

is Public Relations?

There are many different definitions of Public Relations (PR) but they all have common elements:

- PR activity develops an awareness and understanding between an organization and the public.
- PR is the establishment and maintenance of a good relationship between the public and an organization.
- PR is the process of aiming to project positive views or change negative views of an organization
- PR is management of an organization's reputation

Public Relations is usually achieved through **media activities**, although it is sometimes achieved through events, exhibitions, sponsorship and producing promotional publications.

This kit focuses on media relations and should be used in conjunction with the **WAGGGS Policy and Guidelines on Relationship to Society**.

Internal v External PR

A good relationship with the public will only be achieved if you have a good relationship with your internal audience, for example your members (girls and young women), your leaders, your staff, parents and families of members. An organization which is made up of an unhappy internal audience, is unlikely to create the right image externally.

You can use WAGGGS Policies and Guidelines to help strengthen your National Association from the inside so that you have a strong Association to present to the outside. This Media Relations kit is aimed at helping you to build up your relationship and your reputation with outsiders.

The external audience includes girls and young women and potential leaders who do not belong to your organization, the community, funders, other Non-Governmental Organizations, government opinion formers, and businesses.

An effective way of reaching the external audience is through **media coverage**. Almost everyone reads a newspaper or a magazine, or listens to the radio, or watches the television.

Other important tools of PR

- Photography
- Sponsorship
- Market research
- Exhibitions
- Advertising

This Media Relations Kit focuses on getting the most from the media.

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to make the most of Media Relations?

Introduction

Consider the number of newspapers, magazines, TV and radio programmes that compete for your attention in a week. National, regional and local press, radio and TV cover news twenty four hours a day. The internet and cable television have expanded the media even further so that many of us now have access to international programmes and news items.

Think of how many members or potential members that you can reach by being mentioned on the right radio programme, in the right magazine, or in the right newspaper.

This is what Media Relations is all about – promoting your organization through the use of the media.

How many non-members think that your organization is all about cookies and campfires and not about much else? How many non-members know that Girl Guides in Kenya are working on an HIV/AIDS project, or that two Girl Scouts from the Philippines spoke at a major international conference, or that the Polish Girl Guides provided hundreds of peace packs for Kosovo refugees?

Publicity is FREE! And it affects the success of the whole organization. Building up awareness and raising the profile of the Organization through targeted media work will eventually increase the number of members, leaders, funders, and supporters that join your National Association.

This information kit supports and expands on the WAGGGS Policy and Guidelines on Relationship to Society.



is Media Relations so important?

Consider the varied list of media available to you every day, and sometimes all day. National, regional, or local radio or TV. National newspapers in the morning, a local evening newspaper, specialized magazines, and weekly local newspapers. Every one provides you with a potential opportunity to gain publicity. Media coverage is free and it is very influential. What an independent publication or programme says about your National Association is much more influential than what you say about your own National Association.

The media has the power to

- Raise **AWARENESS**
- Change **ATTITUDES**
- Stimulate **ACTION**

Member Organizations need to let the rest of the world know that Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting is relevant and modern.

Good media relations

- Increases membership
- Raises the profile of the organization
- Increases fundraising opportunities
- Increases influencing powers
- Encourages volunteers
- Ensures that accurate information is given
- Encourages support from opinion formers and decision makers
- Maintains your leading position as a major youth organization

CASE STUDY

Kenya Girl Guides Association

Through good media coverage, KGGA's image has improved, more members have joined the Movement, a number of NGOs have sought collaboration, and a number of donors have provided support for projects.

Jordanian Association for Boy Scouts and Girl Guides

Good media coverage has ensured that the image of Guiding has improved.



to Plan Media Relations?

1. Where are we now?

Consider what your current position is amongst other youth organizations. Be very honest and consider the image that your organization currently has in the media.

Conduct a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis among members and non-members about how the organization is perceived.

Example

STRENGTHS	Large Youth organizations Serves girls and young women Democratic Well established	WEAKNESSES	Old fashioned Declining membership Lack of young leaders
OPPORTUNITIES	Increased membership International programmes	THREATS	Other youth organizations Leisure activities for young people Potential young leaders study/work

2. Who is our Target Audience?

Your target audience are the outsiders that you wish to reach through your media relations activities. The target audience will depend on what your objectives are (see below), what your budget is (you may not be able to afford to target all the relevant audiences), and your time scale.

Examples of target audience

- Girls and young women between the age of 10 and 19
- Young women between 19 and 25
- Funding corporations and other donors
- High profile supporters
- Government departments – eg youth, education, women
- Community leaders

All of your media activity should now focus on these target groups.



3. Where do we want to be?

How do you want to be perceived and how will you get there? Your communications objectives should relate to the overall organizational objectives. These objectives will describe where you want to be. The objectives should be measurable and realistic.

Examples of objectives

- To generate awareness of Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting among 70% of 10-15 year olds
- To reposition the organization as a modern and relevant organization for girls and young women
- To support the launching of a project or the new logo with media activity
- To raise \$3000 through PR and fundraising activities

4. How will we get there?

The **strategy** should plan and explain the methods that you will use to achieve your objectives. Strategies are broad statements of action to achieve objectives.

The strategy must keep addressing the objectives and must deliver your messages consistently.

The strategy must be measurable.

Examples

- To undertake continuous Media Relations activities (sending out press releases every one to two months) to support the recruitment for new leaders
- To plan an event to which press and local celebrities will be invited to launch the results of the new survey on girls and young women
- To promote the new uniform through planned Public Relations activities (celebrity endorsement and follow up photography and media work)

5. Tactics

The tactics are the details of how you will achieve your objectives. They are specific actions.

Examples

- 10 projects to be promoted through press release work by the end of the year
- Conduct a survey among girls and young women within 3 months
- Press launch at National Headquarters to launch the survey – inviting relevant media, celebrities, opinion formers, and members
- Local press launches to promote the new uniform in each district within 3 months of the national launch

6. Evaluation

All of your activities must be measurable. Before you begin your media work, establish an evaluation process (see page 27). You must ensure that your objectives have been achieved within the time frame given, and that your target audience has been reached.



