

# 7 Getting publicity

Now you have planned your event, it's time to think about publicity. There are lots of different ways to inform people about your event and how they can get involved. Think about who you want to tell and the best method to reach that particular audience. Further resources including posters and template press releases will be available to download from the Playday website.



## 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. You can also make the most of the interest generated by your Playday event, and generally highlight the importance and benefit of play.

## Who to tell

Local media often feature fun stories of local interest, especially those featuring children.

Find the names of your local newspapers, magazines, television and radio stations in your phone directories or within their publications or websites. With a newspaper or magazine, you'll need to contact the news desk, so mark your press release for the attention of 'The news editor', and for local television and radio, contact the forward planning desk. You could give them a call and ask who is the best person to send your press release to and how they would like to receive it – whether by email, fax, or hard copy in the post. The more you work with the press, the easier it becomes. You will get to know which journalist, when and how to contact them, and who is most likely to support your aims.



### **Tell us**

Don't forget to register your event on the Playday website. 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. Please let us know if you would be happy for us to pass on your contact details to journalists. You can choose if your event is publicised online or is for our information only. 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.

After the event, don't forget to send a copy of your press release, photographs, and any press cuttings you get to the Playday team – visit the Playday website for details.

### **Promotional materials for your Playday event**

Each year, Playday produces official resources for event organisers. You can download copies of the Playday 2009: *Make time!* promotional postcard and poster at [www.playday.org.uk](http://www.playday.org.uk). Official t-shirts and other materials may also be available to purchase – see the Playday website for details.

To give your campaign a local edge and tailor materials to your event, why not produce your own campaign resources? If you have managed to secure a local sponsor for your event, they may also fund promotional materials on your behalf. Producing your own materials gives the advantage that you can include your own logo or logos of local partners. The official Playday logo is also available for Playday event organisers to promote your event, you can request the use of the Playday logo by emailing [playday@ncb.org.uk](mailto:playday@ncb.org.uk). Proofs should be submitted prior to print whenever the logo is featured, which can be approved quickly by email. Children and young people who will be attending your Playday event may enjoy being involved in the design and even production of some of the materials.

### **What to produce**

Postcards and posters are straightforward to design and relatively cheap to produce. They add a huge amount of value in terms of advertising and also for getting your message across if you are coordinating a local campaign as part of your Playday event.

T-shirts are always popular at Playday events. Shops and companies can produce them for you, in both small and large quantities. You could alternatively make your own, using old or cheap plain t-shirts and screen-printing, for example.

Other popular promotional materials include frisbees, banners, stickers – the world’s your oyster! When deciding what materials you would like to produce, consider the benefit in terms of play value. Whilst branded toys can be a real crowd pleaser, children can get just as much, if not more, pleasure from free loose materials to play with at your event.

### **Designing promotional materials**

Designing a postcard or poster is not as daunting as it sounds. You don’t need to be a skilled artist, a computer genius or design expert, to produce effective materials that will get your campaign noticed and event filled. Follow these simple guidelines and you can’t go wrong!

#### **Information**

- Include the most important information: Who, what, when, where and why.
- Keep it short and simple.

#### **Images**

- Use strong, positive images that represent children and young people in your community.
- Use images from previous Playday events to capture the essence of the campaign.
- Ensure consent has been obtained for all images featuring children and young people.

#### **Logos**

- Get hold of an original copy of your organisation’s logo so your materials look professional. If you work for a local authority or large organisation, your communications team should have copies of logos and a guide on how they should be used.
- The Playday logo and guidelines are available on request – email [playday@ncb.org.uk](mailto:playday@ncb.org.uk).

#### **Colour**

- Limit your use of colour to three or four to create consistency and give a professional edge.
- Make sure the colour you use for text makes it clear and easy to read.

#### **IT**

- Microsoft Publisher and Word packages can both be used to create flyers and posters.
- You may find a colleague or contact has access to more advanced programmes such as Adobe InDesign or Illustrator.
- Why not get a design team together from your planning group, choosing members with the best IT and creative skills? Be sure to include children and young people.

