

The Lullaby Trust Media pack



Why media coverage is important

Media coverage is a great way to reach a large audience. Whether you're holding a fundraising event or an awareness campaign, the media can help you publicise your event and raise awareness of our work. Working with the media can mean anything from writing a letter to a newspaper, getting coverage for your event or sending a photo along afterwards, and this pack is designed to give you information and advice when approaching the media.

What do you want to say?

The first thing to think about when trying to promote your event is what you want to get across. If you're hoping to get coverage for your fundraising event be sure to have the main information about the event clear in your mind or in front of you if you're speaking to a journalist. Make sure you have answers for the basic questions - who, what, where, when and why.

Should you talk about your personal experience?

There may be a personal reason why you're holding an event for The Lullaby Trust and quite often when you approach the media they will ask about this. This is an opportunity to talk about your connection to the charity or personal experience of bereavement, however you should not feel pressured into speaking about this if you don't want. You should however prepare yourself for the question and have an answer in mind in case you're asked. If you would like to talk about your experience and raise awareness of our work think about what you would like to say beforehand and what you hope to get across to someone reading or listening to you. The Lullaby Trust Communications Team would be happy to help you prepare for an interview, you can call us at 0207 802 3200 or email communications@lullabytrust.org.uk.

How could you promote your event?

There are various ways to promote your event, from community newsletters to social media and your local press.

Social media:

Your messages can reach thousands of people in seconds using social media and online resources. You may like to:

- Make a Facebook group and invite your friends to 'like' and repost it
- Create a Twitter account to promote the event. 'Follow' people you think may be interested in it and create a hashtag (an online discussion topic) so that people can talk about it.
- Write a blog using sites such as Blogger, Wordpress, tumblr and Livejournal to document your event and progress
- Video your event and upload clips to a Youtube or Vimeo
- Direct your friends and colleagues to your Justgiving or Virgin Money Giving page with your email signature

Feel free to involve The Lullaby Trust on social media - you can mention @lullabytrust on Twitter and Facebook to create a link to our social media and allow your followers to click through and find out more about the charity.

Community groups:

You might also want to contact groups in your area which have newsletters, websites or social media accounts such as church groups, parent and babies groups and village groups. Their members might be interested to know about your event or activity.

Local press:

Have a look in the phone book, on the internet, or in the local library to make a list of local media. You could also visit www.holdthefrontpage.co.uk where you will find a comprehensive list of newspaper websites. Before contacting the media try to find the name of the health correspondent, reporter or listings editor.

You can promote your event through the local press by sending a press release with your event details or inviting them along to take photographs. If your event is coming up soon you will need to enquire about deadlines - deadlines will be important if the newspaper only comes out once a week/fortnight because you won't have as many issues to potentially run your story before the event takes place.

Writing a press release

A press release is a good way to let the media know what you are doing because:

- It is more likely that the journalist will print the correct information
- The journalist can simply copy your text, making it more likely to be printed
- You save time by not phoning journalists who may not have the time to speak to you

News value:

When writing a press release about your event try to think about what makes your event different. This could be that the event is a one-off, that you are doing it in memory of someone or that the event is large. Journalists are always looking for a new or human interest angle, so bare that in mind. Your event is also more likely to be picked up by the media if you provide photos or agree to be photographed, or if you have a local MP or celebrity present.

TIP: Most newspapers have an events/photo diary. Ask them to put it in their diary in case they have a spare journalist/photographer who can actually come along.

Press releases should be:

Short, typed, and emailed within the body of an email and sent as an attachment. Use the draft press release on the next pages to help you plan your own press release. You can always contact The Lullaby Trust Communications Team if you would like someone to look over your press release before you send it or for help writing it.

In your press release remember:

- Get your main points across early
- Add in a quotation from you and other event organisers
- Include photographs if possible
- Include a link to your online donation page
- Include your daytime, evening and any other contact telephone numbers
- Include some details about The Lullaby Trust such as the helpline number/website and use our full name
- Keep a list of which journalists you have sent them to and when

Note:

At the bottom of the release you will need to include Notes to Editors which will give the media more information about the Lullaby Trust. We have attached some information for your use, you're also welcome to contact The Lullaby Trust for our logo and any more information by emailing communications@lullabytrust.org.uk.

Follow up:

It is a good idea to phone the journalist or producer to check that they have received your press release after you have sent it. This is a good way of checking whether they are interested, whether they would like more information, would like to hold an interview or to remind them of the story.

