

Prepared by

MY KID IS NOT CRAZY

A SEARCH FOR HOPE IN THE FACE OF MISDIAGNOSIS



HOSTING A SCREENING: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

So you're excited about the film and you want to raise awareness among the medical and professional community in your area? Here are some tips for hosting a successful screening:

- 1 Build a team of advocates to help ensure the screening is a success. **Communicate with them often** through social media and/or email.
- 2 Secure a venue that is centrally located. To make the biggest impact, ensure theater has both professional audio and video playback.
- 3 Sign up with an events hosting platform, like Eventbrite or Brown Bag to offer online ticketing. Set a general admission ticket price to offset the cost of screening the film. Have a brief description of the event prepared to post on the site.
- 4 Create a target list of health and education professionals and political leaders in your area. Search the web for the contact information (mailing and/or email addresses) of pediatric and mental health practices, legislators, hospital administrators, and school board representatives. **Parent's are all too aware of what this disorder has done to our children, bringing in professionals across different disciplines is what will create change.**
- 5 Call a knowledgeable practitioner or expert in the field and ask if he or she would be willing to join a Q&A immediately following the screening to educate the audience. Choose someone who is well respected by the medical community.
- 6 Email your contact list of PANDAS families a printable flyer with RSVP info to distribute to their children's school principal, pediatrician, psychiatrist, school nurse, teacher, day care provider, guidance counselor, and even local legislators. **A hand-delivered personal invitation is the absolute best way to ensure a great turnout.**
- 7 Create simple, easy to read mailers that include date, time, speaker(s), a summary of the film, and location. Be sure to include a phone number and email address for RSVP's. A good rule of thumb is that 20% will RSVP "YES." Consider writing a personalized handwritten note on the back of the flyer with a compelling fact about PANDAS/PANS. For example, **"NIMH has estimated 25-30% of childhood mental illness may be preventable through early diagnosis and appropriate treatment of PANDAS/PANS. There are 50 families in your city who are anxiously awaiting to see how you'll RSVP to this important educational event. Please join us."** If the cost of direct mail invitations is outside of your budget, use a popular online events platform such as Eventbrite.

- 8 Follow up with **phone calls and emails to everyone on your list 10 days after** the invites go out, and encourage them to RSVP.
- 9 To encourage participation, consider sending out email reminders about a week before the event, letting those who have not yet committed know how many other people will be attending.
- 10 The day before the event, send out parking information and any other additional details to those who RSVP'd "YES."
- 11 On the night of the event, **encourage attendees to sign in with their name and email address**. This list will allow you to follow up with professionals when new research or similar developments become available, and these updates will help keep PANDAS/PANS fresh in their minds.
- 12 Make arrangements for a host to welcome the audience, thank them for coming, and prepare them briefly for what they are about to see. This brief introduction is a great opportunity to share your objective with your audience. For example, "We hope this film will encourage you to learn more by joining the PANDAS Physicians Network."
- 13 Check the food and drink policy for your venue; if allowed, offer water or light refreshments as a gesture of appreciation.
- 14 Send a thank you email the day after the event, and follow up with handwritten thank you notes within 2 weeks.
- 15 In the weeks and months following the event, use those email addresses to send out any relevant PANDAS info, to connect doctors with PANDAS Physicians Network for the latest information, and to continue to express your gratitude for their caring enough to learn about the disorder that affects so many of our families.