



Promoting events

Contents

1. How to promote your event
2. How to use the brand
3. PR guide
4. Swiss cheese press release
5. Key phrases and quotes
6. Change4Life
7. Event Piggybacking

1. How to promote your event

You've organised a Go4Life event and now you're thinking about how you can promote it.

Our guide gives you some hints and tips to get the details out there and hopefully get more people along.

The first thing you can do is look at our promotional materials section for logos, certificates and other bits and pieces you can use to promote your event and make sure people know it is part of Go4Life.

Make sure you tell everyone as early as possible about your plans. Think about how you already communicate and see if you can piggy back on some of that work. For example, use notice boards, newsletters and existing email/telephone networks to get the details out into the community.

Also think about partners you could team up with who might be able to promote your event as well. Maybe you are holding a fitness club at a village hall and the owners can help you promote the details to other users.

Make sure you've registered your event with the Go4Life team so we can put the details on our website and include in our monthly online newsletter. For weekly or monthly Go4Life classes or groups we can include information in our Active Directory.

Another good way to let people know about your event is to send out a press release to local media. A swiss cheese press release is included in this toolkit to help you write this. The template release has lots of holes (hence the name 'Swiss cheese') which you just have to fill in with your information. Then send out the press release with plenty of notice (remember, weekly newspapers often have a deadline five days before it comes out in the shops) to your local media and follow up with a phone call a few days later.



For more help about dealing with the media have a look at our PR Guide. It includes advice on:

Developing key messages for media work

Choosing the best method of communication

Selecting and targeting appropriate media

Developing a press release

Finally, make sure you join our Go4Life network and visit our website at www.go4life.org to keep up-to-date with all the Go4Life news.

2. How to use the Go4Life brand

The aim of the Go4Life campaign is to create an instantly recognisable brand which is associated with healthy and active living. To this end, partners must follow the guidelines below when promoting Go4Life events and activities.

Promotional materials include stationery, websites, advertising, publications and brochures, materials for events, exhibitions and other self promotion activities.

When written Go4Life should have no spaces and the G and L should be capped.

Using the logo

- The Go4Life logo must be used in all promotional material.
- This must be the logo which includes the web address, unless there is good reason for using the logo alone. In this case the web address, www.go4life.org, must be included somewhere in the documentation.
- The logo should be large enough to be clearly identifiable, but there are no restrictions on the location of a the graphic on documentation
- When included on images the logo should be placed in a position with a clear background. For example, use a section of sky rather than on a tree, as the busy background will distract from the logo.
- The logo is for branding only and must not be embedded into text.
- Ensure no other words or images overlap the logo.
- The logo can be just alongside other logos and branding.

Writing style for branded material

Go4Life is about promoting healthy and active living, especially to those who would not normally think about doing exercise or eating well. For this reason the tone of the brand must not be confrontational or accusatory. The aim is to



encourage North Somerset residents to be more active and more aware of their health, not shame them into action.

Images

Pictures and graphics should support the ideals of the Go4Life brand. Therefore, stereotypical sports images should be avoided. Try to think about what message you are aiming to get across and remember the picture will often say more than the words which accompany it.

3. PR Guide

A guide to using the media

This brief public relations guide aims to help you maximise success through raising awareness of your Go4Life event to the general public and other important audiences.

This guide provides advice on:

- Developing key messages
- Targeting your audience
- Selecting a method to ensure your messages are communicated
- Selecting and targeting the media
- Developing relationships with spokespeople and case studies
- Developing a press release
- Selling in your story
- Evaluating your coverage

This guide is developed from the PR Guide written by the No Smoking Day team. The original is available online at www.nosmokingday.org.uk

Messages

Public relations campaigns aim to deliver certain messages, to a chosen target audience, at a specific time. These messages will influence that audience to carry out a certain action, change their behaviour, or change their view on an issue.

Therefore, the first steps are to clarify your communication objectives and key messages, then plan how to reach and motivate your selected audience.



Objectives and key messages

You will usually have one primary objective, for example, to increase the number of people attending your Go4Life event, but you may also have multiple secondary objectives from time to time, for example, to encourage them to get more healthy and active by committing to doing 30 minutes of exercise five times a week. For the latest guidelines visit <http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/fitness/Pages/Fitnesshome.aspx>

Another objective might be aimed at potential funders or service commissioners, to whom you want to demonstrate effectiveness and value for money.

