

Getting local press attention

Before writing your press release, ask yourself the questions - Is my event news worthy? Would people be interested in reading about it? Will it help to raise the profile of the charity? If the answer is yes, then you should publicise it!

Getting started

Before you get in touch with any press you should contact The Sick Children's Trust's PR Officer, Amy Melody, to tell her about your story (email amy@sickchildrenstrust.org or call 020 7638 4066).

If it is decided to publicise the story then the next step is writing a press release.

Writing a press release

- 1. Collate and organise your facts.** A simple rule is to find answers to the following questions: who? what? when? where? and why? - also known as the five W's of the event, don't forget how? as well. This should form the body of your press release.
- 2. Identify the story's angle.** A good story angle must have the following three attributes: It must be the most important fact in your story, it must be timely and it must be unique (news-worthy). Make sure this angle is in your first paragraph to grab people's attention.
- 3. Create a catchy headline.** Keep it short and simple, using less than ten words.
- 4. Write in a third-person voice.** The press release needs to remain objective, so avoid using words like "you", "I", "we" and "us" and replace them with "he" and "they". Try not to include personal opinions.
- 5. Provide quotes from key people.** Journalists always use quotes to add an authoritative voice to their reports. If quoting a member of The Sick Children's Trust staff, make sure you get approval first.
- 6. Provide additional background information.** Try and use our key messages (see below).
- 7. Get it approved.** You'll need to make sure anyone mentioned in the press release has approved what has been said.
- 8. Get photos.** Your press release will stand a better chance of being used if you include a photo. Make sure you caption the photo and get the approval of everyone in it.

we're here, so you can be there



**The Sick
Children's
Trust**

Charity registration number 284416

Construction

- To keep in line with our branding, always use Ariel font, size 11. Where possible use our corporate colours (found in the Branding information in this fundraising pack).
- In general, press releases shouldn't be more than one page long.
- Always put the date and our charity logo at the top of the press release.
- Let the journalist know where the release finishes by adding ---Ends--- at the bottom.
- Add in the photo reference, name and accompanying caption.
- Always put the following under Notes for Editors:

About The Sick Children's Trust

The Sick Children's Trust is celebrating 30 years of supporting families in need. It was founded in 1982 by two paediatric specialists, Dr Jon Pritchard & Professor James Malpas, who believed that having parents on hand during hospital treatment benefitted a child's recovery.

Today we have seven 'Homes from Home' at major hospitals around the country, where families can stay free of charge, for as long as they need whilst their child is undergoing treatment. There is a growing demand for our 'Homes from Home' as children must increasingly travel long distances to get the specialist treatment they need. In the last 30 years we have supported more than 40,000 families.

For further information about The Sick Children's Trust, please contact (NAME) on (PHONE NUMBER) or email (EMAIL ADDRESS)
www.sickchildrenstrust.org

Distribution

- Make sure that your press release is hitting your target audience. You should only target newspapers and magazines which are local or topical to your event or where you live.
- Try not to include attachments, as some recipients do not open files that they think may contain a virus. Where possible, copy the press release and image into the body of the email.

SCT Key Messages

- We are a charity that believes that seriously ill children should not be separated from their loved ones whilst in hospital.
- We provide free, high quality 'Home from Home' accommodation for families whose children are seriously ill in hospital.
- You can make a real difference to the lives of sick children and their families, helping to alleviate some of the emotional and financial strains at a very stressful time in their lives.

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SCT Key Values

- 1. Family:** The Sick Children's Trust is a champion of family values, our 'Homes from Home' enable the stability of family life to continue for the whole family every day.
- 2. Together:** The Sick Children's Trust believes family is the best medicine and that together families are able to help each other through the worst of times.
- 3. Support:** The Sick Children's Trust works in partnership with the hospital to encourage the speedy recovery of sick children by ensuring the very basic of all medicines has a chance to work; family love and support.
- 4. Home:** The Sick Children's Trust meets both emotional and physical needs of families using our 'Homes from Home' - offering a sanctuary to gather emotions in a well designed home providing all the necessities of modern living.
- 5. Hope:** The Sick Children's Trust offers hope to families who are feeling immense vulnerability and fear, but helping to embrace the unity between family members so they can create strength in the face of adversity and hope for their future.

When writing or speaking always refer to us as The Sick Children's Trust

Never use

the Sick Children's Trust
the Sick Childrens Trust
the sick children's trust
The Trust
the trust

Try avoid abbreviating our name to The SCT, we are not well known enough for this to happen. Although it may be necessary in certain situations.

When writing or speaking, refer to our houses as:

'Homes from Home'

'Home from Home'

houses

Individual house names, such as Treetop House, Rainbow House etc.

Never use:

Homes from Home - ie, without quotation marks

homes from home - ie, always use capital H

homes - ie, use the word houses instead

Home - ie, use 'Home from Home' instead

Houses - ie, don't use a capital H when using the plural word houses, except when starting a sentence.

Remember, we are happy to help with publicity for your event, so if you have any questions please contact Amy Melody on 020 7638 4066 or email amy@sickchildrenstrust.org

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