CASE STUDY

The National Organization for Scouts and Guides, Oman

Through its media activity, the Scouts and Guides of Oman reach a large sector of society:

- Government – by demonstrating their responsibilities to society, the Guides and Scouts gain financial support; by gaining the trust of governmental departments, partnerships are formed
- Parents – by raising the profile of the Scouting and Guiding Movement
- Potential members
- Present members – by raising awareness of the educational side of their activities; and by demonstrating how they are different to other youth organizations which are not educational and which do not contribute to the development of a person and the community
- General Public – by raising awareness of the voluntary work of the members

Kenya Girl Guides Association

The Kenya Girl Guides have an events calendar which allows them to plan to inform the public in good time. The different events have different target audiences and so KGGA identifies the target media for each event, depending on its readers/listeners/viewers.

Fédération Ivoirienne du Scoutisme féminin

Through its media activity, the Fédération Ivoirienne du Scoutisme féminin wishes to reach the government, funders, new members and the general public.

Asociación de Guías y Scouts de Chile

As part of the planning process for the 19th World Scout Jamboree the Asociación de Guías y Scouts de Chile compiled an important document, called the 'List of positions, duties and profiles'. This enabled the association to determine how many staff and what skills were needed to help organize media coverage for the event.



to choose the right media?

Journalists rely heavily on press releases and story ideas from the public. They also receive a number of unwanted news stories from the public, which are unusable as news.

Before you submit a story, consider honestly whether it really is newsworthy. If it isn't, don't send it. You will only build up a reputation for wasting journalists' time.

The first step towards ensuring that your news ends up in print and on the air and not in the bin, is to research the media. Ask yourself which publications or programmes are most likely to be interested. How have they presented similar stories in the past?

Consider both your target audience, and the readers/listeners/viewers of the media. Different stories attract different media. Local stories with a local celebrity and a local angle obviously attract local media.

Media is interested in life stories, with real people and real situations. Even national media focuses on 'slice of life' stories.

Your story stands a better chance if it appeals to the target audience of a particular publication or programme. It is important to find out how many and what kind of readers, listeners or viewers are involved.

It is also very important to consider who you really need to reach through the media. Quite often stories about Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting are placed in publications and programmes which are read by people already interested in and sympathetic to your organization. Be careful that all of your media efforts are not already targeting people who are already involved and positive about your Association.

Before you choose your target media, research

- Type of reader/listener/viewer
- Circulation numbers
- Types of stories covered in the past
- Which publications and programmes are realistic targets for your stories

Media available

- National radio, TV, press
- Regional radio, TV, press
- Local radio, TV, press
- Special interest press
- Internet

Radio

Short articles work well on the radio. Local and regional radio is an easy media to tap into, and is very effective if your objectives target potential members and leaders, and communities.

Almost everyone listens to the radio.

Radio is very popular with young people.



If you do send press releases to the radio, expect that you will be required to give radio interviews.

You could also consider sending audio cassettes to local radio stations, perhaps including interviews and activities from your members.

Television

Consider if your story has good visual content. Give plenty of warning to the targeted TV programme and expect that a camera crew will come to your event or location.

Provide media training for your organization's spokespeople if they are going to be interviewed on TV or radio.

Press

Newspapers tend to cover current news, so only target them with very current stories. Newspapers sometimes use photographs also.

You might also get a feature covered in a magazine or a larger newspaper. Features are usually planned in advance. Try and find out what themes are being planned for the features by contacting the Features Editor on the newspaper or the magazine.

Many magazines are popular with young women. Use them to target potential members and leaders. Allow for a long lead in time for magazines.

For forthcoming events, find out who keeps the diary and make sure that your National Association's plans – for example, for a news conference or photo call – are noted.

Send several invitations to your event to the news desk so that they can be circulated.

Press releases must be rewritten for each type of media that they are sent to. A story covered in a national newspaper would have a very different angle to the same story covered on a local radio show. Take time to rewrite your stories considering the readers/listeners/viewers of the publication or programme that you are targeting.

There are media directories available with all the different types of media and their contact details listed. You can also build up your own media directory, listing the name of the publication, the contact person, the types of stories covered, contact details, deadlines and publication dates.

CASE STUDY

Girl Scouts of the Philippines

The Girl Scouts of the Philippines arrange interviews on national television and radio stations for members and for visitors from other WAGGGS Member Organizations.

Kenya Girl Guides Association

KGGA targets national television and local newspapers to advertise fundraising dinner/dances or fashion shows. Adults were the target audience, and they read and watch the target media.

On the other hand, a fun fair music road show was covered by local music radio stations, as KGGA was targeting young people.



CASE STUDY

Association of Ukrainian Guides

Press releases are sent to national information agencies before they are sent anywhere else, because almost all television and radio companies and newspapers take their news from these agencies.

TV journalists were invited to cover the first national Guide Camp which had very good visual content.

Fédération Ivoirienne du Scoutisme féminin

The Fédération Ivoirienne du Scoutisme féminin targets radio stations that are listened to by young people.



to contact the media?

Media relations is the communication pattern between an organization and the media interested in its activities. You are more likely to get your story covered if you have established good communications with relevant media.

Once you have decided which type of media you will target, you need to decide which journalists to approach.

It is very important to build up a good and long term relationship with journalists. Sending out press releases is only half the story.

Once you have researched your target media, you should then identify the key people who are most likely to cover your stories. Journalists on the Social Affairs, Education, News, Women and Pictures Desks are some of the people who may be interested in your National Association. Don't forget freelance journalists who may specialize in these areas and provide stories for a number of different publications and programmes.

Before you contact anyone, make sure you're familiar with the content and the style of the different media in your area. Check when the paper is published or the programme is broadcast. Make sure you are not trying to 'sell' an old story. If you sound as if you have done your research, you and your organization will be seen in a much better light.

Making Contacts

Find out the name of the relevant journalist, either by looking in a media directory, or by checking the newspaper, magazine, television or radio programme. Always address your press releases and correspondence to a journalist by name.

