



## Public Relations Coordinator Information

### COTA Public Relations Coordinator (PRC) Job Description

In order for a Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA) community campaign to be successful in raising funds for transplant-related expenses, the PRC will need to make the public aware of the family's transplant journey. The most effective way of achieving this is by developing relationships with area media -- newspapers, television and radio, by identifying key community communications networks, and by using social media platforms.

#### PRC Qualifications

1. Must not be the COTA patient's parent, spouse or caregiver, or live in the same home as the patient.
2. Should live in the area where the majority of the COTA fundraising will take place.
3. Have excellent knowledge of the community and know a variety of people. (Solid communications skills are a plus.)
4. Should be comfortable using a computer, working on the Internet and using email.

#### PRC Task List

1. Serves as the primary contact person with the media. Ensures accurate information is provided to the media and community.
2. Coordinates media contacts, press releases and publicity for COTA community campaign activities using COTA resources and templates. COTA must approve all copy prior to release via [CampaignInfo@cota.org](mailto:CampaignInfo@cota.org).
3. Looks for creative means of free advertising and publicity; recruits local printers to donate printing services, if needed.
4. Uses grassroots strategies and community communications networks to make the public aware of the need to fundraise for transplant-related expenses.
5. Works very closely with the Website Coordinator to ensure the website is regularly updated with news, photos and other compelling information. Promotes the COTA campaign website, and social media platforms, in all communications.

#### Helpful Hints

- Always know the fundraising goal of the community campaign and always report the same number.
- Be clear that contributions to COTA are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.
- *Remember:* A successful media/public relations effort is often the difference between a COTA team that meets its goal and one that struggles to do so.

## VITAL COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA INFORMATION

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY AND REGULARLY COMMUNICATE THIS INFORMATION  
WITH YOUR COTA VOLUNTEERS!

As a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, the Children’s Organ Transplant Association (COTA) receives contributions to help offset transplant-related expenses. COTA then allocates funds to families to offset those expenses.

A crucial part of the contribution process is to clearly state who is receiving the gifts and how they will be used. Financial contributors must know their gifts are contributions to COTA and not to the patient/family directly. Contributions to COTA will be used to reimburse transplant-related expenses, and are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

***Why is this so important?*** While it is highly motivating to promote helping a local patient’s family with medical expenses, if the family receives money directly it is considered taxable income and the contributor cannot receive a tax deduction. Therefore, the public should not be misled to believe their gifts immediately go to COTA families. It should be clear that transplant families are the beneficiaries of COTA funds, and the community campaign is raising funds that can be used by transplant families as they need them throughout their transplant journey.

The table below shows some examples to help you understand what wording is appropriate.

Not Allowed	Allowed
Fundraising proceeds will benefit Jean in her campaign with COTA.	Fundraising proceeds will benefit COTA in honor of Jean to assist with transplant-related expenses.
100% of the proceeds raised from fundraising go to Johnny and his family to pay transplant-related expenses.	100% of the proceeds raised from fundraising will go to COTA to assist families like Johnny’s with transplant-related expenses.
A group of volunteers from Nashville, Tennessee, have been working with the Children’s Organ Transplant Association (COTA) to raise funds for Jane’s transplant-related expenses.	A group of volunteers from Nashville, Tennessee, have been working with the Children’s Organ Transplant Association (COTA) to raise funds for transplant-related expenses for children like Jane.
Friends and family members of local boy Sam Doe are hosting a bake sale to raise money for his liver transplant. The group is working with the Children’s Organ Transplant Association to raise funds for the family’s expenses.	A bake sale will be held in honor of Sam Doe, a Chicago-area child who needs a liver transplant. Sam’s family has asked for assistance from the Children’s Organ Transplant Association. Funds are being raised to assist with transplant-related expenses.

Again, please regularly communicate and reaffirm this information to your volunteers to make sure there is no question about the path the contributions will take. Before announcements, flyers, and details about fundraising events are published in written form, on the patient’s COTA website or in social media, approval is required by emailing the final document to **CampaignInfo@cota.org**.

***The Children’s Organ Transplant Association is a national charity that provides fundraising assistance to transplant families. Since 1986, COTA’s priority is to assure that no child or young adult is denied a transplant or excluded from a transplant waiting list due to lack of funds. 100% of funds raised in honor of transplant patients are available for transplant-related expenses.***

## Using Your Media List

The Children's Organ Transplant Association will email you a media list for your COTA community campaign. Your campaign media list is determined by the counties/cities your campaign leadership determines to be the areas where fundraising activities will be focused. Please note that in the left column of the media list you will find the total number of records, which is a good indicator of the size of your team's media market.

The first job for the PRC is to make the media list as current and as manageable as possible. The media list will have the name of the media outlet (newspaper, radio or television station) and will include a phone number and an email address, if it is available. The Public Relations Coordinator is encouraged to find an email address and direct phone number for the following individuals at targeted media outlets:

Newspaper	Features Editor and/or Managing Editor, Health/Medical Editor, Community Calendar Coordinator
Radio	News Director; Community Events Announcer
Television	Assignment Editor/News Director; Health/Medical Editor; Community Spotlight Reporter

The PRC should build a targeted media contact email file once the research is complete. COTA's Public Relations Coordinator Manual includes a telephone script that is helpful when calling media outlets to research specific reporters' names, emails and phone numbers. The PRC should use the Internet to search newspapers, television and radio stations to identify specific reporters/editors and their contact information -- specifically their email addresses.

The Public Relations Coordinator should feel free to eliminate (from the provided media list) any media that would likely never cover information about the patient's transplant journey or COTA fundraising activities.

The Children's Organ Transplant Association creates and emails the initial Media Alert. It is sent to all media with email addresses included on the Public Relations Coordinator's media list. **From that point forward, the Public Relations Coordinator writes all campaign press releases and submits them to COTA for approval via [CampaignInfo@cota.org](mailto:CampaignInfo@cota.org).** After approval, the PRC emails the press release to the media. If possible, the PRC should email the press releases four to six weeks prior to a fundraising activity and is advised to do telephone follow-up approximately two weeks prior to the event. As a rule of thumb, it is best to send press releases on Monday or Tuesday. Holiday weeks should be avoided if at all possible.

**REMEMBER:** Any promotional pieces/media pieces created by the PRC and approved by [CampaignInfo@cota.org](mailto:CampaignInfo@cota.org) should be posted on all social media platforms in addition to being sent via email to area media representatives.

## **Primary Media Explanation and Strategy**

### **Daily Newspapers**

Daily newspapers are primarily concerned with current events and breaking news. You must emphasize the local connection to the story for dailies.

### **Weekly Newspapers**

As a general rule, weekly newspapers are very well read. Call the weeklies to find out the contact information and email addresses for the correspondent who covers your territory; regularly email that person information about COTA community campaign fundraisers.

### **Television**

Television contacts need very short messages and visuals/pictures. If your story is 'bumped,' call to find out when it will be rescheduled. When using television to promote a COTA fundraising event, call the station's Promotion Director to ask to be included in the community calendar segment. Always ask the television reporter or editor to include a link to the COTA campaign website on the station's home page.

### **Cable Television**

Check to see if your local cable provider has a community access channel. If so, call to ask if they air local information. Also ask if they air locally produced talk shows because this may be a good venue for interviews with volunteers and/or the family.

### **Radio**

The key to radio success is getting the right message to the right person at the right time. Remember that radio news is typically a three-minute broadcast. A local angle is VERY important to radio. Radio stations will readily take on a 'cause,' so try to develop a long-term relationship for the COTA community campaign. Always ask your radio contact to include a link to the COTA campaign website on the station's home page.

