**Media resources**

**Preparing for a TV/radio interview**

**Before the interview**

* **Do your prep.** Think about the kinds of questions the interviewer might ask, and prepare some responses. This includes challenging questions. If you’re on a panel, always prepare to be thrown to first.
* **Get familiar with the publication/outlet/journalist you’re being interviewed by.** Read past interviews conducted by your interviewer to get used to their questioning style.
* **Prepare your key messages.** What are the central points you want to convey? What are the data points you’ll use to support this? How can you use your own experience as a young person in your key points?
* **For visual mediums (TV or Zoom/Skype interviews), consider what you’re going to wear**, and if not in a studio, where and how you’ll sit in your home, office etc.
  + *Avoid dressing in black or white.* These tones can appear harsh on camera and wash you out
  + *Avoid busy patterns, especially narrow stripes.* They can be distracting on screen and potentially distort on camera.
  + *Try the sit-down test.* Some outfits look great when you’re standing up, but reveal more or look vastly different when you sit down. Test your outfit at different heights in front of a mirror. Adjust as required.
  + *Think about where your microphone will go/what is capturing sound.*Most in-studio appearances use a lapel (pinned to the collar/chest area) microphone. If you’re doing a Zoom/Skype interview, test your computer audio or any home mics you use for quality. Note and try to reduce where movement of clothing and other noises are captured.
  + *Makeup*. If you’re doing your own makeup, remember that TV and screens have a tendency to make faces look shiny. Go for really matte makeup and use a powder on your face to finish.
  + *Jewellery.* Best to go simple with jewellery and test to see if it jangles or makes any noise likely to be picked up by your microphone or computer.
* **Role-play and record with a trusted colleague or friend**. Consider the medium of the interview. Is it radio, TV or for print? Is it live or pre-recorded? Dress accordingly to see how you look, feel and sound, particularly for TV interviews, the most visual and challenging medium.
* **Watch/listen back.** Critique your performance. What were you satisfied with, would you do differently? It can be hard watching yourself in this context but it’s the most valuable practice you can do for an interview.
* **Have good headshots available.** The media often promote interviews before they happen on websites and social media with your headshot and bio. Make sure you’ve got a high quality photo and succinct biography ready to go.

**During the interview**

* **Breathe**. Take a few deep breaths to steady and calm yourself. You’ve got this!
* **Take your time to respond**. It’s okay to hesitate and put some thought in before you answer. Use fillers if you need to give yourself some more space, such as “Thanks for the question [HOST NAME]...” or “That’s a really interesting point, and what I’d say is...” But avoid filling the space with long “umms” or “ahhhs”.
* **Stay on message.** Journalists like to create tension and conflict with their interviewees, so be on the look out for if you’re being given a leading or provocative question, even one outside your area of expertise. Stay focused and remember your key messages. These can be wrapped around any question you’re thrown.
* **Pivoting and using bridging lines**If you get a challenging or unexpected question thrown to you, get ready to pivot and use a bridging line. Don’t be afraid to lean into your own experience here to validate answers and stay on track. Well trained interviewees do this all the time (especially politicians!). Some bridging lines include:
  + I can’t speak to that specific point, but what I can tell you is…
  + The main issue I’m focused on now is…
  + While I’m not across the details of that policy item, what I know from my own lived experience is…

*For example:*Question: The 2021 Federal Budget did not commit a sufficient amount to remedying rising homelessness, and additionally failed to increase funding to the key social service organisations. What do you think about this?  
  
Answer:   
I’m not across the specifics of the budget, but what I do know from experiencing homelessness first hand, and working closely with young people who continue to face this enormous challenge, is that more needs to be done. Investment in ending youth homelessness is an investment in all of society, and one that we cannot afford to cut.

**After the interview**

* **Get the media clips.** Use these for your organisation’s social media channels, portfolio and for your own personal records. Watch the recordings to inform your reflection and debrief.
* **Reflect and debrief.** Do this with someone you trust no more than 48 hours after the interview has taken place so your reflections are still fresh. Ask yourself what worked? What didn't? What surprised you about the interview or process? What could you work on for next time? There are always opportunities to improve, whether it’s making your responses more succinct, reducing how much you say “umm” or “ahh”, or learning how to tackle unpredictable questions. See this reflection as an opportunity to enhance your skills.
* **Celebrate!** Getting through any media interview is a big deal, so celebrate the fact that you got through it and used the media to promote your organisation, campaign or movement. It will get easier every time.