Before you send press releases, find out when the deadline for the programme or publication is. Send press releases first thing in the morning. Try to follow up your press release with a phone call, especially if you know the journalist. Phone at a quiet time of day. Mid-morning is usually a good time. Avoid phoning just before a deadline. Avoid contacting journalists on Fridays because most stories will have been written and published by then.

Broadcast journalists need most warning. Phone them first before you send a press release, to alert them to it. They will then need time to organize camera crews and reporters.

If you are in a position to do so, email press releases and give a brief summary of the content in your email. More and more journalists now use email and this is the quickest and easiest way for them to receive information.

Journalists change jobs frequently. When you know that your type of story is now being covered by another journalist, make an introductory call to them. Remember that they should come to regard you as an important source of information.

Invite journalists to meet for a background briefing on your organization.

Keep a list of friendly journalists and develop a working relationship with them by offering good stories, or access to information they need. If you are reliable, journalists will come to depend on you and ask for your advice on stories related to your field of activity. They are also more likely to come to the phone when you call.



Keep all details of your conversations and which journalists have covered which of your stories in your media directory.

When you speak to journalists, try and tape record or make notes of your conversation. If you feel you have been misquoted, you can check back on the details of what was said.

Why do some press releases end in the bin?

- The addressee no longer works on that desk
- They arrive after the copy deadline

Once you have made contacts they will need cultivating. It is much easier to offer stories to journalists you already know. Keep files of their name, job title, and the kind of stories they cover. Offer them access to useful sources or celebrities associated with your organization. Do not hesitate to tell a journalist that you liked one of their stories.

Tips

- Know the name of the journalist covering your type of story
- Know the frequency of the publication/programme
- Know the deadlines for the publication/programme
- Get to know the content and style of the different media in your area
- Check with people covering the news what kinds of stories they want
- Build rapport with individual journalists
- Maintain regular contact with the journalist
- Position yourself as someone with specialist knowledge
- Keep notes of conversations with the media
- Build up a press list (with the name of the journalist and their desk, the title of the publication, address, telephone and fax, date of publication/time of broadcast, deadlines, details of any correspondence)

CASE STUDY

Girl Scouts of Japan

The Girl Scouts of Japan make sure that all local councils have a list of the names and contact details of journalists in local newspapers, radio and television. Any press release is sent to each journalist, with the name and address of a Council member as a contact. Local journalists then contact the Council member directly, and build up a relationship with her.

The Girl Scouts of Japan often telephone journalists to secure media coverage. Ongoing contacts are considered very important and so the Girl Scouts always try to keep in touch with journalists regularly.

Whenever significant events or activities are about to take place (five or six times a year) the media are informed about 10 days prior to the date. A press release is faxed to all relevant journalists.



CASE STUDY

The National Organization for Scouts and Guides, Oman

The Scouts and Guides of Oman visit relevant journalists to make sure that they are up to date with Scouting and Guiding activities and to exchange good wishes during festivals etc.

The Scouts and Guides regularly telephone different journalists to inform them of their activities.

The National Organization sends greeting cards to all media contacts during national festivals.

The National Organization sends a regular update on different activities to all media.

Media are invited to events and functions so that they can cover the story and also to thank them for their good work.

Jordanian Association for Boy Scouts and Girl Guides

Personal contacts with top journalists are used and developed.

The National Organization has formed a media committee which specializes in media and public relations. The committee ensures that useful external audiences know about its activities through the media.

Girl Scouts of the USA

The Girl Scouts held a national event which involved twelve Girl Scouts. In order to publicize the event, GSUSA contacted the local media of all twelve Girl Scouts in addition to national print and broadcast media by phone, mail and fax.

The Guides and Scouts of Finland

The Guides and Scouts of Finland sent out two press releases before their Great Jubilee 2000 event. Various faxes and emails were sent during the weekend itself. The Guides and Scouts also wrote stories about the event during the weekend for local newspapers.

Lesotho Girl Guides Association

The Girl Guides of Lesotho are fortunate enough to have two members who work for two different radio and television stations. These members frequently contact the National Headquarters to find out if there are any news items for them to cover. The Lesotho Girl Guides have built up a good relationship with other journalists so that they telephone the national headquarters themselves to find out what's going on. If there is anything urgent or major that is about to happen, the Lesotho Girl Guides contact the media in advance.



to write a press release?

Considerations

Is my story newsworthy?

Your first thought before you write a press release must be whether it is newsworthy? If your story isn't newsworthy then don't write a press release. Journalists get too many press releases daily which they cannot use because the stories aren't interesting enough for their readers. Remember that your release will have to compete with scores of others which land on editors' desks every day. Most will be rejected. Think long and hard about the story's news value. It is easy to gain a bad reputation as a time waster if you send too many press releases with no value.

Who am I writing for?

Consider the audience that your story would appeal to and the audience of the media that you wish to target. Are they the same? If they are, write your press release with the readers/listeners/viewers of the media in mind.

What do I want to say?

Consider what your main message is.

What facts do I have?

Consider whether you can back up your message with hard news and facts.

What is the purpose of the story?

Consider whether by getting your story published/broadcasted, you will achieve your objectives.

Golden Rules

- Journalists spend about 5 seconds reading through press releases. Make sure that you capture their interest in the first paragraph
- The headline should be simple and factual
- Answer WHO, WHY, WHAT, WHERE and WHEN in the first paragraph
- Do not use adjectives or superlatives (e.g. the Girl Guides launched the most wonderful campaign yesterday, in the most beautiful surroundings of the fantastic new headquarters)
- Use simple and short sentences and paragraphs
- Try and include a quotation from someone with authority but make sure that they say something interesting
- Use active words, not passive, and write in the future tense (eg 'the Girl Guides will launch a new project' and not 'a new project was launched by the Girl Guides')
- Try to write the press release in a single page.
- Always send press releases on letter headed paper or on special press release paper
- Avoid embargoes
- Get the right name of the journalist to whom you are sending the press release
- If there is a photo opportunity, add 'NOTICE OF PHOTO OPPORTUNITY' on the press release and send a copy to the pictures desk.



