she knows when to expect an interview.
* Thank the reporter at the end of the interview! Ask him/her if there is anything else he/she needs.
* When the story runs, feel free to email the reporter and thank him/her again.

***Key Messages***

*Strolling Thunder* is all about telling our policymakers to *Think Babies* for stronger families, vibrant communities, and a prosperous country. Here are a few messages that you can include in your interviews:

* The science is clear: our brains grow faster between the ages of 0 and 3 than at any later point in our lives. The experiences we have in our earliest years lay the groundwork for the rest of our lives.
* Investments in babies are and investment in our present and our future. They will immediately improve the lives of babies and families by addressing the barriers families are facing right now. Babies are also the next generation of leaders, engineers, teachers, farmers, small business owners, community members, and policymakers. We must *Think Babies* and invest in our future today.
* Be part of the team that’s fighting for our future. Learn more at [WEBSITE] and sign up at [www.thinkbabies.org](http://www.thinkbabies.org/).

We’re calling on policymakers to [ORGANIZATION TO REVISE BASED ON YOUR POLICY PRIORITIES] to ensure all babies and families have they need to thrive including:

* Good Health;
* Strong Families; and
* Positive Early Learning Experiences.