

4 Planning your Playday 2009 event

Organising a Playday event is lots of fun. With plenty of help and support, you will be able to achieve a day to remember - and one that will make a big difference to local children and young people. Try not to do everything yourself; involve other people as much as you can. Use this guidance together with the section *Getting the details right* in this guide when planning your event.



Playday email updates

If you have not already done so, sign up to receive regular Playday email updates for all the latest news and advice. Send your details (including name, address, telephone number and email address) to playday@ncb.org.uk or sign up via the online form on the Playday website. Encourage others to sign up too.

Playday website

Check out the Playday website, for all the latest Playday support, news and resources. The website contains free downloadable resources for organisers, practical advice on organising a Playday event, a facility to register your Playday event online, searchable listings of Playday events nationwide, an online forum to share knowledge and advice, campaign material including research, and lots more!

Register your event

Don't forget to register your event on the Playday website so we can give you additional support. You can choose if your event is publicised online or is for our information only. We often receive enquiries from press and members of the public to find out what Playday events are going on in their area, so this information really makes a difference. It also helps us to plan how we can support Playday organisers this year and in the future. If you register your event online, but select not to publish it on the website, we will only give this information to third parties with your permission.

The most important people to invite onto your planning group are children and young people



Start in plenty of time

Start planning as soon as possible, particularly for a large event. Securing funding is one of the first things you need to think about – check out the previous section, *Funding your Playday event*, for tips and ideas.

If you're planning to celebrate Playday by holding a street party, some local authorities may need three months' notice of road closure.

Get a planning group together

Think about who to involve – refer to the section *Working in partnership with the community* in this guide for more ideas. Find people that balance each other's skills.

Probably the most important people to invite onto your planning group are children and young people; after all, Playday is all about them!

Define your roles – for example, agree who is going to be in charge of publicity, who will design the invitations, who will plan for play provision, food and drink, and who will find out about health and safety, sorting out licences, insurance and road closures. Make an action plan of key tasks and agree target dates.

The message

The campaign theme for Playday 2009 is *Make time!* All children have the right to play and need time and space to play. The campaign is asking everyone – from parents, carers and teachers, to policy makers and planners – to make time to support children's right to play. You could develop this campaign message and think of an issue you want to address locally. Refer to the section *Playday 2009: Make time!* for more information on the theme.

Decide on a date

Playday is on Wednesday 5 August this year, but if it's difficult to hold your event on this date, consider holding it on a different day. You may even have a pre-organised event this summer, if so, embrace the Playday 2009 campaign and adapt your event into a Playday event!

Decide on a venue

Playday events can be held anywhere, from your back garden to Trafalgar Square! In 2007, lots of street parties were held on Playday; why not organise a Playday street party this year? You could use open spaces in your community like a park, village green, grassed area of your neighbourhood, or even close off the car park of

a local venue. Your local authority may have lists of local venues available free or discounted to community groups. Lots of local authorities hold events in pedestrianised town and city centre locations. Think about whether you want to hold one large event or a number of smaller events to reach different parts of your community.

Set goals

Do you want to make it bigger and better than last year's event? What do you want the people who attend to get out of the event? Think about the best way to promote play and the benefits it brings. Is publicity important for you?

Set a budget

How much can you or are you willing to spend? How much is it likely to cost to deliver? Remember, Playday celebrates children and young people's right to *free* play. Will you need to fundraise, or can you rely on voluntary contributions from people attending? Fundraising by applying for grants from charitable trusts can take a long time, so plan well ahead. For further advice, check out *Funding your Playday event* in the previous section of this guide.

Invite the guests

Spread the word. Tell everyone you know!

Children and young people are the most important guests, so invite local schools, play associations, youth groups, and other organisations involved with children and young people.

Playday is a national campaign that focuses on local communities, so think about the different people and groups in your community that would like to come along.

Invite people who will be good to help you achieve publicity, or people who could be influential in helping you achieve your campaign objectives. These could be local celebrities, the mayor or councillors.

For more on attracting decision makers, refer to the section *Developing a campaign* in this guide.