Press Release Format

- Use 1 side of paper – never use both sides. If your press release is longer than one side, use a separate sheet of paper
- Double space the text
- Put the date in the top right hand corner and at the end of the release
- Specify if the press release is for immediate release or if it is embargoed
- Clearly identify the release as a NEWS RELEASE, NOTES FOR EDITORS etc
- The headline should be no longer than 2 lines, in bold, but not capitals and not underlined
- Use a readable size of text
- Use paragraphs
- Spell numbers one to nine
- Spell 'per cent' and 'number'
- Include titles in your first reference to people (eg Mrs Jane Patel PhD)
- Spell out acronyms in your first reference and include the acronym in brackets afterwards (World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS)). Thereafter you can just use the acronym.
- Don't use italics or underlining
- Don't split a sentence or a paragraph between pages
- Number all pages
- Write 'Ends' at the end of the press release
- Include a contact name and number at the end of the press release
- Include contact details for anyone whom you have quoted and inform them that they may receive calls from the media
- Put any key information (Notice of Photo Opportunity, Press Conference etc) at the top left corner of the press release

Once the press release is written:

- Get a colleague to double check the text
- Get approval for the text
- Make sure that anyone who has been quoted is available and willing to comment further
- Don't send more than one copy to one publication/programme, unless it is an invitation to a press event, in which case, send several copies to the news desk
- If there is a photo opportunity send the press release to the picture desk and editor as well as to the relevant journalist

Timing

- Try and only send press releases when they are needed. If you are only trying to reach one particular publication/programme try contacting them directly and use the personal approach
- Don't send a press release to arrive on the publication day
- Avoid sending press releases/contacting journalists on Fridays or on the day before a public holiday
- Use emails wherever possible – more and more journalists are using this form of communication

Some more reasons why press releases end up in the bin

- The press release is too long
- You have sent a similar press release to all journalists. The press release must be rewritten with a different angle for each particular media



- The WHO, WHERE, WHY, WHAT, WHEN isn't given in the first paragraph
- You haven't targeted the readership/viewers/listeners in your text
- The news is buried too deep in the story
- Sentences/paragraphs are too long or too complicated

NB Sometimes unforeseen major events take over and so your story which was going to be covered has to be removed to make space for coverage of the event.

Types of Release

- News Release – gives information about a current story/event
- Notes for Editors – gives additional information about the story and about the organization. The notes for editors are usually attached to a news release
- Case studies – gives information about individual life stories. Usually accompanies the press release
- Invitations – inviting journalists to photo calls, press conferences, press launches, press receptions. Usually in the form of a news release
- Press kits – distributed to all journalists attending media events and to other interested target audiences

Tips

- If you are in doubt about the value of the story, call a journalist and ask their advice
- Use quotes
- Aim the content of the press release at the readers/viewer/listeners of the publication/programme
- Make sure the story is absolutely new
- Keep it short, sharp and simple
- Avoid jargon
- Ask a colleague to double check the facts
- Circulate a copy of the press release to anyone in your organization who might be contacted
- Make a follow up call to journalists you know

CASE STUDY

Girl Scouts of Japan

Girl Scouts Day did not get as much coverage as it normally would in 2000. This was because more significant events took over, like the death of the Prime Minister and also the news of changes in the social welfare system.

Girl Scouts of the USA

A big national event held by GSUSA was not attended by some media and the coverage was less than expected due to the timing of the event. The Girl Scout Gold Award Young Women of Distinction celebration was held during 'Super Tuesday'. This is the name given to the day of the Presidential primary elections held in several states in the US. These elections often determine the outcome of the future President of the United States and are given considerable press coverage.



CASE STUDY

Girl Scouts of Japan

Girl Scouts Day did not get much coverage also because the information in the news release was not specific. Each troop and council held events on different days and so it was impossible for the release to list all the different dates and activities. However, when the Girl Scouts send releases with more specific information, such as international exchange events with overseas participants, the response is much more positive.

The Guides and Scouts of Finland

The 90th anniversary of Guiding and Scouting celebrations were considered too much like good news so that some newspapers didn't feature them, although they admitted that this was a mistake after the event.

Association of Ukrainian Guides

The Association chose to target the media in the summer, when there isn't much other news to cover. Journalists search for any fresh or interesting information to cover during this period. So the Ukrainian Guides decided to hold a press lunch in the summer, which coincided with the first All-Ukrainian National Guide Camp. The lunch was very well attended.





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First Baron Baden-Powell of Gilwell, OM
World Chief Guide 1930-1977
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of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**NEWS RELEASE****Packard Foundation funds major adolescent health project in India**

Over 20,000 young people in West Bengal, India will take part in the Healthy Adolescent Project in India (HAPI) which will be launched on World Population Day, July 11 2000. Bharat Scouts and Guides will work with the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts and Family Health International to improve the reproductive and general health of 22,500 adolescent young people through peer education over the next two years.

In May 2000, the population of India reached 1 billion. 10 to 19 year olds make up 20% of the country's population. Almost 40% of young women aged between 15 and 19 are sexually active. Young marriages are the norm in India. The median age of marriage is 16. Most young brides have children in their adolescence, putting their health and their personal development at risk.

The HAPI project will use Guiding and Scouting methods, such as learning by doing and peer group education, to educate 900 young people in 30 Guide and Scout units about health issues, including reproductive health. Each of these young people will be given training in sharing information about health with their peers in their own communities – each person is challenged to reach a further 25 peers. Each of the 900 participants who successfully complete the HAPI programme and share information to at least another 25 peers, will receive a badge and certificate. Through peer education over 20,000 young people will discuss and develop their physical, emotional, sexual and mental well being. The programme is available in English and all the local languages of the participants.

'The idea for this project originated with the Scout and Guide leadership in Calcutta. They recognized that the vast existing network of Scouts and Guides throughout India, including the poorest states in the north, could serve as an ideal vehicle providing young people with reproductive health information' said Dr Sarah Clark, Director of Packard's Population Programme.

~Ends~

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to create a Press Pack?

If you are holding a media event, it is a good idea to create press packs for everyone who attends. Make sure that you have extra copies in case others turn up.