Your key messages should convey your objectives in a manner that will be understood and will motivate your target audience – which means they should be phrased in plain, jargon-free language.

It is common to select between three and five key messages for a press release or media interview. These will be the most important points that you want to get across to your target audience. Any more messages and you run the risk that your key points will become confused or lost.

Framing your key messages

On most occasions, the underlying objective of your communication will be to promote your event. This means that whatever the news hook that is creating the story; you should have strong simple themes to convey.

For example, Go4Life's underlying campaign messages do not change – they are:

- To get the residents of North Somerset more active and healthy
- To promote the benefits of committing to an activity, which will get your heart rate up, for 30 minutes five times a week
- To promote the benefits of a healthy diet

All of Go4Life's media communication contains one or more of these messages.

For partners, constant underlying messages could be:

- Exercise doesn't have to be scary
- A more healthy and active lifestyle will make you feel better

If you can, make sure you are familiar with the evidence underlying these messages, and try to find figures to back them up.



Audience targeting

Decide who you want to target and know where to find this audience. If you are unsure, ask your service users:

- What they read? And what parts of the publication? Letters pages are widely read as well as editorial content.
- What they watch and when?
- What they listen to and when?
- Where they go regularly? (for example gym, library, supermarket)

For professional audiences consider also the professional publications they would read – especially trade newspapers and magazines, and letters/news pages of professional journals. Would your story be relevant there? Drive-time local radio can also be a useful way to reach this audience.

Vehicle

In order for the message to reach the target audience, a communication vehicle is required. There are several vehicles that can convey your message to your target audience. The choice of vehicle will depend on what your message is and whom you want the message to reach.

Possible communication methods include:

1. Proactive press release

- Press release based on a created platform (for example, your Go4Life event or hooking into planned national campaigns)

2. Opportunistic/reactive press release

- Press release issued in response to recent events

3. Features

- In depth articles that expand on a particular issue or news piece

4. Case studies

- These are individuals who have succeeded in some way with your help and would be comfortable to talk to the media about their experiences
- These can be incredibly inspiring and motivating to others who want to get involved with Go4Life



5. Spokespeople

- Either yourself or somebody else in your organisation who can speak comfortably to the media about your work

Key points that would make a story popular with regional newspapers include:

- Human interest element: journalists prefer to feature local people (i.e. case studies) in their newspapers, sharing their experience, as this makes compelling and newsworthy reading
- Reproducible elements such as relevant quotes and photography
- News factor: newspapers are always keen to bring their readers relevant information that is new or surprising in some way

Media

For your messages to reach the appropriate audience, targeting is essential.

When a journalist receives your press release they will initially ask themselves four questions:

- Is it relevant to my readers / listeners / viewers?
- Is it new or surprising?
- Is it helpful to my readers / listeners / viewers?
- Is it credible?

Therefore, in order to target publications successfully, there is no substitute to reading, watching and listening to the media that your target audience use.

Make a note of local journalists who specialise in health, especially if they have an interest in your area.

Keep a file of their articles about any relevant health issues. Refer to these articles before you call journalists, to ensure that you do not ask journalists to repeat articles

When working with the media remember that they need fast and accurate information, ideas that will interest their readers and information that they can make their own. They do not appreciate inaccuracy, weak stories, waffle, failure to appreciate deadlines and failure to understand readers' interests.

Key tips include:

- Exploit milestones – for example 1000th user to join or anniversaries
- Use annual opportunities – for example New Year's resolutions, No Smoking Day (second Wednesday in March) or sporting events such as Wimbledon



- Highlight human interest success stories – for example three generations who have all signed up to Go4Life
- Prepare a list of local experts and case studies, noting their availability for media interviews
- Keep an up-to-date record of facts and figures about your service

Working with the media

Spokespeople and case studies

Remember that people make the news so it is important to have spokespeople and case studies available to bring your story to life.

If you are trying to achieve coverage in a number of different types of publication it is best to get a variety of spokespeople and case studies to target different media.

Once you have identified someone who would make a good case study or a colleague who may be an appropriate expert/spokesperson, ask them if they would be willing to be interviewed by local journalists.