### **Public Service Announcements (PSA)**

Radio and television stations are required to spend some airtime airing PSAs. Radio PSAs range from 10 seconds (20 words) to 60 seconds (125 words). Once approved via CampaignInfo@cota.org, submit the PSA and then call the Public Service Director to follow up. Date all materials with a 'use before' or 'use until' message. Sample Public Service Announcement templates are included in this PRC Manual and online templates are found at COTA.org/Volunteers/Public Relations Coordinator as well.

### **Letters to the Editor**

Letters to the Editor can be one of the best tools you can use to build community support. With one letter that gets printed, the need to fundraise for transplant-related expenses can reach thousands of readers. Here are some tips for getting your Letter to the Editor in print:

1. Pick one topic and do not deviate. Concentrate on a few powerful points.
2. Keep it short. Limit your letter to 250 words.
3. Proofread and spell check. Typos can undermine your credibility.
4. Use your real name and your position with the COTA community campaign. Always include your contact information – telephone number and a regular mailing address.
5. Submission instructions are spelled out on the newspaper's website.

## Tracking Media Coverage

The Public Relations Coordinator is responsible for tracking and reporting all media coverage to the Children's Organ Transplant Association. **Please send your media coverage links to [kim@cota.org](mailto:kim@cota.org).** It is important to keep a record of your success. You may need to ask other members of your COTA campaign team to help watch for media coverage, especially Internet articles and broadcast pieces that are sometimes quickly removed from media websites.

When a reporter calls and an interview takes place with the patient, the patient's family or key COTA volunteers, the PRC should try to be present. If the PRC cannot be present, place a follow-up call to the reporter immediately after the interview. Ask when the article is scheduled to run or air. Remember to make note of this information and search the newspaper or the television station's website on the given date (or the day after) to find the coverage. Media websites are helpful tracking tools for COTA community campaigns, especially when media outlets are spread over a large geographic area.

Once the PRC finds a media story about the COTA family or a COTA fundraising event, the link should be emailed to [kim@cota.org](mailto:kim@cota.org) and the COTA team's Website Coordinator should be copied on the email. These media stories should be promoted on social media platforms as soon as possible. If there are any inaccuracies in the media coverage, or if there is non-compliant verbiage included, please use social media to reinforce accurate information and compliant verbiage.

**NOTE:** *Do not delay in sharing media clips because the clip may only be available for a short time online once the story airs/runs.*

## Print Media Tools

After your media list is targeted with specific reporters' names, email addresses and telephone numbers, it is important for the Public Relations Coordinator to become a media consumer. This means reading as many newspapers and other publications as possible. It also means visiting publications' websites. The PRC should take note of who is covering stories and issues that are related to the COTA community campaign. The media list may need to be altered based on this research.

Here are some tips for working with the print media:

- Make sure your story is newsworthy, or if it is a feature story, that it is interesting and appropriate for the publication you are targeting. It is important the story be pitched to a specific reporter and publication. Avoid jargon in all press releases.
- Make sure the COTA campaign leaders know when stories and releases are being sent to the media, and reiterate to all that the Public Relations Coordinator is the primary contact for the media. The Public Relations Coordinator will need to return media inquiries in a timely manner -- reporters are typically on tight deadlines. A PRC must be accessible.
- Ask the reporter for clarification if a question is not completely understood. Be as helpful as possible, even if the reporter needs to be sent to another campaign volunteer or a family member for more information.
- If you do not know an answer, tell the reporter that you will get back to him/her. Be sure to follow up as reporters appreciate timely responses.
- The Public Relations Coordinator should offer feedback to a reporter when appropriate. If a story contains a major error, the PRC should bring it to the reporter's attention. If the story is good, remember to send an appreciation email and/or post a comment online.

The Public Relations Coordinator should not:

- Ask to review or to approve the story before it is published.
- Say "no comment." It sounds as if you have something to hide.
- Ask to speak "off the record." Presume everything is on the record.
- Ignore a reporter's request for an interview.
- Lie to or mislead a reporter.
- Allow more than one person from the COTA community campaign to contact the same publication.

The Children's Organ Transplant Association has developed tools for Public Relations Coordinators to use when working with various media outlets. These press release templates can be found on the following pages and are available online as downloadable templates.

**Remember to have all press releases approved by COTA by sending them to CampaignInfo@cota.org before releasing anything to the media.**

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## Recycling Program to Raise Funds for COTA in Honor of Local Child/Teen/Young Adult

**City, State** – Cell phones and spent printer ink cartridges are being collected by a local group of volunteers for COTA in honor of **Patient Name**, a **Location**-area **child/teen/young adult** who **needs/has had** a **Transplant Type** transplant. Working with the Children's Organ Transplant Association's *Recycle for Life* program, proceeds from the **Location** effort will assist with transplant-related expenses.

**Patient First Name** was diagnosed with **Diagnosis**. Local volunteers are raising an estimated \$ \_\_\_\_ for COTA in honor of **Campaign Name** to assist with transplant-related expenses throughout **his/her** lifetime.

“The family and friends of **Patient Name** want to encourage everyone to donate used cell phones and printer ink cartridges in order to help give **Patient First Name** a second chance at life,” said **Community Coordinator Name**, Community Coordinator. “Please take your used, worn out, or completely non-working cell phones and printer ink jet cartridges to **List Drop-Off Points/Dates**.”

An estimated 150 million wireless phones are discarded annually. For more information about COTA's *Recycle for Life* program, or other fundraising and volunteer opportunities, please contact **Community Coordinator Name, Telephone and Email**.

**Patient Name**'s family has asked for assistance from the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA), a national charity based in Bloomington, Indiana. COTA is dedicated to organizing and guiding communities in raising funds for transplant-related expenses. COTA's services are completely free of charge, and 100% of funds generated by COTA community fundraising campaigns are available for transplant-related expenses.

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## MEDIA ADVISORY

### Fundraising Event for COTA Honoring Local **Child/Teen/Young Adult** to Be Held

**City, State** – A “**Title of Event**”, will be held for COTA in honor of **Patient Name**, a **Location**-area child who **needs/has had** a **Transplant Type** transplant. The event is planned for **Day, Date**, at **Location**. **Age**-year-old **Patient First Name** is **listed for/received** a **Transplant Type** transplant at **Hospital Name** in **Hospital Location**. Funds are being raised in honor of **Patient Name** to assist with transplant-related expenses.

**Insert details about the event, including sponsor names. Include directions to location, if necessary.** The cost of this event will be \$**Cost** per person. **Patient First Name** was diagnosed with **Diagnosis**. Local volunteers are raising an estimated \$**\_\_\_** for COTA in honor of **Campaign Name** to assist with transplant-related expenses throughout **his/her** lifetime.

“The family and friends of **Patient Name** want to encourage everyone to attend our **Event Name** and help give **Patient First Name** a second chance at life,” said **Event Chair Name**. “100% of the profits from the **Event Name** will assist with transplant-related expenses.”

For more information about the **Event Name**, or other fundraising and volunteer opportunities, please contact **Event Chair Name, Telephone and Email**.

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## Event-A-Thon to Raise Funds for COTA in Honor of Local Child/Teen/Young Adult

**City, State** – An Event-A-Thon, “**Title of Event**”, will be held for COTA in honor of **Patient Name**, a **Location**-area child who **needs/has had** a **Transplant Type** transplant. The event is planned for **Day, Date**, at **Location**. **Age**-year-old **Patient First Name** is listed for/has received a **Transplant Type** at **Hospital Name** in **Hospital Location**. Funds are being raised for COTA in honor of **Patient Name** to assist with transplant-related expenses.

