



# Broken Places

Hosting a **BROKEN PLACES** Public Screening Event

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Documentaries have the ability not only to educate, but also to generate engagement that extends beyond the screening. The first thing a viewer will want to do after watching a powerful film is talk about it. Screening events facilitate meaningful debate, reflection, and subsequent action. The following suggestions will provide you with the tools you need to host the most successful event possible.

### **Create goals for the event**

What do you hope to achieve as a result of your event? To increase awareness or knowledge? Change attitudes or behavior? Help people network in ways that spark energy and ongoing connection? Being clear about your goals will make it easier to decide how to structure the event, target publicity and evaluate results.

### **Outreach for partner organizations**

BROKEN PLACES documents the devastating impact of early childhood adversity as well as the factors that foster resilience. Consider inviting partner organizations to co-host your screening in order to reach more diverse audiences, build coalitions, and share constructive approaches to the problems raised in the film. These organizations can include groups representing pediatricians, child psychiatrists and psychologists, neurobiologists, social workers, policy makers, educators, service providers, juvenile justice officials, child welfare organizations, early childhood centers, advocacy groups, and other child development stakeholders.

### **Plan ahead**

Choose a screening date at least several weeks out to secure the best location, find partner organizations, and publicize the event widely.

### **Make sure the structure of the event fits your goals**

Do you need an outside facilitator, translator or sign language interpreter? Who are the local experts on the topic who should be present? Will you have a panel presentation, a structured Q&A session, or just an open discussion? Try to gather a group of people who have different opinions on the subject. If all sides are fairly represented, the discussion will be much stronger and have more impact.

### **Select a venue**

Is your screening location comfortable enough for viewers to sit through a feature-length film? Does it allow for an inclusive discussion? Is the building wheelchair accessible and easily reachable by public transportation? Does it have the appropriate screening equipment for the size of your audience? The best locations are those that regularly host film screenings, such as school auditoriums, church meeting rooms, public libraries, and community centers . Be sure to test equipment before the day of your event.

### **Choose a facilitator**

The facilitator plays an important role in creating an environment in which people feel respected, safe, and encouraged to share their opinions about sensitive topics. University professors, journalists, and professionals from community organizations can provide background knowledge about the subject matter, maintain a neutral position, and move discussion forward.

### **Publicity**

The BROKEN PLACES EPK has materials to help you publicize your event, including key art, one-page synopsis, and photos. It can be found [here](#).

### **In addition, use the following communications tools:**

*Email blasts.* Make your invitation short and personal; ask recipients to spread the word

*Social media.* Set up a Facebook event page; post directly on other walls

*Press releases.* Contact writers/bloggers/radio hosts who cover the issues directly

*Events listings.* List the event on newsletters, listservs and online calendars

### **Post-Screening Discussion**

Before planning a long post-screening program, consider the length of the film, especially for evening events. Since audiences passively absorbed a lot of information during the film, you may want to open the floor right away to questions, discussion and next steps.

### **Remind participants that everyone sees through the lens of their own experience**

Everyone in the group may have a different view about the film they have just seen, and each may be accurate. Geography, age, race, religion and socioeconomic class can all have an impact on comfort levels, speaking styles, and prior knowledge.

**End discussion with a plan for action**

After an engaging film and a thought-provoking discussion, your viewers will hopefully leave the event wanting to take action. Provide a wide range of next steps that audiences can take in their communities, whether they are new to the subject, have limited time or resources, or are seasoned activists.

**Collect feedback and sign-in sheets**

Remind viewers to fill-out feedback forms and sign-in sheets so you can stay in touch, find out more about community needs, and learn how to improve future events.