Make sure they are able to present your message in the right tone – highly knowledgeable experts are not always the best at talking plain, lively English. Match the spokesperson to the tone of the publication or programme you are targeting.

Then it is essential that you talk in person to your potential spokespeople/case studies to:

- Profile what they feel comfortable saying
- Brief them thoroughly
- Agree key messages with them
- Provide them with copies of all the media materials
- Check their availability and negotiate time to be booked out for interviews well in advance
- Make sure you have all their contact details and a plan of their whereabouts at the times they will be required

Every time you receive a request from a journalist to interview somebody, you should call the spokesperson/case study and explain which newspaper/radio station would like to speak to them, outlining what questions they will ask and when the news story will be published.

If, at this point, the spokesperson/case study agrees to be interviewed, you should then either ask them to call the journalist, or seek their permission to give their phone number to the journalist.



Never pass a spokesperson's or case study's contact details to anyone without their permission.

Radio

Radio interviews can be either 'live' or 'pre-recorded'.

Live interviews are the best way to ensure the station includes your key messages, as pre-records may edit them out.

Avoid telephone interviews if at all possible. Always encourage your spokesperson to attend the radio station for a face to face interview as the radio station will prefer this method and the rapport between the interviewer and interviewee will be much better.

Press Release

- In general, when communicating your messages via a press release, ensure that the first paragraph encapsulates your news and that you only include essential background. Overall the story should be brief and self-promotion subtle
- Make a list of your key messages (between 3 and 5)
- Imagine that you have 30 seconds to relay these messages and prioritise them accordingly
- Use these message points as a road map for a press release, summarising the news element in the first paragraph then detail who, where, what, when and why
- Use short quotes to support your story, including full titles of spokespeople
- Fully reference health claims and any research findings
- Include contact details of your event organiser and times and the location it will run from
- Provide publications with top tips (for example, to get more active or to eat better)
- Constantly evaluate whether your press release is relevant and interesting to your target audience – consider the principles in the checklist below

Take a hard look at your story – is it news or not?

News is...

- New credible
- Conflict



- Controversial
- Shocking
- Sex, money, death, corruption
- Funny
- Personalised

News is not...

- Opinions (unless they are from someone important or surprising)
- Policy papers (unless influential)
- Meetings (unless unlikely pairings)
- Letters (unless leaked secrets)
- Visits (unless famous person)
- Theoretical
- Predictable messages

Top Tips for “Selling In”

There is more to getting your story covered than simply sending out unsolicited press releases. Investing time in talking directly to journalists about your story can be much more productive – it can also give you a chance to match your story more closely to the journalist’s interest. This is known as ‘selling in’ your story.

When selling in a story there are some basic tactics that are worth remembering:

- Watch, read or listen to the media before you make contact. Try to understand where your story may feature in the publication, for example, the health page, woman’s page, success story of the week
- Call the correct contact. Relevant correspondents for press release distribution include news desk reporters and health editor/reporter. Feature ideas should be sent to the features editor
- Know the best times to call and avoid calling journalists when they are on deadline or just before a programme is due on the air. If you call at an inappropriate time, ask them what are good and bad times for you to call
- Begin your call with a brief but interesting introduction, clearly demonstrating your relevance to their audience
- Tie your news into an emerging trend or opportunistic news item



- Be prepared to defend your position and cite relevant references
- Be ready with times and availability of spokespeople and case studies
- If you have promised to get back to a journalist – do it quickly
- Be wary of voicemail, it is always better to call back. Only leave a message if you have a truly irresistible story, leaving your name and telephone number at the beginning and end of the message

Checklist

Have you...?

- Agreed your campaign objectives and target audience
- Listed your key messages
- Identified media that are in tune with your target audience
- Developed a news hook that will be of interest to your target audience
- Identified appropriate journalists to contact
- Ensured that spokespeople and case studies are fully briefed on key messages and are comfortable speaking to the media

Evaluating Your Coverage

It is important to check the outcome of your media work – did the story get covered?

If so:

- Were your messages conveyed properly?
- Did anything unexpected crop up in coverage of your story for consideration next time?
- Did any journalists seem particularly interested - or cynical?
- Keep a file of your cuttings with copies of the press releases and press lists you used, and review them to improve future releases.