Contents

- Contact details for members of the PR team
- Fact sheets – about the organization; key messages; Questions and Answers
- Biographical Details of speakers/important members of staff/volunteers
- Photograph of speakers
- Copy of press release about the event
- Back copies of other press releases sent in the past
- Copy of publication/survey (if you are launching a publication/survey)
- Summary of the publication/survey
- Samples or photographs of any products you are promoting (new logo, new uniform etc)
- Case Studies (relating to the press event)
- Promotional leaflets for your National Association and for WAGGGS

Try and customize the press pack by putting the information in branded folders or wallets. You can brand plain folders/wallets with stickers.

CASE STUDY

The Guide Association (UK)

The Guide Association launched the results of its survey on young women at an event. Each person who attended was given a folder with the name and branding of the survey on the front, as well as the name and logo of the National Association.

Inside the pack were an invitation to the event, a programme for the day's activities, a copy of the annual report, a list of participants, biographies of all the main speakers, and a copy of the survey itself.

Jordanian Association for Boy Scouts and Girl Guides

The National Association prepares stickers, brochures, emblems and badges which support the activity which it is promoting through the media. These materials are distributed to journalists a week or more before the activity is held, to support the news release.



makes a good story?

All your media relations work should reflect a modern and relevant image of your National Association.

When you think that you may have a good story, consider the image that it would convey of Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting, and whether it is newsworthy.

Why do you want news coverage and what is your angle? Do you want to let people know that your organization exists, to persuade people to attend an event, influence decisions, raise funds, or increase membership?

Member Organizations have gained positive press coverage for a number of different PR activities. Here are just a few of them:

Community Projects – real life stories are very popular with the media, especially local and regional media. Projects that are run by young people to help their community or the environment are very newsworthy and present a good image of an organization.

Campaigns – the WAGGGS sensitive issue and your National Association's promotion of this and similar initiatives could be newsworthy, especially if they deal with current and perhaps controversial issues. Before you launch a campaign, consider how your members and volunteers would be affected by your position, and whether they will agree with it. Don't promote something controversial just for the sake of it – it may backfire on you and you may lose some of the support from your internal audience.

Visits – if a World Board member is visiting your National Association, invite the media to interview her or attend an event in which she is playing a role. If a government minister or a celebrity is visiting a community project or your National Headquarters, make sure you give the media the details.

New staff – if you are welcoming a new International Commissioner or President, or even a new manager on the staff, inform the media, telling them about the job and about the person who has been appointed.

News about Members - if one of your members has been elected on the World Board or has received an award, let the media know.

Survey results – a number of National Associations have conducted surveys on how Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting has contributed to the lives of young and older women, or on what young women want out of life in the 21st century. Publish the results of the survey at a press reception and invite a celebrity and key opinion formers to attend. Also invite the media. You can gain valuable publicity and authority as the source of a survey or report. Highlight the key findings and you can often be sure of coverage, especially if they point to unpublicized problems or contradict popular assumptions. If surveys are done professionally and thoroughly, they can be expensive.

Partnerships – if your National Association has joined with a major NGO/government department/UN agency to work in partnership, launch the partnership publicly and with the media present. Have spokespersons from each organization available for interview and comment.



Increase in membership figures/funding – launch any new positive figures by sending press releases to relevant media. If you have received any major funding, inform the media through press releases giving details of where the money will be spent.

Anniversaries, events and special days – forward plan for such occasions and see if you can create a story angle which will attract media interest in advance. Check what else is happening to ensure that, if possible, your timing does not clash with rival news events.

Celebrity Support - try and get an appropriate celebrity to endorse your organization. Get a local celebrity to attend a local event or a media conference, or even get them to provide a quote for your press release. If you are launching a national event, try and get an appropriate national celebrity to endorse your launch. Choose your celebrity carefully – he/she should represent the right image of your National Association and should appeal to your target audience.

Make sure that your celebrity’s responsibilities and their commitments are clear at the start of your relationship. If they wish to leave the partnership at any time, do not make them feel guilty (you may wish to use them again later). Do not give your celebrity too many things to do, and make sure they know the message which you wish them to convey.

Tips

- Do you have an eye catching angle?
- Is your story topical?
- Does your story fit the kind of stories usually covered by the target programme or publication?
- Does it have a clear, catchy message?
- Has the issue been covered recently?
- Is it relevant and interesting to readers/listeners/viewers?
- Don’t promote too many different stories at the same time, e.g. don’t hold the opening of your new headquarters by a well known national celebrity at the same time as the visit of a World Boar member.

CASE STUDY

Jordanian Association for Boy Scouts and Girl Guides

Community Projects

Educational, health, scientific and environmental projects are promoted through the media.

National events

The media is invited to join national celebrations

Roundtables dealing with health and environmental issues take place and the media is invited

Celebrity Support

The National Organization invites a number of key opinion leaders to attend activities and events. Royalty and the Prime Minister have been among the distinguished guests.



CASE STUDY

Girl Scouts of the USA

National events

GSUSA held a special event for the Girl Scout Gold Award Young Women of Distinction celebration. The award is given to only a handful of Girl Scouts, to commend them on exemplary work in the areas of leadership, community service, career planning and personal development. It was decided to hold an event to gain more media coverage for the Girl Scout Gold Award. The Young Women of Distinction celebration gave twelve Gold Award recipients the opportunity to meet members of Congress, take part in leadership development workshops, and visit historical landmarks.

Celebrity Support

The twelve girls who took part in the Gold Award celebration, also participated in a panel discussion which was moderated by NBC News journalist, personality and former Girl Scout, Katie Couric. The panel also included celebrity Mary Tyler Moore and women's rights activist Gloria Steinem. Another highlight was when US Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala acknowledged the twelve Girl Scouts at a luncheon.

Girl Scouts of Japan

National events

The 80th Anniversary of the Movement in Japan was promoted to the media. As a result, a journalist from one of the largest national newspaper companies visited GSJ's office and interviewed the Executive Director and the Chief Director of the Education Division. A few days later, an article about the innovation of the GSJ educational programmes appeared in the Home and Life section, with a colour photograph of girls participating in a community event. Following this, GSJ received many enquiries from potential members. Juvenile delinquencies and criminals are currently one of the most worrying social problems in Japan, and so the message about education for children and young people was very relevant and interesting.