**Insert details about the event, including sponsor names.** Participants are asked to collect all pledges prior to the Event-A-Thon and are asked to complete a registration form that is available by contacting **Event Chair Name, Telephone and Email**.

“The family and friends of **Patient Name** want to encourage and challenge everyone to ask their neighbors and colleagues to make a pledge to help give **Patient Name** a second chance at life, said **Event Chair Name**. “100% of the funds collected at the Event-A-Thon will assist with transplant-related expenses.”

**Patient First Name** was diagnosed with **Diagnosis** Local volunteers are raising an estimated \$ \_\_\_ for COTA in honor of **Campaign Name** to assist with transplant-related expenses throughout **his/her** lifetime. For more information about the Event-A-Thon, or other fundraising and volunteer opportunities, please contact **Event Chair Name** at **Email**.

**Patient Name**'s family has asked for assistance from the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA), a national charity based in Bloomington, Indiana. COTA is dedicated to organizing and guiding communities in raising funds for transplant-related expenses. COTA's services are completely free of charge, and 100% of funds generated by COTA community fundraising campaigns are available for transplant-related expenses.

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## **Dinner Event to Raise Funds for COTA in Honor of Local Child/Teen/Young Adult**

**City, State** – An **Event Name**, “**Title of Event**”, will be held for COTA in honor of **Patient Name**, a **Location**-area child who **needs/has had** a **Transplant Type** transplant. The event is planned for **Day, Date**, at **Location**. **Age**-year-old **Name** is listed for/ has received a **Transplant Type** transplant at **Hospital Name** in **Hospital Location**. Funds are being raised for COTA in honor of **Patient Name** to assist with transplant-related expenses.

Major dinner sponsors include: **Insert sponsors names**. The cost of the dinner will be **\$Price** for adults and **\$Price** for children under the age of **Age**. The dinner will feature **Insert theme or special activities**. **Insert event specifics: directions/special activities/etc.**

“The family and friends of **Patient First Name** want to encourage everyone in the community to attend our upcoming dinner in an effort to help give **Patient First Name** a second chance at life,” said Event Chair **Name**. “100% of the profits from the **Dinner Event Name** will assist with transplant-related expenses.”

**Patient First Name** was diagnosed with **Diagnosis**. Local volunteers are raising an estimated **\$\_\_\_** for COTA in honor of **Campaign Name** to assist with transplant-related expenses throughout **his/her** lifetime. For more information about **Event Name**, or other fundraising and volunteer opportunities, please contact **Event Chair Name and Email Address**.

**Patient Name**'s family has asked for assistance from the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA), a national charity based in Bloomington, Indiana. COTA is dedicated to organizing and guiding communities in raising funds for transplant-related expenses. COTA's services are completely free of charge, and 100% of funds generated by COTA community fundraising campaigns are available for transplant-related expenses.

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## **Auction to Raise Funds for COTA in Honor of Local Child/Teen/Young Adult**

**City, State** – A **live/silent** auction will be held for COTA in honor of **Patient Name**, a **Location**-area child who **needs/has had** a **Transplant Type** transplant. The event is planned for **Day, Date**, at **Location**. **Age**-year-old **Name is listed for/has received** a **Transplant Type** at **Hospital Name** in **Hospital Location**. Funds are being raised for COTA in honor of **Patient Name** to assist with transplant-related expenses.

Major auction sponsors include: **Insert sponsors names**. Cash, checks and most major credit cards will be accepted at the auction for any purchase or donation. Early donations include: **Insert package/item names with brief descriptions here**.

“The family and friends of **Patient First Name** want to encourage everyone in the community to attend this special auction in an effort to help give **Patient First Name** a second chance at life,” said Event Chair **Name**. “100% of the profits from the auction will assist with transplant-related expenses.”

**Patient First Name** was diagnosed with **Diagnosis**. Local volunteers are raising an estimated \$\_\_\_ for COTA in honor of **Campaign Name** to assist with transplant-related expenses throughout **his/her** lifetime.

For more information about **Event Name**, or other fundraising and volunteer opportunities, please contact **Event Chair Name, Telephone and Email Address**.

**Patient Name**'s family has asked for assistance from the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA), a national charity based in Bloomington, Indiana. COTA is dedicated to organizing and guiding communities in raising funds for transplant-related expenses. COTA's services are completely free of charge, and 100% of funds generated by COTA community fundraising campaigns are available for transplant-related expenses.

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## Coins to be Collected for COTA in Honor of Local **Child/Teen**

**City, State** – A **Community/School** Coin Drive is being held for COTA in honor of **Patient Name**, a **Location**-area child who **needs/has had** a **Transplant Type** transplant. The Coin Drive is an attempt to turn everyday change into life-saving. **Patient First Name** is **listed for/received** a **Transplant Type** transplant at **Hospital Name** in **Hospital Location**. Funds are being raised for COTA in honor of **Patient Name** to assist with transplant-related expenses.

Pennies, nickels and dimes do add up. According to Coinstar, a national coin redemption machine manufacturer, a gallon jug filled with coins can net nearly \$230. **Insert details about the coin drive here, including any sponsor names.**

**Patient First Name** was diagnosed with **Diagnosis**. Local volunteers are raising an estimated \$\_\_\_\_ for COTA in honor of **Campaign Name** to assist with transplant-related expenses throughout **his/her** lifetime.

“The family and friends of **Patient Name** want to encourage everyone to support our **Community/School** Coin Drive and help give **Patient First Name** a second chance at life,” said **Community Coordinator Name**, Community Coordinator. “Every coin collected will assist with transplant-related expenses.”

For more information about the COTA Coin Drive, or other fundraising and volunteer opportunities, please contact **Community Coordinator Name, Telephone and Email**.

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## Tasting Showcase to be Held for COTA in Honor of Local Child/Teen/Young Adult

**City, State** – A **Type** Tasting Event is being held for COTA in honor of **Patient Name**, a **Location**-area child who **needs/has had** a **Transplant Type** transplant. **Patient First Name** is **listed for/received** a **Transplant Type** transplant at **Hospital Name** in **Hospital Location**.

Funds are being raised for COTA in honor of **Patient Name** to assist with transplant-related expenses.

A team of family and friends are organizing this **Type** Tasting Event on **Date** at **Location**. Numerous opportunities to help COTA in honor of **Patient Name** will be featured throughout the **Type** Tasting Event. **Insert details about the tasting event here, including any sponsor names.**

**Patient First Name** was diagnosed with **Diagnosis**. Local volunteers are raising an estimated \$     for COTA in honor of **Campaign Name** to assist with transplant-related expenses throughout **his/her** lifetime.

“The family and friends of **Patient Name** want to encourage everyone to support our **Type** Tasting Event and help give **Patient First Name** a second chance at life,” said **Community Coordinator Name**, Community Coordinator. “Every dollar donated throughout the event will assist with transplant-related expenses.” For more information about COTA fundraising and volunteer opportunities, please contact **Community Coordinator Name and Email**.

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## City-Area Youth Raising Funds for COTA in Honor of Local Child/Teen/Young Adult

**City, State** – A group of youth have organized a **type of event** that will be held for COTA in honor of **Patient Name**, a **location-area child/teen/young adult** who **needs/has had a transplant type** transplant. This youth event is planned for **Day, Date**, at **location**. **Name** is **listed for/received a transplant type** transplant at **Hospital name** in **Hospital location**. Funds are being raised for COTA in honor of **Patient Name** to assist with transplant-related expenses.