#### **Style guides**

- If you work for a local authority or large organisation, your communications team should have a style guide you can follow or may produce the materials for you.
- You may want to follow a similar style to official Playday materials. Email [playday@ncb.org.uk](mailto:playday@ncb.org.uk) for a copy of the Playday logo guidelines, which includes information on our colour palette, fonts and style.

If you have any questions about designing and producing your own Playday materials, email us at [playday@ncb.org.uk](mailto:playday@ncb.org.uk).

#### **Event listings**

If your event is open for anyone to attend, make sure it is included in local event listings. These are usually free to advertise in. Parents and carers are often looking for fun activities for children and young people in the summer holidays and listings can be the first port of call. Don’t forget your local authority and free local newspapers will have events or ‘what’s on’ guides. Think about making use of ‘what’s on’ noticeboards which can often be found in local libraries, civic centres and community venues. There are also listing guides online, including family specific websites.

Don’t forget to register your event on the ‘Events near you’ section of the Playday website. The website receives lots of visitors in the run up to Playday due to the national media cover generated, so this is a great way to attract people to your event. If your event is not open to the public, it is still important to register your event via the website to receive support from the Playday team; you can specify whether your event appears on the Playday website or not when you register.

## Newsletters

Newsletters are a great way to keep everyone informed and involved in your event. Contact your local play network and local authority; they are often looking for news items to include in their newsletters or are happy to publicise an event. You could even consider producing your own newsletter if you decide to develop a campaign after your Playday event.

## Local media like to feature fun stories of local interest

### Write a press release

Remember to include the five 'Ws' in the opening of your press release:

1. **Who** is involved?
2. **What** is your message?
3. **Where** is the event taking place?
4. **When** is the event taking place?
5. **Why** is this event taking place?

Refer to the main Playday 2009 campaign messages:

- All children have the right to play and need time and space to play.
- Adults should prioritise the time children have to play.
- Everyone should make time to support children's right to play.

Keep it punchy. Use short paragraphs, short sentences and short words. Your press release should only be one or two pages long. And explain everything clearly: avoid abbreviations and jargon. Use a headline that states what the story is about and grabs the editor's attention.

Include a quotation from someone involved in the event, or a supporter of your event, which could be a VIP or your local MP/MSP/AM.

Always include a contact name and phone number. Make sure there is someone available to answer this phone on the day – a mobile phone number is ideal.

Make sure you provide some background information about Playday 2009; there are some

facts you can use in this guide in the *Playday 2009: Make time!* section or visit the Playday website.

### Sample press release

A sample press release will be available on the Playday website. Adapt this to include your event details and any additional local campaign messages.

### Stage a photo call

Children and young people playing always provide lots of opportunities for great photographs. To capture the imagination of the photo editor, and for a better chance of getting publicity, stage a photo call and request that the press send a photographer. Newspapers get lots of requests to photograph events; if they are unable to send a photographer to your event, remember to send your own photos of the day to them.

Maybe one of your VIPs – your local MP, mayor or celebrity – could help you out. Visit [www.upmystreet.com](http://www.upmystreet.com) for lists of local councillors, MPs and other elected representatives such as Welsh Assembly Members (AMs) or Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). Arrange photographs with them and some of the children and young people.

### Parental consent for photographs

You should take child protection guidance and the Data Protection Act 1998 into account when allowing photographs to be taken at your event. Wherever possible, seek parental consent for photographs featuring children and young people attending your event, as well as obtaining consent from the subjects themselves. Parental consent should be obtained for photographs that are published featuring anyone under 18 years old.

If consent cannot reasonably be sought because the photographs are taken in a public place and if you can answer 'yes' to the following questions, it would be reasonable to take the photographs without fear of being in breach of the Data Protection Act 1998.

- Would people attending the event expect photographs to be taken?
- Would people in the photograph probably consider themselves to be in a public place, with no expectation of privacy?