Raising Funds

GSJ raised funds for UNICEF and this was covered on many occasions in the media.

Girl Scouts of the Philippines

National Events

GSP's 60th Anniversary was featured in the editorial of the Manila Bulletin which is the largest selling newspaper in the country.

Visits

GSP arranges interviews for visitors from WAGGGS on national television and radio stations.



CASE STUDY

The Guide Association, UK

Research/Survey

The UK Guides published the results of a survey called '*Today's Girl Tomorrow's Woman*' at a media event. The results explored the hopes, aspirations, dreams and fears of girls and young women in the UK. The results were published in a report which also outlines the important role for the Guide Association in offering choices and opportunities to *Today's Girl*.

Celebrity Support

The launch of the *Today's Girl* results was supported and endorsed by leading British women, who also gave presentations at the event.

Kenya Girl Guides Association

National Events

The annual Peace Festival attracts a number of different UN agencies and NGOs, and also considerable media coverage.

Community Projects

Local projects on Food and Nutrition have gained media coverage, especially those which have received the FAO/WAGGGS Nutrition Award.

Anniversaries/celebrations

World Thinking Day celebrations attract media coverage.

Zwiazek Harcerstwa Polskiego (Polish Scouting and Guiding Association)

Visits

The Polish Scouting and Guiding Association ensured that the World Bureau Director's visit to Poland was well known by the media. The Director gave radio and TV interviews and her visit was featured in the press.

Council of Irish Guiding Associations

International Events

The Council of Irish Guiding Associations (CIGA) gained significant coverage for the 30th World Conference which was hosted by CIGA in Dublin.



to use different Media Relations methods?

There are a variety of different PR methods which gain media coverage.

Continuous

Send regular press releases to relevant media, rewriting the press release according to the readership/viewers/listeners of the targeted media.

Placed Articles

Contact the features editor of target publications and propose to write an article on an issue that relates to your National Association. Consider the style and the readership of the publication as you write. Check the word limit and the deadline, and whether photographs will be needed. Once your article has been accepted by one publication, you shouldn't offer it to another editor.

Forward Planning Tracking

Many items and articles are planned in advance - this is called forward planning. Phone targeted media and speak to the forward planning desk. Ask what major features are being planned for the coming months, and check whether you can contribute. Find out who the commissioning editor is and contact them to explain how you can contribute.

Letters

You can always write a letter to the editor of a publication in response to an article or news piece.

Interviews

Speaking on the radio or the TV is one of the most powerful and immediate ways of reaching an enormous range of people. National and local radio and TV can be broken down into many categories. These include news, current affairs, documentaries, features and light entertainment. The opportunities for you to publicize your story are endless.

Make them need you

You must be prepared to make yourself available. When asked for an interview at short notice, do everything to meet the deadline. Have a calm, authoritative sounding spokesperson ready whenever you send out a press release. If your representative is good once, they are likely to be invited back.

Interviews either take place on location, when the radio or TV reporter comes to you, in a studio, or on the telephone. If the reporter is coming to you for a TV interview, consider the backdrop that you use, and make sure it promotes the National Association. It is much easier to do an interview face to face because you can see the interviewer's reaction.

Remember that the interview clips which are broadcast on radio or TV are usually no longer than 30 seconds. So if you are not prepared, you will be off the air before you have made your point.

Before the interview

Find out what the interview is about, its length, context and the programme's target audience. Decide on no more than three main points you would like to make. Try not to talk about anything but the two or three points. Practise beforehand. Think how to turn a negative question into a positive answer.

Prepare likely questions and answers and run through them with your speakers.

If you are appearing on TV, think about what to wear. Wear your National Association uniform, or something that identifies you with your organization like a scarf. Avoid distracting patterns.



During the interview

Be honest, relaxed and natural. Journalists can ask surprise questions. Try not to talk about something that you are unfamiliar with – stick to your two or three points.

Speak slowly and clearly. Remember that the broadcast version will almost certainly contain only edited quotes. Short, sharp sentences are more likely to be broadcast.

Make sure your National Association gets a mention right at the start. If necessary, say what it does in your opening reply.

Keep steady eye contact with the interviewer. If you don't like a question, try and give yourself some time to answer.

Photocalls

If your story has good visual content, invite the pictures editor to attend a photocall. You may want to hold a photo call for a story on a community project; a leading person attending an event or visiting your National Association; or for an opening of a new building etc.

Consider whether the photocall will provide the media with interesting photographs which tell a story and which present the right image of your organization.

Alert pictures editors with a brief press release which tells them Who, When, Why, What, and Where.

Get your own photographer to cover the event fully and don't rely on the results of other photographers.

Invite others to the event – members, leaders, local celebrities and opinion leaders etc.

Issue a photocall notice one week before the event takes place. Telephone interested pictures editors one to two days before the event to remind them.

Wherever possible, choose an outside location. Have other arrangements made just in case of bad weather.

Photography

If you are holding a media event, always bring your own photographer along so that you get some photographs which will be useful to you.

- Brief the photographer – tell the photographer what sort of shoot you would like (group, action, portrait)
- Give a deadline for returning the photographs
- Consider the angles, objects, and lighting when briefing the photographer
- You must attend the photographic event and ensure that the photographer is getting the right photographs

If you are sending photographs to the media :

- Always have a caption
- Include the name, address, and telephone number of the sender
- Describe the picture
- Name any people in the photograph
- Place the caption firmly on the back of the photograph



Press Conferences, Press Launches and Press Receptions

A news conference or less formal briefing should only be called if you want to announce something of major importance and news value. Otherwise a news release will be adequate. Most news organizations are on tight budgets and cannot afford the time or money to send a journalist to a publicity event which may not produce a worthwhile story.

News conferences also cost the organizers a lot of time, money and energy.