Area youth involved in this fundraising effort include: **insert youth names and schools**.

“The family and friends of **Patient Name** want to encourage everyone in the community to attend this special event in an effort to give **Patient Name** a second chance at life,” said Youth Organizer **Name, Age**. “100% of the profits from the **type of event** will assist with transplant-related expenses for **his/her** lifetime.”

For more information about **Event Name**, or other fundraising and volunteer opportunities, please contact **Youth Organizer Name, Phone and Email Address**.

“We are thrilled this group of youth in **City** are using their talents and energy to raise funds for transplant-related expenses,” said **Community Coordinator Name**, Community Coordinator for the COTA for **Patient Name** campaign. “It is heartwarming to see these talented young individuals working so hard to help our COTA community fundraising campaign in this way.”

**Patient Name**'s family has asked for assistance from the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA), a national charity based in Bloomington, Indiana. COTA is dedicated to organizing and guiding communities in raising funds for transplant-related expenses. COTA's services are completely free of charge, and 100% of funds generated by COTA community fundraising campaigns are available for transplant-related expenses.

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## Restaurant Night Planned to Raise Funds for Transplant-Related Expenses

**City, State** – A **Restaurant Name** fundraiser will be held for COTA in honor of **Patient Name**, a **Location**-area **child/teen/young adult** who needs/has had a **Transplant Type** transplant. The **Name of Restaurant** COTA fundraiser is planned for **Day/Time Period**.

Locations for the **Restaurant Name** COTA fundraiser include: **Insert specific information about locations, times, etc.** Each participating restaurant will contribute **insert percentage/amount/program** to COTA in honor of **Patient Name**. **Insert any other event specifics.**

“The family and friends of **Patient First Name** want to encourage everyone in the community to attend our upcoming **Restaurant Name** fundraiser in an effort to give **him/her** a second chance at life,” said COTA Volunteer **Name**. “100% of the profits from the **Restaurant Name** percentage event will assist with transplant-related expenses.”

**Patient First Name** was diagnosed with **Diagnosis**. Local volunteers are raising an estimated \$ \_\_\_ for COTA in honor of **Campaign Name** to assist with transplant-related expenses. For more information about **Restaurant Name** event, or other fundraising and volunteer opportunities, please contact **Name, Telephone and Email Address**.

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## COTA Patient Media Kit

A media kit is a set of documents that provide the media with detailed information about your COTA community campaign's efforts. The media kit emails attachments allow the media to determine if they want to do a longer, more in-depth story. COTA's *media/press release templates* are designed to promote specific events with a goal of getting people involved in the campaign's fundraising activities. COTA's *patient media kit templates* are designed to help reporters learn about the patient's transplant journey and the COTA community fundraising campaign.

If the Public Relations Coordinator decides to create a media kit to be sent electronically, it should be targeted to a select group of reporters who are likely to share the patient's transplant journey and COTA's role, in addition to publicizing fundraising events.

Reporters prefer to receive a media kit as an electronic document, with all electronic attachments. If it is decided to create and email a media kit, the PRC should start early in the fundraising process to work with the family and/or the patient to create the documents that will be included in a media kit. Once the media kit pieces are written and approved by the family and/or patient and the Community Coordinator, remember to email everything to CampaignInfo@cota.org for final approval prior to sending the media kit as a series of electronic attachments.

Two pieces included in COTA's Patient Media Kit are camera-ready and are NOT templates. These are the **COTA Facts** and **Transplant Facts** documents. The Public Relations Coordinator should find ways to use the COTA Fact Sheet when publicizing the team's fundraising events even if it is decided that a media kit is not an optimal outreach strategy for the COTA community campaign.

Once the media kit is emailed to the targeted media, the PRC should call recipients to ask if there are any questions about the information and to talk about the transplant journey and fundraising effort.

COTA Media Kit elements include:

- Introduction Letter
- COTA Patient Biography
- COTA Patient Medical Condition Form
- Upcoming Events
- Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA) Facts
- Transplant Facts



# Children's Organ Transplant Association®

The Trusted Leader Supporting Families ... For a Lifetime

COTA in Honor of **Patient First Name and Last Initial or Team Name**

Date

Dear Media Professional:

My name is **Name** and I would like to introduce you to a local **child/teen/young adult** who **is in need/has had** a life-saving transplant. **Patient Name** is **Age** years old. **Patient Name** and **his/her** family lives in **Town** and this family's story needs to be shared with the community at large.

Area residents have joined forces to raise funds for the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA) in honor of **Patient Name**. COTA is a national charity dedicated to organizing and guiding communities in raising funds for transplant-related expenses. Since 1986, COTA has assisted thousands of transplant patients from throughout the country, all of whom required a life-saving organ, bone marrow, cord blood or stem cell transplant. COTA's services are provided completely free of charge with 100% of funds generated by COTA community campaigns being used for transplant-related expenses.

For more information, please visit [COTA.org](http://COTA.org).

This media kit contains information about our patient, **his/her** medical condition, some upcoming COTA community campaign fundraisers and key contact information for our COTA team's leadership. Please call or email me at **Phone/Email** to let me know if you are willing to help us share **Name**'s story.

*Thank you for your time!*

**Public Relations Coordinator Full Name**

**Public Relations Coordinator Phone and Email**

Public Relations Coordinator, COTA in honor of **Patient Name**

# Children's Organ Transplant Association®

The Trusted Leader Supporting Families ... For a Lifetime

COTA in Honor of **Patient First Name and Last Initial or Team Name**

**Patient Name:**

**Nickname:**

**Date of Birth:**

**City/State of Residence:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Date of Diagnosis:**

**Patient Age When Diagnosed:**

**Type of Transplant Recommended:**

**Date of Transplant** (*if it has been performed*):

**Name/City/State of Transplant Center:**

**Parents' Names:**

**Siblings' Names and Ages:**

**Patient's School:**

**Patient's Favorite Things:**

**Patient's Wish or Dream:**

**Public Relations Coordinator Name:**

**PRC Telephone Number and Email:**

**Patient Name's** family has asked for assistance from the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA), a national charity based in Bloomington, Indiana. COTA is dedicated to organizing and guiding communities in raising funds for transplant-related expenses. COTA's services are completely free of charge, and 100% of funds generated by COTA community fundraising campaigns are available for transplant-related expenses.

***Find out more about COTA at [COTA.org](http://COTA.org) or by calling 800.366.2682.***

2501 West COTA Drive • Bloomington, Indiana 47403

800.366.2682 • [COTA.org](http://COTA.org)

# Children's Organ Transplant Association®

The Trusted Leader Supporting Families ... For a Lifetime

COTA in Honor of **Patient First Name and Last Initial or Team Name**

**Patient Name:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Background on Disease:**

- *Include a simple summary of the disease, including information about the organ, etc.*
- *Is there a cause?*
- *How common is this disease?*
- *What does this disease mean to the patient's daily routine?*
- *How does this diagnosis impact the family's daily routines?*

***Use bullet points for this explanation.***

*Please work your COTA family to help find websites that would be helpful to share with area reporters for their use in researching your COTA patient's diagnosis.*

**Type of Transplant Recommended/Received:**

**Name/City/State of Transplant Center:** *Include Website*

**Background on Transplant:** *Include some basic information about the transplant procedure itself.*

- *What is the cost of this type of transplant procedure?*
- *What post-transplant costs, i.e. prescription medications, temporary housing, transportation, multiple doctor visits, etc. will your COTA family be facing?*
- *What is the pre- and post-transplant hospital experience typically like for the patient?*
- *What is the typical recovery time for this type of transplant?*
- *You may want to visit [www.transplantliving.org](http://www.transplantliving.org) for research on these topics.*

***Use bullet points for this explanation.***

**Public Relations Coordinator Name:**

**PRC Telephone Number and Email:**

**Patient Name's** family has asked for assistance from the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA), a national charity based in Bloomington, Indiana. COTA is dedicated to organizing and guiding communities in raising funds for transplant-related expenses. COTA's services are completely free of charge, and 100% of funds generated by COTA community fundraising campaigns are available for transplant-related expenses.