If your story doesn't get covered, consider the range of reasons:

- Competing news? Even the best story can get swamped if big stories break
- Wrong journalists targeted?
- Wrong timing?
- Story presentation not interesting enough?



- Story just too dull? Looking back at your press release, would you be interested in reading this if you came across it in a newspaper?

4. Swiss Cheese Press Release

This guide is developed from the PR Guide written by the No Smoking Day team. The original is available online at www.nosmokingday.org.uk

Go4Life <name of event>

KICK start a new healthy lifestyle with Go4Life and join in with <name of event>.

On <date of event> <name of organisation> has organised the event as part of North Somerset's Go4Life initiative which aims to help residents get more healthy and active.

Just 30 minutes of activity three times a week can improve health and well being. As long as it gets the heart rate up, this can be anything from a walk at lunchtime to a bicycle ride or a sports game.

<name of event> is an opportunity to get involved.

<name of spokesman> said: "We are proud to be involved in the Go4Life initiative and hope our <name of event> will be a chance for everyone to get involved.

"By getting involved in you can get fitter and your overall health will be better.

"The more fun the activity the more enjoyable it will be and hopefully you will want to stick at it and get more active in the future."

Go4Life offers the chance for individuals, families and sports clubs running training sessions to get involved.

For further information log onto www.go4life.org or email goforlife@n-somerset.gov.uk

5. Key phrases and quotes

Phrases

When promoting your Go4Life even here are some useful phrases and quotes you can adapt and use for your press releases:

Go4Life is a North Somerset scheme which encourages and supports people to get more healthy and active in their everyday lives.



Go4Life targets anyone who does not take part in 30 minutes of activity three times a week.

As long as you feel warmer and are slightly out of breath the activity is doing its job and increasing your heart rate, which will lead to you being healthier.

Go4Life is also about healthy eating and finding healthy alternatives which suit your needs.

Go4Life is a North Somerset Partnership initiative.

For help and advice about getting healthier and more active contact Go4Life via email at go4life@n-somerset.gov.uk

For more information about Go4Life log onto our website at www.go4life.org

Quotes

“We are proud to be part of the Go4Life project, which aims to get the residents of North Somerset more active and healthy.

“Our <insert name of activity or event> is the perfect way to get more active in a fun and enjoyable way.”

“This is an excellent opportunity for the residents of North Somerset to get more healthy and active.

“We would encourage everyone to get involved and Go4Life.”

“Go4Life is not just about getting involved today. It’s about making a commitment to change your lifestyle to get more healthy and active.”

6. Change4Life

Change4Life is a national publicity campaign aimed at getting families and children more healthy and active.

Run by the Department of Health, the ambitious promotion, on television, billboards, newspapers and magazines, wants to kick start a healthy revolution to stop rising numbers of obesity.

And Go4Life is supporting this work locally. We are working with everyone, children and families, adults, teenagers, older people and those with disabilities, and our aims, to get everyone healthier and more active, are the same as Change4Life.

When promoting your Go4Life event you can piggyback on this national promotion by also using the Change4Life logo.



For more information about the campaign and the brand guidelines to use its logo visit www.nhs.uk/change4life or call 0300 123 4567.

7. Event piggy-backing

An excellent way to publicise your Go4Life work is to tie in with, or piggy-back, an existing event or promotion.

There are a number of excellent opportunities to use the work of national campaigns to promote your own Go4Life event.

For example, the second Wednesday in March is usually No Smoking Day. This is an ideal opportunity to promote a healthy lifestyles message. You can also register your event at www.nosmokingday.org.uk to get more coverage.

As the momentum of national sporting events sweep the country this is an excellent time to organise a Go4Life event. For example, during Wimbledon the use of tennis courts goes up. Maybe your event could be linked to a World Cup or the Olympics?

There are a huge number of awareness raising days and weeks you could tap in to. Maybe you could use the British Heart Foundation's Help a Heart Campaign (log on to www.bhf.org.uk for details) or Bike Week (www.bikeweek.org.uk).

Most organisations will be sent details of different national campaigns and events which are being organised, especially if they are relevant.

You can also find information online. For example you may find some ideas from the Department of Health's current campaign's webpage at www.dh.gov.uk/en/News/Currentcampaigns