News conferences are good when:

- You need to communicate with the media and the public face to face and give more clarification about an issue
- You are confident that journalists will want to attend. If you are unsure, phone a couple of journalists and check. Only hold a news conference if you have a really important story.

Timing

Plan the timing carefully to obtain maximum coverage, when there are no competing events or foreseeable major news developments. The media should be told about the news conference well in advance through a press release (with notification of the news conference). Ensure that journalists have plenty of writing time before their deadlines.

Location

Make sure that your press event is held at a central location where it is easy for journalists to get to.

Before the event

Brief all the speakers beforehand and make sure that everyone knows who should say what. Suitable spokespersons must be available if there are likely to be radio or TV interviews.

Involve as many young people as possible. This will ensure that you have conveyed the right image of your National Association. However, if you are involving young people, REHEARSE – both what they should and should NOT say.

If you want to promote your organization as a youth organization, make YOUNG people visible.

Rehearse everything.

Prepare likely questions and answers and run through them with your speakers.

Choose a central and accessible venue with parking and exhibition display boards. Be ready with plenty of spare press packs, a signing in book, name badges and enough of your own staff to manage all the journalists. Check the facilities of the venue well before the press conference starts.

Invite members, leaders, opinion formers, celebrities and other interested people to a press launch or reception as well as the media.

Provide food and drinks for your guests.

Invitations

The invitation can take the form of a press release, giving all the details of the location, timing and date, as well as the WHO, WHERE, WHY, WHAT, WHEN of the story itself.

Give details of the location with a map, time, and parking spaces. Late morning is a good time for press conferences/launches/receptions.



Send several invitations to press conferences, photo calls, press launches and receptions to the news desk and to the pictures desk so that they can circulate the invitation.

Phone a couple of days before and check whether journalists are attending. After the event send a press release summarizing the event to journalists who did attend and also to those relevant journalists who were unable to attend.

CASE STUDY

The National Organisation for Scouts and Guides, Oman

Continuous Media Activity

The Guides and Scouts regularly inform the relevant media about activities and events.

Photography

The Scouts and Guides take photographs for all their media activity. Often the media provide their own photographer, or the National Organization will send photographs with their press release. Many media institutions now have a special archive with photographs of the Scout and Guide Movement.

Girl Scouts of the USA

Photo Opportunities

The Girl Scout Gold Award event was supported by a photo opportunity for media picture desks. Several media agencies covered the story BECAUSE there was visual content.

Girl Scouts of the Philippines

Radio Interviews/Announcements

GSP prepare spot announcements (short advertisements on the radio) for the radio. The Girl Scouts also produce radio plays for broadcast.

Video Coverage

GSP ensure that there is video coverage of its major events and activities which is given to television stations.

Press Conferences

GSP holds press conferences for major national events.

The Guides and Scouts of Finland

Letter Writing

The most important newspaper in Finland failed to write an article about 20,000 Guides and Scouts who met for the 90th anniversary of Guiding and Scouting. Many parents and other supporters wrote to the editor-in-chief because they had failed to pick up on the story of the parade of young people marching through the main street of Helsinki. The editor later admitted that they had made a mistake!

Media Reception

A media reception was held for the Great Jubilee 2000, at which 20,000 Guides and Scouts joined together to celebrate the 90th anniversary of Guiding and Scouting in Finland. Local and national newspapers, magazines, radio and TV stations were contacted through letters, faxes, phone calls and email.

Photography

The Guides and Scouts took their own photographs for the media who were not based in Helsinki, where the Great Jubilee 2000 took place.



to evaluate Media Relations activities?

Why should you evaluate your media relations activities?

- Accountability
- To check your achievements against your objectives
- To improve for the next time you run media relations activities
- To show how important media relations is
- To give examples of best practice

The Evaluation Process

The evaluation process should be planned at the beginning of your media relations activities. Be realistic when you plan for your media relations evaluation. There are financial and time implications.

1. Where do you want to be?

Evaluation objectives should relate to the overall communication objectives

2. Where are you starting from?

Consider how the media cover your organization's stories before you begin your media relations activities. How much coverage do you get? Is it always favourable?

3. Who are your target audiences?

You may not have the time or the money to monitor all media which reaches all of your target audiences. Decide which are your most important audiences and monitor the media which is read/watched/listened to by these audiences.

4. Which media is most relevant?

Once you have determined your priority audiences, you will be able to determine the most relevant media to track.

5. What key messages do you want to track?

What are the most important messages that you wish to convey to the media?

6. What extent of the media will you track?

Decide whether you will track national, local or regional media or all three.

7. Who will provide the media cuttings?

Will you pay an outsider to collect media cuttings, or will you or one of your colleagues collect them?



8. How long will you monitor the media for?

Consider the time period of the evaluation process and when you will produce a report.

9. Budget

Consider the costs of the evaluation process.

Quantitative Evaluation

- Frequency of the National Association being mentioned in targeted media
- Frequency of messages being conveyed in targeted media
- Numbers of opportunities to see
- Where are the articles/programmes placed (front page, editorial, social affairs section, women's section)
- Type of media featuring your story (Local/national/regional? Press/radio/TV?)
- Balance of coverage between national and local media

Qualitative Evaluation

- What messages are being picked up and how are they being presented?
- What messages are being ignored?
- Which spokespeople are being quoted? What is being quoted? How are they coming across?
- Which spokespeople are not being quoted?
- Type of readership/viewers/listeners receiving the messages
- What is the nature of the headline?
- How much space is being given to positive messages and how much is being given to negative messages?
- How are audiences reacting to the media coverage? This is more difficult to determine although you can form focus groups of your target audience and ask them to respond to media coverage

CASE STUDY

Jordanian Association for Boy Scouts and Girl Guides

A special file containing all newspaper and magazine cuttings is kept.



to deal with a crisis?

Bad publicity

Sometimes an organization will be featured negatively in the media. Very occasionally this could lead to a crisis. However, if you react to the negative coverage well, you could change it to positive coverage.

Reactive Media Activities

If your organization has a potentially damaging story, and the media contact you:

- Do not rush. Get the facts first and then call them back
- Plan two or three messages before telephoning
- Turn all negative stories to positive stories
- Give the reporter something new about the story, which gives a positive slant
- Try not to say 'no comment'. If it is impossible to reveal information give a reason for it.