***Find out more about COTA at [COTA.org](http://COTA.org) or by calling 800.366.2682.***

# Children's Organ Transplant Association®

The Trusted Leader Supporting Families ... For a Lifetime

## Children's Organ Transplant Association Facts

The Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA) is a national charity based in Bloomington, Indiana, which is dedicated to organizing and guiding communities in raising funds for transplant-related expenses. COTA's priority is to assure that no child or young adult is denied a transplant or excluded from a transplant waiting list due to lack of funds.



Founded in 1986 after a group of Bloomington, Indiana, volunteers helped raise funds to place a child on the liver transplant waiting list.



COTA has helped thousands of children and young adults and has raised more than \$110 million for transplant-related expenses.



Since 1986, approximately 2,400 COTA patients have been successfully transplanted.



Last year, nearly 200 COTA patients were successfully transplanted and more than \$5 million was raised.



COTA does not charge a transplant family, or patient, for its services.



Every dollar raised in honor of COTA's patients is used for transplant-related expenses.



COTA funds are available for a patient's lifetime for eligible transplant-related expense.



In addition to children, COTA works with adults with single-gene disorders such as Polycystic Kidney Disease, Cystic Fibrosis, and Sickle Cell Disease.



Nearly 75% of COTA's families are referred to COTA by a transplant social worker or transplant financial coordinator at a transplant center.

# Children's Organ Transplant Association®

The Trusted Leader Supporting Families ... For a Lifetime

## Transplant and Organ Donation Facts



More than 120,000 U.S. patients are currently waiting for solid organ transplants, with many more searching for a cord blood, marrow or stem cell match.



Each day, about 77 people receive an organ transplant. Each day, 22 people die waiting for an organ transplant.



First U.S. organ transplant -- 1954 at Boston's Brigham and Women's Hospital -- kidney was transplanted from one twin to another.



Currently there are more than 50 organ procurement organizations in the United States that provide organ procurement services to nearly 300 transplant centers.



Donor organs are matched to waiting recipients by a national computer registry called the National Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN). This computer registry is operated by the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) in Richmond, Virginia, which was chartered by Congress to provide this service.



The cost of organ transplants varies greatly, not only with the type of transplant, but also with the hospital where the procedure occurs. Typical organ transplant costs (not including pre-transplant or follow-up treatments) are: kidney, pancreas or small bowel \$125,000; liver \$300,000; lungs \$300,000; heart \$350,000; bone marrow, stem cell and cord blood transplants \$150,000 - \$500,000 each.



Hospitals require that a patient be able to show proof of payment before the patient is placed on a transplant waiting list. Typical insurance plans will pay 80% of the "normal and customary" expenses incurred for the procedure. That means that for a \$300,000 liver transplant, the patient will likely be responsible for a deductible plus other related expenses such as temporary housing while the patient is hospitalized, transportation for pre- and post-transplant care, medications, etc. The lifetime total can easily exceed \$1,000,000.

The Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA) is a national charity based in Bloomington, Indiana, which is dedicated to organizing and guiding communities in raising funds for transplant-related expenses. COTA's services are completely free of charge, and 100% of funds generated by COTA community fundraising campaigns are available for transplant-related expenses.

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## **Broadcast Media Tools and Tips**

The Public Relations Coordinator should communicate regularly with television and radio stations. Broadcast media attracts large numbers of viewers and listeners. Media releases should be sent to broadcast media, as well as print media. However, the PRC should be aware differences do exist between print and broadcast media.

### **Television Tips**

- When pitching a story to television, make sure to always know what ‘visuals’ are available for your story. Always talk about the most important information first: type of event, area celebrities helping with event, date of event and location. Remember ... you have about 15 seconds to hold a television producer’s attention.
- Always try to submit ideas in writing, i.e. a press release, if time allows. Try to follow up after a press release is emailed with a telephone call.
- Become familiar with local television news programs and identify those reporters who are going to be interested in the story. Target these reporters.
- Television stations like to cover events and stories that look unusual, but be aware of other major events happening on a given day in a given area. Remember that Mondays and Saturdays are typically ‘news short’ and that pitching your COTA story on either of these days could improve your chance of receiving coverage.
- When dressing for television interviews, the Public Relations Coordinator should note that color is fine, but it should be toned down. Vertical lines (not narrow), subdued colors and simple, small jewelry lend authority and seriousness to the Public Relations Coordinator’s remarks.
- The Public Relations Coordinator has every right to ask a reporter what material will be covered in a televised interview and to inform him/her the areas that can not be discussed. Please make sure the patient and/or patient family are aware of this as well. It may be helpful to provide the television reporter with a brief summary outlining the subject being discussed and the patient’s information.
- Watch your body language on television. TV reporters routinely shake their heads during an interview, as if nodding in agreement with the speaker. This can be hypnotic if you are being interviewed and you too may start nodding your head.
- The PRC should always be focused on the interview. Please avoid getting too ‘cozy’ with the interviewer or the setting. Some of the most embarrassing mistakes in television interviews occur not because of tough questions, but because the interviewee loses focus and begins to babble.
- Be on time to any television interview. Unlike an interview with a print reporter, you cannot typically call a television reporter back later.
- Remember that public and cable television stations are generally more approachable than some network television stations.
- ***Always ask the reporter or editor to include a link to the COTA community campaign website on the station's home page, and to promote your COTA-dedicated social media platforms, including specific hashtags being used.***

## **Radio Tips**

- When pitching a story to radio, make sure to always know what ‘sound bytes’ are available for your story. Always talk about the most important information first: type of event, area celebrities helping with event, date of event and location.
- Always try to submit ideas in writing, i.e. a press release, if time allows. Try to follow the press release send with a telephone call.
- Become familiar with local radio news programs and identify those reporters and/or announcers who may be in your COTA transplant and fundraising story. Target these reporters.
- Radio stations typically broadcast press release information whenever possible. Some radio stations prefer hand delivery of press releases, and this is never a bad idea if the Public Relations Coordinator has time.
- Radio reporters may ask to tape an interview over the phone. This is a common practice used to obtain ‘sound bytes’, but the reporter should inform the Public Relations Coordinator of the taping before it begins.
- Speak slowly and in short, concise sentences. Most radio reporters are generalists. Avoid using jargon. State the story in simple, easy-to-understand language -- especially information about the patient’s medical condition. Remember, in most cases you are speaking to the public, i.e. potential contributors and event attendees, through the reporter.
- Radio stations typically have special programs/call-in shows the Public Relations Coordinator needs to research. These programs often deal with issues of local interest and they are a good match for transplant stories and fundraising event coverage. These radio programs require a spokesperson and the Public Relations Coordinator should be prepared to serve in this capacity. The Public Relations Coordinator should contact the radio talk show host one month in advance and should send all background information to the host at that time.
- Always ask the reporter or editor to include a link to the COTA community campaign website on the station's home page, and to promote your COTA-dedicated social media platforms, including specific hash tags being used.