- Do you think it unlikely that anyone would object to the photograph being taken?

### Top tips:

- Design a simple consent form stating what the event is and what the photographs are likely to be used for. Include space for the child's name and the parent's or guardian's signature, printed name, contact details and date of signing.
- Make sure you tell any photographer which children and young people you do not have permission to photograph.
- Include a note within the general publicity for the event to the effect that photographs will be taken at the event that may be published.
- Display signs prominently at your event, stating that attendees may appear in photographs taken on the organiser's behalf for publicity purposes.
- When publishing photographs of children and young people, avoid captions that reveal personal details.
- Obtain parental consent ahead of your event by arranging a group of children and young people who are happy to be photographed. You could work in partnership with a local children's group who will be attending the event.
- If you have commissioned an official photographer, ensure that they guarantee to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998. Also consider providing them an assistant so that they can obtain photographic consent from parents/guardians/the subject throughout the event.
- Remember, photos taken purely for personal use are exempt from the Data Protection Act 1998, so it is fine to let people take photographs of their children and friends.
- The press are exempt from the Data Protection Act 1998, but they have to consider parental wishes if you allow them to take photographs from which a child can be identified.

For a sample consent form and more information about what event organisers need

to be aware of when taking photographs of children and young people, visit the NSPCC website at [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk). Your local authority may also have further guidance. You can find further advice from the Information Commissioner's Office, visit [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk).

### Identifying a photographer

It is a good idea to identify a good photographer for the day. You don't need to hire a professional, although if you have the budget it might not be expensive to hire one for the busiest part of the day, say for one or two hours. If you can't afford a professional, pick a keen amateur with a high resolution digital camera; digital photos will be easier to send to the press afterwards, by email. Why not get a child's eye view and think about giving disposable cameras to children and young people at the event?

**TOP TIP: Why not hold a local poster competition to design your promotional artwork or ask local play settings to get involved?**



## Tips from Playday organisers

Decide on a strategy – think about who to get involved, who your target audiences are and start in plenty of time.

Involving local councillors will raise the profile of the campaign and increase publicity.

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Give the campaign a local edge – invite local schools, football clubs, shopping centres and celebrities to get on board.

### Media Trust

The Media Trust provides comprehensive online guides which cover a range of media and communications issues including PR, marketing, design, web services and dealing with the media. Use their guide *Compiling a media list* to find newspaper, television and radio contact details. Go to the online guides section of their website: [www.mediatrust.org/training-events/training-resources](http://www.mediatrust.org/training-events/training-resources).

### Countdown

It's important to include a plan for getting local media publicity in your overall week-by-week event countdown.

#### • Two weeks to go

Send your press release to the local media. Make sure someone is available to answer the phone if they call, and make a note of the journalist's contact details. Don't worry if no one calls; many will leave it to the last minute to decide which stories to report on.

#### • One week to go

Phone your local media to say you sent a press release and you'd like to talk to someone about whether they're interested in reporting on it. Be friendly but persistent. Newsrooms can be busy places and so if you fail to speak to someone, keep trying! When you are ringing a newspaper, check what their deadline is for going to print, and avoid calling them at their busiest times.

#### • Three days to go

Agree with your media contacts what sort of story they want to do. They may want to send a photographer; some may want to interview you or your local MP. Make sure someone is available to organise this.

#### • The day before

Call your media contacts to confirm the details of the event and any interviews you have arranged for them. If your local newspaper is unable to report on your event, remember to send in a photograph afterwards.

#### • On the day

Allocate one person to be 'press officer' for the day to look after the journalists you are expecting. Make sure this person has a list of the names of journalists and photographers you are expecting, and some spare copies of your press release.

#### • After the event

Thank the journalists, and send in two or three of the best photographs from the day. Make sure you include names of the people in the photograph (as long as they have given consent,) in the order they appear, and two or three lines summarising the event and its objectives.

**Don't forget to register  
your event on the  
Playday website  
[www.playday.org.uk](http://www.playday.org.uk)**