Why not send out written invitations. Perhaps you could send a Playday party invite, 'Can ... come out to play?' Download the Playday postcard from the Playday website to give

invitees more information about Playday, or create your own.

Publicise your event

If your event is open to the public, attracting the media ahead of your event is extremely beneficial to increase participation on the day. If developing a campaign or raising the profile of play is important to you, make sure you invite the press to your event. For further advice refer to the section *Getting publicity* in this guide.

Order additional materials

For details on Playday materials available including posters and postcards, visit the Playday website.

Plan play provision for the day

Refer to the section *Event ideas and play* in this guide for more ideas. Swap ideas with other Playday organisers via the Playday forum at www.playday.org.uk/forum.

Help on the day

Sign up volunteers to help on the day. Think about the tasks that need filling for example marshals, play workers, food servers and photographers. Refer to the section *Getting the details right* for ideas of who to ask and things to consider.

On the day

Make sure it's not all hard work and enjoy celebrating children's right to play and the benefits it brings!

After the event

Once everything has been cleared up, take a break and congratulate yourselves on a successful event. Thank everyone who helped to support your event. Pass round photos of the event, or make a display on a wall. Do some monitoring and evaluation, informal and formal, making notes that you can refer to when planning next year's event. You might want to develop a local campaign to follow on from your event. Refer to the section *Developing a campaign* in this guide for more advice.

Countdown to your Playday event

For more details on planning your event refer to the section in this guide *Getting the details right*. For a large event, start planning as soon as possible, using the guidance below as a timeline. Don't worry if you're new to Playday – you can organise a small-scale celebration in next to no time, just pick out the relevant details below.

As soon as possible

- Get a planning group together.
- Sign up for Playday email updates.
- Set a budget and apply for funds.
- Decide the date and venue.
- Make an action plan with target dates.
- Contact your local authority. If you are holding a street event, remind local residents and display legal order notice for road closure.

Three months or more to go

- Invite partner organisations.
- Apply for permissions and licences.
- Check insurance policy.
- Plan publicity.
- Visit the Playday website for the latest advice and information.

Two months to go

- Plan theme, entertainment, and play provision.
- Invite guests, eg residents, children's groups and elected representatives.
- Carry out a risk assessment.
- Think about toilet provision.
- Plan food and drink.
- Identify or book a photographer.
- Plan health and safety and first aid provision; identify a qualified first aider, or consider asking a voluntary first aid society to provide a first aid post.
- Register your event on the Playday website.

One month to go

- Advertise your event if it's open to the public.
- Display Playday posters, available from Play England or to download from the Playday website.
- Find volunteers to help with setting up your event and to help on the day.

Two weeks to go

- Download sample press release from the Playday website and send your version to local media.
- Prepare an action plan, detailing what time everything will happen, from set up to close.

- Allocate roles and tasks on the day to volunteers.
- Confirm all bookings.

One week to go

- Phone local media to follow up press release.
- Check weather forecast and make the necessary preparations; for example, obtaining extra quantities of water, sun cream or umbrellas!
- If you are holding a street event, send a note round to all the houses in the street and put it on cars to tell owners when they'll need to move the cars. Also display legal order notice for road closure.

The day before

- Call media contacts to confirm event details and any interviews arranged.
- Set up your venue.
- Carry out safety checks and review your risk assessment.
- For large events consider printing fliers to distribute at entrances. You could include a basic site map, also notification that photographs may be taken at the event and promotional details of your organisation.

On the day

- Make sure emergency services have clear access to your site.
- Carry out additional safety checks, walk the site, and refer to your risk assessment.
- Set up a clearly marked first aid point.
- Set up a clearly marked information point with a site map.
- Decorate your venue.
- Ensure you have all relevant contact numbers to hand.
- Mobilise volunteers and ensure that everyone knows their role.
- Relax and enjoy yourself.
- Clear up and move barriers at the agreed time.

After the event

- Thank journalists, VIPs, and volunteers for their support on the day.
- Hold an evaluation meeting – make sure you include children and young people.
- Develop a local campaign.
- Send copies of press cuttings to Play England and relevant national/local play organisation.
- Start planning next year's Playday event!