## **Radio Public Service Announcements (PSA)**

The Children’s Organ Transplant Association has scripted radio PSA materials for Public Relations Coordinator use. The Public Relations Coordinator is encouraged to save the *Fundraising Event Announcement* PSA for the COTA community campaign’s larger event(s). Templates include:

- Radio PSA Cover Letter
- Call for Community Campaign Volunteers (30 and 60 second scripts)
- Fundraising Event Announcement (30 and 60 second scripts)

# Children's Organ Transplant Association®

The Trusted Leader Supporting Families ... For a Lifetime

## COTA in Honor of **Patient First Name and Last Initial**

Date

Dear **Public Service Director Name**:

My name is **Name** and I am the Public Relations Coordinator for a local fundraising initiative in honor of a **child/adult** who **is in need/has had** a life-saving **Transplant Type** transplant. **Patient Name** is **Age** years old. **Patient Name** and **his/her** family lives in **Town** and they need the community's help.

**There is no 'public service' greater than that which saves lives.** Please have your announcers read the enclosed Public Service Announcement frequently. Here's why:

- Nearly 120,000 people are waiting for a solid organ transplant, and, in addition, many more are searching for a bone marrow/stem cell/cord blood match.
- Each day, about 77 people receive an organ transplant and each day, 22 people die waiting for an organ transplant.
- The cost of organ transplants varies depending on the type of transplant and where the procedure is done. A liver transplant procedure can cost \$300,000. Typical insurance plans will pay 80%, leaving the patient responsible for the deductible plus temporary housing during the procedure and recovery, transportation before and after transplant, medications, etc. And a person will not be placed on the waiting list until **the family/the patient** can show the ability to pay those costs.

**Town** area residents have joined forces to help raise funds for the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA) in honor of **Patient Name**. Since 1986, COTA has assisted thousands of patients throughout the country, all of whom required a life-saving transplant. Our campaign leadership has been truly impressed that every dollar raised goes toward transplant-related expenses. For more information, please visit [COTA.org](http://COTA.org).

I urge you to use your broadcast power to alert your listeners to **Name's** transplant journey. I thank you in advance.

With appreciation,

**Public Relations Coordinator Full Name**  
Public Relations Coordinator, COTA in honor of **Patient Name**  
**Public Relations Coordinator Telephone and Email**



# Children's Organ Transplant Association®

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## COTA in Honor of **Patient First Name and Last Initial**

Radio PSA Script

Radio PSA Script - **Call for COTA Community Campaign Volunteers**

### 60 second

Will you help give hope to a local **child/teen/young adult**? **Age**-year-old **Name needs/has had** a life-saving **Transplant Type** transplant. **Name** lives in **Town** -- maybe right down the street from you. **Name's** family needs you to get involved with a community fundraising campaign that is raising funds for transplanted-related expenses. **Name's** life depends on it.

**Name's** family is working with the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA) to organize and mobilize area volunteers. If you can sell event tickets, find auction items, put a coin canister in your workplace, organize a fundraiser, and/or collect used cell phones ... then we need you!

Call **Public Relations Coordinator Name** at **Telephone** to get involved. For more information, go to **Campaign Web Address** or visit this station's website at **Station Web Address**. Thank you for helping COTA give **Name** a second chance at life.

### 30 second

Will you help give hope to a local **child/teen/young adult**? **Age**-year-old **Name needs/has had** a life-saving **Transplant Type** transplant. **Name** lives in **Town** -- maybe right down the street from you. If you can sell tickets, put a coin canister in your workplace, collect used cell phones, organize a fundraiser ... then we need you!

**Name's** family is working with the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA) to organize and mobilize volunteers. Call **Public Relations Coordinator Name** at **Telephone** to get involved. For more information, go to **Campaign Web Address** or visit this station's website at **Station Web Address**. Thank you.

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# Children's Organ Transplant Association®

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## COTA in Honor of **Patient First Name and Last Initial**

Radio PSA Script - **Event Announcement**

### **60 second**

Want to have fun while giving hope to a **child/teen/young adult** from right here in **Town**? COTA for **Patient Name** is planning a **Name of Event** in honor of **Age**-year-old **Name**, who **needs/has had** a life-saving **Transplant Type** transplant. This event will be held on **Date** at **Time** at the **Location**. The cost of this event will be **\$Cost** per person. *(Use if applicable and include any major sponsors who are helping to underwrite the event.)*

All proceeds from the **Event Name** will be used for transplant-related expenses. Local volunteers are raising **\$Goal** for COTA in honor of **Patient Name**. Transplant-related expenses, include transportation, temporary housing, multiple medical visits and prescription medications – all of which are necessary and costly.

We hope to see you on **Event Date**. All contributions are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law. For more information, call **Event Contact Name** at **Telephone** or go to **Campaign Web Address** or visit this station's website at **Station Web Address**.

### **30 second**

Want to have fun while giving hope to a **child/teen/young adult** from right here in **Town**? COTA for **Patient Name** is planning a **Name of Event** in honor of **Age**-year-old **Patient Name**, who **needs/has had** a life-saving **Transplant Type** transplant. This event will be held on **Date** at **Time** at the **Location**. The cost of this event will be **\$Cost** per person. *(Use if applicable and include any major sponsors who are helping to underwrite the event.)* Local volunteers are raising an estimated **\$\_\_\_** for COTA in honor of **Patient Name**. For more information, call **Event Contact Name** at **Telephone** or go to **Campaign Web Address** or visit this station's website at **Station Web Address**.

## Communication With Your Community

The Public Relations Coordinator needs to be aware that sometimes, no matter how much time and effort is invested, the media may not provide coverage to the COTA community fundraising campaign. Typically in very large media markets (i.e. Chicago, New York City, Los Angeles, etc.), it is sometimes a challenge to entice the media to cover transplant family stories and COTA fundraising events. This can sometimes be the case in smaller markets as well.

Your community offers a variety of avenues for sharing the family's transplant journey and promoting upcoming COTA fundraising events. You should investigate the community's communication opportunities and should enlist the help of other COTA campaign volunteers in identifying the family's/the patient's networks of connectivity and potential communications avenues.

Some ideas include:

- Area Churches (*A template for a church bulletin announcement is included.*)
- Local Employers (*A template for an employee newsletter story is included.*)
- Area/Visitor Websites (*A template for a website announcement is included.*)
- Community Calendar (*A template for a community calendar announcement is included.*)
- Schools and School Districts - backpack stuffers, newsletters and website information
- Event Flyers for Grocery Stores and Locally-Owned Retail Stores
- Utility Company Newsletters/Statement Mailing
- Community Websites (banks, businesses, etc.)
- Civic Social Media Platforms

The Public Relations Coordinator will likely be given the opportunity to address community groups about the COTA community fundraising campaign. The Public Relations Coordinator should be prepared to address community groups who want to know more about the patient, the family's/patient's transplant journey and COTA fundraising. Public speaking tips and a sample presentation outline are included, following the templates noted above.

# Children's Organ Transplant Association®

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## COTA in Honor of **Patient First Name and Last Initial**

### Sample: Church Bulletin Announcement

Date

Dear Area Church Minister:

*Can you please include this announcement in your bulletin this Sunday and for the next several Sundays? I would be very happy to provide you regular updates if you would like to ask your congregation for ongoing prayers of support and healing. Please call me if you wish to discuss this further, and God bless you for your help!*

Public Relations Coordinator Full Name

Public Relations Coordinator, COTA in honor of Patient Name

Public Relations Coordinator Telephone and Email

### Area **Child/Teen/Young Adult** Needs Your Help

Will you help give hope to a **child/young adult**? **Age**-year-old **Patient Name** **needs/has had** a life-saving **Transplant Type** transplant. **Name** lives in **Town** and has been diagnosed with **Diagnosis** and doctors at **Hospital** recommended a life-saving **Transplant Type** transplant. Local volunteers are raising an estimated \$      for COTA in honor of **Patient Name** for **his/her** lifetime.

