How to Organize a Community Event

Action Planning Checklist
Make sure to check the Fast for Families website and contact the Regional Lead for your state so you can get connected with F4F Staff. The following is a helpful checklist, of some of the things you should do before, during, and after a public event.

As early as you can:
Confirm the location, date, and time for the events including the Host Committee Welcome/Press Conference and the Community Meeting.

✓ If you are doing your event in a park, please contact your city officials to get a permit to use the space you need for that day/s.
✓ If your event is one of the phase 2 bus events, scout the best location for the bus to roll into town for the press conference. Ensure any permits required for bus parking are secured.
✓ Contact and convene allies and other social justice groups to discuss the upcoming events. Make sure your allies include faith leaders, business, local celebrities and sports figures, other unions, community organizations, etc. Divide labor and get agreement around other details. In order to have stronger impact we ask you to use the message and materials in this toolkit around the purpose of your fast and around what we want to accomplish with it.
✓ Arrange to rent a tent, stage, speakers, microphones, based on the needs for your event.
✓ Generate a list of volunteers
✓ Call social justice and other interested groups in the area and invite them.
✓ Find supporters online in your area on meetup.com, Facebook, etc.
✓ Send out an invitation to email lists.
✓ Visual are important. Prepare materials like signs, items to display, religious items (try to have items from several different faith groups)
✓ Prepare spokespersons speeches. Tell stories of members, business leaders, students, from all cultures, faiths, etc.

Please email.fast4families@gmail.com to get additional materials you may need that are not included in this toolkit or you can obtain materials at fast4families.org.

The week before
✓ Call those who said they were interested and ask them to attend your event.
✓ Create visibility around your event by flyering, announcing your event through radio or other media.
✓ Finalize specific roles such as volunteer coordinator, media spokesperson, chant leader, emcee, props manager, etc.

Two days before
✓ Call and confirm all the people who said they would attend.
✓ If the bus is coming into your city, call the Bus Organizer to confirm your meet up time and location when it comes into town.
✓ DO A SITE CHECK! Scout out the area and determine where people should park, stand, where signs should be held, etc.
✓ Develop a back-up plan in case of unexpected problems for your action, such as if you get kicked off the site.
✓ Finalize your program and schedule.
✓ Do you have a press conference planned? Have you rehearsed your remarks? Whatever it is—decide what you’re doing, and tell people when they arrive.
✓ Print out songs and hymns so everyone can be involved.

The day of the action
✓ Coordinate to meet the F4F Staff early in the day for a check-in meeting.
✓ Have enough commitment cards and flyer to hand out (at least 500, depending on how busy the area is). SEIU will ship commitment cards out to each location prior to the event.
✓ Bring clipboards for petitions and pens.
✓ Have enough water, sunscreen comfortable chairs for the people fasting and anything else you’ll need to be safe and comfortable.

After the event
✓ REPORT OUT on your event here: https://seiu.quickbase.com/db/bir49sw6s?anwr.
✓ It is essential that each event submit reports from their events so we can help tell the story at the national level.
✓ Email pictures of your event to fast4families@gmail.com so we can post them on a website to maximize the event’s impact.
✓ Give completed commitment cards you received to the F4F staff so that we can deliver them to your legislator.
✓ Submit letters to the editor and op-eds to your local paper about your event.

Media Checklist
REMINDER: The ideal time to hold a press conference is late morning. Reporters usually have deadlines in the afternoon. Tuesday and Wednesday are usually the best days to hold a press conference

As soon as you can
✓ Make or get a media outlet list for your area for TV and radio, all you need is the main switchboard number.
✓ Customize the sample media advisory or press release in this toolkit.
✓ Use talking points and connect your action to the fasters in the Washington, DC and those fasters across the nation that believe in the moral imperative to pass commonsense immigration reform with a path to citizenship.

Two days before the event
✓ Call reporters about the event, and email the advisory.
✓ In your phone calls, you’ll have about 30 seconds to tell them the WHO-WHAT-WHEN-WHERE-WHY of the event, and check their email address to send them your advisory.
✓ Call back to make sure they received it. Ask them if they are planning to cover the event and try to get a commitment. Don’t get discouraged, they probably won’t commit!
✓ Call the Associated Press (AP) and get the event in their “Daybook”
✓ The AP in your state circulates to all the media outlets in your area a schedule of events for each day. Find their number in the phone book or information, and tell them you have an event for the daybook. Email them your media advisory and call to follow-up.
✓ Prepare press packets that include your media advisory, press release and bio or other background information. This packet should be distributed to the press at your event.
✓ Designate a media liaison and greeters and have a set of people prepared to deliver the message to any reporters that come. Practice fielding questions from the media and role play sound bites and answers.

**Morning of the action**
✓ Call through media contacts once again. Email reporters your press advisory. Try to get a commitment that they will attend.
✓ Bring press packets and a sign-in sheet for reporters who attend.

**After the action**
✓ After your event, follow up with all reporters who attended the event. Make sure they have all of the materials they need. If you took digital pictures, offer to email them the pictures. Use this time to thank the reporter and build a relationship with the reporter.
✓ Look for coverage of your event on the news, in newspapers and online. Record and clip articles and send them to fast4families@gmail.com.