You should send your press release:

- 14 days before the event for weekly newspapers or weekly listings magazines
- 7 days before the event for daily newspapers, TV and radio programmes

TIP: You may also want to send a post-event press release with a picture. You can use practically the same wording adding how much was raised, a link to your online donation page and a big thank you to everyone who took part.

Preparing for an interview

If a journalist phones you out of the blue and asks you for comment, it is often a good idea to ask whether you can phone them back. This gives you time to think what you want to say and prepare any facts or figures you want to include. **Remember that you do not have to say yes.** You may want to call The Lullaby Trust Communications Team on 020 7802 3200 to discuss what to say. If you feel ill-prepared or unhappy with the subject you can always suggest that the journalist contact the Lullaby Trust central office.

During an interview:

- Get your point across as soon as possible
- Include the basic information such as the who, what, where, when and why
- Do not feel pressured into speaking about anything you don't want to - if you don't want to comment, be honest with the journalist and tell him/her you're not comfortable speaking about that thing
- Try to mention your fundraising and online donations page
- Have the Lullaby Trust helpline number and webaddress in front of you – 0808 8026868, www.lullabytrust.org.uk
- Use everyday language and no jargon
- If you're conducting the interview over the phone try to put the phone in a room with no background noise
- Speak slowly if you are on the radio/television - you always have more time than you think
- Stand up to take the call if you are feeling nervous

When you are approached by a local radio station requesting an interview, check:

- What they want you to speak about
- When and where they will want to interview you
- How long the interview will be
- Will it be pre-recorded or live
- Whether anyone else is being interviewed with you
- What format the interview will take eg. is it a phone-in or a one-to-one discussion with the presenter?

Radio interviews normally last no longer than three minutes so you may need to keep your answers shorter than you would in a newspaper interview. It is important to plan what you want to say so that you can get across the main points. Stick to a few key points, rather than squashing lots into a short interview.

If you are asked to be interviewed for television or radio please contact The Lullaby Trust communications team for advice: 020 7802 3200, email: communications@lullabytrust.org.uk

TIP - Think about the questions a journalist might ask you and how you might reply. Think about how much personal information you would like to disclose before being interviewed

For more information please contact the communications team on 0207 802 3200 or email communications@lullabytrust.org.uk

Template press release



Always include the date

Press Release

DATE

HEADLINE – Something short and sharp that captures the essence of your story

Family face mountain challenge in memory of son

PARAGRAPH 1 - Open with the newest and most interesting information being sure to include the 5 Ws (who, what, where, when and why)

A family from Yorkshire will push themselves to the limit when they take on the three peaks challenge next week in memory of their son

PARAGRAPH 2 – Go into a bit more detail here

The Smith family, from Drifffield, hope to raise £3,000 for The Lullaby Trust through their challenge after the charity supported them through their bereavement in 2012

PARAGRAPH 3 – Add a quotation from someone relevant to the press release. Quotations usually add emotion to a news story leaving facts for the rest of the copy. **NB: You can speak about your personal experience here if you wish but do not feel pressured to include details if you don't want to**

Mrs Smith said: "I am not used to exercise so this will be an enormous challenge for me! But I want to do something to support the charity that is searching to find the cause of sudden infant death syndrome. I hope no family will have to go through what I went through."

PARAGRAPH 4 – Add more relevant detail here such as what else is happening at your event, who is supporting you or relevant background information

Mr and Mrs Smith will be joined by their two children and parents at Wherside. The family will wear three peaks t-shirts donated by a local printer in support of the challenge

PARAGRAPH 5 – Add in additional quotations where needed. It's good, but not essential, to quote more than one person before bringing your press release to an end. In your final paragraph summarise what you have said. Add your contact details, justgiving page and any other relevant information here

NB: If you add your details for a journalist to contact you remember to make it clear whether or not these details can be published.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

ABOUT THE LULLABY TRUST

The Lullaby Trust provides specialist support for bereaved families and promotes expert advice on safer baby sleep.

Working with the NHS we run a national health-visitor led service for bereaved parents, Care of Next Infant (CONI) programme, which supports families before and after the birth of their new baby.

We are committed to supporting research to understand why babies die suddenly and unexpectedly and to find out more about how to prevent these tragic deaths.

The Lullaby Trust also runs an information line for parents and professionals (0808 802 6869) and a dedicated line for bereaved families (0808 802 6868). Both are free to call from landlines and mobiles.

Advice including, factsheets and the latest research can be found at www.lullabytrust.org.uk

We campaign tirelessly, lobbying government to keep sudden infant death on the public health agenda.