**Name**'s family is working with the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA) to organize volunteers who are needed to help with fundraising efforts. If you can sell event tickets, find auction items, put a coin canister in your workplace, organize an fundraising event at your church, collect used cell phones ... then we need you! Please call **Public Relations Coordinator Name** at **Telephone** to get involved. For more information, go to **COTA Campaign Web Address**.

*(If applicable, insert information about upcoming meetings and activities.)*

In addition to your time and gifts, this family really needs your prayers. Thank you for helping COTA give **Name** a second chance at life.

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# Children's Organ Transplant Association®

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## COTA in Honor of **Patient First Name and Last Initial**

### Sample: Newsletter

**Date**

Dear Public Relations Executive:

*Can you please include this in your next issue of your company's newsletter? I would be very happy to provide you with regular updates if you would like to let your employees know about the family's transplant journey. Please call me if you wish to discuss this further.*

*I have always admired the way your company reaches out to help the community. If you would like to become an ongoing sponsor of our COTA community campaign, please feel free to call me to discuss that possibility as well.*

**Public Relations Coordinator Full Name**

Public Relations Coordinator, COTA in honor of **Patient Name**

**Public Relations Coordinator Telephone and Email**

### Area **Child/Teen/Young Adult** Needs Your Help

Will you help give hope to a **child/teen/young adult**? **Age**-year-old **Patient Name** **needs/has had** a life-saving **Transplant Type** transplant. **Name** lives in **Town** and has been diagnosed with **Diagnosis**, and doctors at **Hospital** recommended a life-saving **Transplant Type** transplant. Local volunteers are raising an estimated \$      for COTA in honor of **Patient Name** for **his/her** lifetime.

**Name**'s family is working with the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA) to organize volunteers who are leading a fundraising effort. If you can sell event tickets, find auction items, put a coin canister in your workplace, organize a lunchtime fundraising event, collect used cell phones ... then we need you! Please call **Public Relations Coordinator Name** at **Telephone** to get involved. For more information, go to **COTA Campaign Web Address**.

*(If applicable, insert information about upcoming meetings and activities.)*

Thank you for helping COTA give **Name** a second chance at life.

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# Children's Organ Transplant Association®

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## COTA in Honor of **Patient First Name and Last Initial**

Sample: Community Calendar or Community Website

Date

Dear Community Calendar Editor:

*Can you please include this in the printed and electronic community calendar? I would be very happy to provide you with regular updates if you would like to be made aware of the patient's ongoing transplant journey. Please call me if you have any questions.*

**Public Relations Coordinator Full Name**

Public Relations Coordinator, COTA in honor of **Patient Name**

**Public Relations Coordinator Telephone and Email**

**COTA Fundraising Event Name:**

*Name of event*

**COTA Fundraising Event Description:**

*One or two sentence summary with event highlights*

**COTA Fundraising Event Date and Time:**

*Event date and time*

**COTA Fundraising Event Location:**

*Event location – including address*

**Other Information:**

*Other specifics, like cost, sponsors, registration deadlines, ticket sales locations, etc.*

**How to get involved:**

*One or two sentence summary outlining COTA volunteer opportunities/contacts*

Age-year-old **Name** needs/has had a life-saving **Transplant Type** transplant. **Name** lives in **Town** and has been diagnosed with **Diagnosis** and doctors at **Hospital** recommended a life-saving **Transplant Type** transplant. Local volunteers are raising an estimated \$\_\_\_\_ for COTA in honor of **Patient Name** for his/her lifetime.

**Name's** family is working with the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA). COTA is a national charity based in Bloomington, Indiana, dedicated to organizing communities in raising funds for transplant-related expenses. COTA's services are completely free of charge, and 100% of funds generated by COTA community fundraising campaigns are available for transplant-related expenses. You can find out more at COTA.org.

Call **Public Relations Coordinator Name** at **Telephone** to get involved. For more information, go to **COTA Campaign Web Address**.

## 10 Tips for Successful Public Speaking

According to the *Book of Lists*, the fear of speaking in public is the top fear of all fears. It is reported that more than 41% of people have some fear or anxiety dealing with speaking in front of groups. Mark Twain said it best, “*There are two types of speakers: those that are nervous and those that are liars.*”

Feeling some nervousness before giving a presentation is natural and even beneficial. But too much nervousness can be detrimental. Here are some proven tips for how to control your butterflies and give better public presentations:

1. **Know your material.**  
Know the patient’s diagnosis, transplant journey details and have the Children’s Organ Transplant Association facts memorized, or close at hand, during any public speaking opportunity.
2. **Practice. Practice. Practice.**  
Write any public presentation and then make sure the patient and/or the family is comfortable with the information to be shared. Practice your presentation by yourself and for others to work out the kinks and to get more familiar with it.
3. **Know the audience.**  
Ask who will be in audience when accepting an invitation to speak (ages, interests, etc.). Then greet audience members as they arrive at the presentation. It is easier to speak to a group of friends than to strangers.
4. **Know the room.**  
Arrive at the presentation site early to set up your materials. Make sure the microphone, and any other audio or visual aids, are all working properly and that you know how to operate them.
5. **Relax.**  
The goal is to turn your nervous energy into enthusiasm for upcoming COTA community campaign events and express the passion you feel for the patient and this COTA fundraising effort.
6. **Visualize yourself giving your presentation.**  
Imagine yourself speaking, your voice loud, clear and confident. Your conviction for the patient and the family should be clearly evident.
7. **Realize the audience wants you to succeed.**  
No one in the audience is looking for your mistakes -- or cheering if you make one. They want to hear your message, so focus on that, not on you.
8. **Do not apologize for any nervousness.**  
Most of the time, a speaker’s nervousness does not show at all so if you do not say anything about it. Nobody will notice -- and nobody will care.
9. **Concentrate on the message.**  
Think about the patient and the family at all times. This will keep the message at the forefront of the presentation. Express your emotions.
10. **Gain experience.**  
Most beginning speakers find their anxieties decrease after each presentation they give. As you begin, you can help your nerves by practicing in advance and having notes to glance at during the presentation to keep you on track. ***Every presentation after the first one will get easier!***

## Sample Presentation Outline

1. Introduce yourself
2. What is organ and tissue donation?
  - a. Transplanting an organ or tissue from one person to another
  - b. After brain death for organs or after cardiac death for tissue
  - c. Some organs can come from living donors: kidney or lobe of liver
3. What can be transplanted?
  - a. Organs are heart, liver, lungs, kidneys, pancreas, small bowel
  - b. Tissues include bone marrow, stem cells, and cord blood
4. How does someone receive a transplant?
  - a. Placed on waiting list by transplant center
  - b. National list maintained by UNOS (organs) or NMDP (marrow)
  - c. Organs matched by blood, and tissue type and size
  - d. Recipient must be in good enough health and close to transplant center
5. Who can donate?
  - a. Usually no age requirements -- health of organs are the major concern
6. Why would anyone donate?
  - a. To help others
  - b. To make a death into a positive outcome
7. Why do some people refuse to donate?
  - a. Wrong information
    - i. Cost: There is no cost to the donor
    - ii. Funeral Arrangements: Donation does not alter customary burials
    - iii. Religious Beliefs: Most major religions do not discourage donation
    - iv. Appearance of Body: Body is respected, open casket funeral possible
    - v. Fear that Care Prior to Death Would be Compromised: Organ donation is explored only after brain death
8. How to become a donor
  - a. Register on your state's online donor registry
  - b. Tell your family -- they must know your wishes
9. How to become involved with the Children's Organ Transplant Association
  - a. Volunteer to help a person raise funds for the transplant-related expenses associated with an organ or tissue transplant
  - b. Describe your patient
    - i. Health situation
    - ii. Financial situation
  - c. Why COTA is involved
    - i. 100% of funds raised available for transplant-related expenses
    - ii. Administrator of funds
  - d. Describe your COTA community campaign and how to get involved
    - i. Contributions
    - ii. Volunteer time to assist with fundraising activities
10. Questions and Answers



## Your COTA Community Campaign Website

**Your COTA community campaign website is integral to your fundraising effort.**

Even though each COTA community campaign has a Website Coordinator assigned to this task, it is extremely important for the Public Relations Coordinator to be involved with making the website a top-notch communications vehicle.