Sometimes a negative story could turn into a crisis.

What is a crisis?

A serious incident which has received or has threatened bad publicity for the organization.

Examples

- Girl Guide/Girl Scout is involved in a serious accident on a Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting camp
- Another youth organization with strong political links uses your name and logo
- Your National Association is accused of being racist/sexist

Crisis Management

Preparation is the key.

Plan for potential crises in advance:

- Consider what crises could hit the National Association
- Who are the audiences who could be affected by the crisis? (members, parents, staff, leaders, other youth organizations)
- Who could affect your organization in the event of the crisis? (government, charity bodies, parents, leaders)
- Who needs to know about the crisis? (parents, authorities, key media)
- How do we contact the target audiences? (do we have emergency phone numbers)
- What are our messages?
- In the event of a crisis, you must be reassuring, give a human face, tell the public what you are going to do about the crisis in the short term and in the long term.
- Try and have some statements giving information about the organization ready to distribute in the event of a crisis.
- Who will form the crisis team?



It is a good idea to have a team of volunteers/staff ready in the event of a crisis. The team should include a team leader, spokespersons, a media minder, a coordinator and an administrator.

- Build bridges in advance
- Get your potential target audiences on your side in advance. For example, make sure that parents and members are satisfied with the level of safety at your National Association events so that in the event of an accident, you have already built up a level of trust.

In the event of a crisis

- Holding Action – e.g. announce immediate action, stop the activity, launch an investigation
Get a spokesperson to make a statement as early on as possible. Assure the public that you will be looking into the crisis and that you are very concerned. Only apologize if the crisis was a direct result of your own mistake/negligence etc. Of course you must show concern and regret, but this is different to an apology. Assure the public that you will be doing something about the crisis and continue to update them on this action. Try and highlight some positive facts about the organization, although this of course doesn't make up for the fact of the crisis.
- Assemble the crisis team (the team members should be identified in advance – see **Plan for potential crises in advance**)
- Assess the situation
- Decide on the strategy – who is going to take responsibility, are we going to have a high or a low profile etc.
- Identify the audiences – who is affected by the crisis? Who can affect us? Who needs to know? Who else should be informed?
- Decide on your messages – include a holding statement which informs the public about the current situation; give details; have a human face; give details of your National Association's track record; provide background briefs on WAGGGS
- Brief relevant people – e.g. those who answer the phones, staff who may be asked questions by the public, members.
- Understand your audience – be outgoing and honest; don't speculate; hold interviews in a controlled environment; avoid press conferences (it is better to deal with media enquiries one at a time); empathize.
- Give information – avoid 'no comment' because this will just allow for speculation by outsiders.

When the crisis has been dealt with

- Evaluate the crisis management, and discuss what has been learned from the crisis. Prepare for more bad publicity if the crisis is ongoing.



CASE STUDY

Girl Scouts of the USA

The general messages reported by the media are that Girl Scouting is fun, it helps to develop leadership skills and it teaches values.

However, when the media does convey negative messages about GSUSA it is usually about an injured Girl Scout. Because of GSUSA's large presence and generally good image, bad media coverage does not usually affect membership or funding. GSUSA has developed a positive, progressive image among many people.

Girl Scouts of Japan

Although media coverage is generally positive, negative coverage appeared last year. The title of the article was 'Crisis of Girl Scouts and discussed the decrease in membership which was greatly exaggerated in the style of a scandalous tabloid article.

The Guides and Scouts of Finland

The media is very keen to talk about Guides and Scouts who have got lost in forests. The media gives the wrong impression that hiking is something dangerous and that patrols rely on the help of rescue services when they are in trouble.



to use other Public Relations tools?

There are many other ways of gaining good publicity. For example, holding exhibition stands, sponsorship, advertising, direct mailing.

WAGGGS Policy and Guidelines on Relationship to Society develops some of these other methods further.

Here are some easy ways of getting good publicity:

Newsletters/Magazines

Most National Associations produce a regular newsletter or magazine. Often it is only the internal market which reads it. Try and send out your newsletter to your external target audience – opinion leaders, parents, community leaders, schools, funders etc.

Promotional Leaflet

Produce a colourful and active leaflet with photographs of young women enjoying Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting and with a small amount of text (not too much – people lose interest) which shows how relevant and important Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting is in your country.

Website

If you have the infrastructure to use the internet, try and launch a website. It costs very little to set up a small website for your National Association and it can be looked at by both your internal and external audiences. Look at the WAGGGS website (www.wagggsworld.org) and other Associations' websites for some ideas.

Displays

Have a display about your National Association in your headquarters, for visitors to look at. Whenever there are exhibitions for young people or for your other target audiences, offer to put up a display on your National Association.

WAGGGS leaflets

Distribute WAGGGS' leaflets and publications to your external audience as well as to your internal audience, including Our Word News, the WAGGGS leaflet and the partnership leaflet.

CASE STUDY

Girl Scouts of Japan

Website

GSJ launched its official website and already it has had several thousand visitors. Enquiries from potential members have dramatically increased.

Other publications

A free phone number and the website address appeared on a publication produced by the Ministry of Education which was distributed to all primary and junior high school children. Since then, enquiries have poured in from all directions.



CASE STUDY

Girl Scouts of the Philippines

Magazines

GSP produces The Girl Scout magazine which is distributed to leaders and troops and also to local government agencies, other NGOs, schools, public and private libraries and Philippine embassies.

Photo exhibitions

GSP holds regular photo exhibitions.

The Guides and Scouts of Finland

Website

Throughout the Great Jubilee 2000 event, volunteers kept the website up to date with all the latest information.

Federação de Bandeirantes Do Brasil

The FBB has produced its own internal newspaper since 1922. The FBB also launches its PR tools through the media, so that kits, leaflets, posters, videos, the website and the reprinting of the newspaper, were all covered by the media.

The FBB even created its own radio station for its national camp. Young people could participate, and the station included music, adverts, messages and details about the camp programme.