Maintaining a COTA community campaign website is as important as creating and launching it. New content must be added regularly. Writing for a website must be clear and concise. Use short sentences and small words. Web browsers do not want to read a lot of text. Please remember to proofread all online information very carefully before the Website Coordinator posts it.

The Public Relations Coordinator needs to work closely with the Website Coordinator to share ideas on how to personalize the COTA community campaign website home page.

The Public Relations Coordinator needs to work with the patient and the family to make sure that the Blog feature of the website has regular, first-person updates about the patient, the transplant, their journey, the community's support, etc. Keeping the Blog updated with the patient's (or the family's) words will drive visitors to the website and ensure repeat visits.

According to *Cause Communications*, blogs are proliferating because they are among the least expensive, fastest and easiest ways to share information. Blogs allow for instant updates and for instant feedback -- making them invaluable for building relationships with key audiences. ***To be most effective, a blog must be updated regularly ... at least two to three times per week, if not daily.***

In addition, the Public Relations Coordinator needs to make sure new and high-quality photographs are featured on the COTA campaign website. The PRC should also regularly check to ensure that fundraising event information is current.

## Viral Marketing

### Using the Internet for Email/Social Media Campaigns

Viral marketing refers to the process of getting individuals to pass on an electronic message. You can use viral marketing to share information about your COTA community campaign to a group of people, and then ask they each share this information with their friends, family and colleagues.

The viral marketing message needs to be approved (as do all written campaign materials) by sending an email to [CampaignInfo@cota.org](mailto:CampaignInfo@cota.org).

Do not underestimate the power of a well-crafted email as an effective fundraising tool. Here are some email marketing tips:

- **Personalize the email.**  
Without personalization, an email looks like junk mail and may be discarded. People like to be addressed by their name in the email, if possible.
- **Write an engaging subject line.**  
Include the name of the COTA patient along with an action phrase such as: You Can Make a Life-Saving Difference for **Name** or Help Give Hope to the **Family Name**
- **Make the reason for the email clear.**  
By the end of the first sentence of the email, the recipient should know why he or she is being asked to help.
- **Check your spelling and grammar.**  
Viral emails will be forwarded, printed and replied to. Take care when drafting and reviewing an electronic message.
- **Pick fonts and colors carefully.**  
Messages with overly large fonts or those that use multiple colors and/or backgrounds are not easy to read or to print -- *keep it simple!*
- **Be aware of 'spam' themes.**  
Avoid using words that are the same as words used in spam that promotes mortgage rates, prescriptions, etc. Do not use these words in your subject line or in the text of the email.
- **Make sure that COTA approves all email marketing messages before they are sent. Send these messages to CampaignInfo@cota.org for approval.**

### Please Note:

COTA shares patient and community campaign stories through its own social media efforts and ongoing communications with contributors, volunteers and supporters. Be sure to tag **COTA** in your social media posts that refer to fundraising -- and any other posts as necessary. Use the hashtag **#COTAHope** to allow anyone looking for COTA-related posts to easily find information about your COTA patient and community campaign. Any photographs or information used by COTA community campaigns on social media or COTA websites may also be used in online and printed COTA communications. COTA will make every effort to communicate its intention of sharing photographs and patient updates with families and community campaign coordinators.

## **Communications with the Children's Organ Transplant Association**

### **For Assistance with Media and Public Relations**

[PRInfo@cota.org](mailto:PRInfo@cota.org)

### **Press Release and Promotional Material Approval Process**

[CampaignInfo@cota.org](mailto:CampaignInfo@cota.org)

All written materials must be approved by the Children's Organ Transplant Association. Please allow two business days for campaign materials to be reviewed and approved.

### **For Assistance with COTA Community Campaign Fundraising Activities**

[CampaignInfo@cota.org](mailto:CampaignInfo@cota.org)

### **For Assistance with Your COTA Community Campaign Website**

[WebInfo@cota.org](mailto:WebInfo@cota.org)

## **Children's Organ Transplant Association Campaigns Team**

### **Kim Carter Parker**

### **Director of Communications**

Trains and assists campaign Public Relations Coordinators with campaign media and publicity.

Email: [kim@cota.org](mailto:kim@cota.org)

### **Kristy Brown**

### **Chief Development Officer**

Trains and assists Community Coordinators and supports campaign events and activities.

Email: [kristy@cota.org](mailto:kristy@cota.org)

### **Lauren Wilmer**

### **Regional Development Manager**

Trains and assists Community Coordinators and supports campaign events and activities.

Email: [lauren@cota.org](mailto:lauren@cota.org)

### **Danielle Faczan**

### **Campaign Resource Specialist**

Coordinates patient website program and assists Website Coordinators with patient websites.

Email: [danielle@cota.org](mailto:danielle@cota.org)

### **Jillian Lawrence**

### **Campaign Specialist**

Assists fundraising campaign volunteers throughout the fundraising campaign.

Email: [jillian@cota.org](mailto:jillian@cota.org)

## **Children's Organ Transplant Association National Headquarters**

Phone Numbers 800.366.2682  
812.336.8885 (Fax)

Email Address [cota@cota.org](mailto:cota@cota.org)

Web Address COTA.org

Mailing Address 2501 West COTA Drive, Bloomington, Indiana 47403

# Public Relations Coordinator Manual

## COTA Public Relations Coordinator Tips

The Public Relations Coordinator serves as the primary spokesperson for the COTA community fundraising campaign. Here are some helpful hints for speaking to the media and to the community on behalf of the patient, the family and the COTA community campaign team:

- **Be prepared.**  
Always know the facts about the patient, the family and the COTA community campaign before you talk to the media or to community representatives. Make notes before an interview or public presentation to ensure you cover the most important points and stay on topic.
- **Be consistent.**  
Always use the same number for the COTA campaign goal.
- **Be positive in all comments to the media and to the community.**  
Make no public comments you do not want broadcast, printed or repeated. Nothing is off the record.
- **Be sure to keep your message brief and concise.**  
Use facts to answer questions. Never lie, guess or speculate on behalf of the patient or family. If you do not know an answer, please say so. Tell the reporter or community member that you will get back to him or her with the answer as soon as you research the answer to their question. Make sure you do so.
- **Be aware of the power of word-of-mouth communication.**  
In this era of electronic and instant communications channels, it is easy to forget the most basic (and likely still the most successful) way to build support for your COTA volunteer team's fundraising efforts.

According to the Harvard School of Business:

*“Among the many and varied channels through which a person today may receive information, it is hard to imagine any that carry the credibility and, as a result, the importance of interpersonal communication, or word-of-mouth. There is little debate as to whether word-of-mouth matters. In fact, there is good reason to believe it has more potential impact than any other communication channel.”*