

PUBLICISING YOUR EVENT

This media guide aims to help you make the most of your fundraising activities. If needed, make use of our sample press release and letter to the editor. And don't forget to tell us about it! We can use our official social media pages to publicise your event too.

Making the News:

Rarely do cleft lip and/or palate issues get national media coverage. However, it is possible to get 'cleft' related issues mentioned in local papers by framing it as a 'human interest' story alongside your fundraising efforts.

What the papers want to hear about:

What's new is news: A new local CLAPA Branch; a link-up with a local business or an event.

What's unusual is news: Hold an event that's a bit different or get sponsored for something bizarre.

A good quote can be eye-catching: It can be a quote which refers to research or by someone famous. The quote must say something that is new, attention grabbing and true.

Human interest stories (case studies): How cleft lip and/or palate has affected a person or a family's life and how they have got on with things. Do bear in mind that this has to be done with the permission of the individual / family concerned.

Photographs: Having an eye-catching and interesting picture to accompany your story will increase its chances of being used. All pictures need to be good quality, high resolution. If you are lucky, you may be able to get the newspaper photographer to take your photos.

Remember to include a picture caption for each photograph that includes the names of people in the photo, why they are relevant to the story, where they are and what they are doing. Captions should be no longer than two short sentences.

How to contact your local media:

- It is always a good idea to read, watch and listen to your local media, and check out their websites, so that you are familiar with the paper/station you are contacting. Don't forget free papers and trade papers.
- Make contact – write, email or telephone – the journalist. If you are using the telephone, ask if they have a few minutes to spare so you can introduce yourself and tell them your story.
- If you write, follow up your letter or email with a phone call a couple of days later to make sure it was received and to allow the journalist to ask any questions he/she might have.
- Make sure you have covered the 5 W's and one H – What is happening, When it is happening, Where it is happening, Why it is happening, Who is involved and also How it is happening.

Opportunities for pre- event press releases:

- Give advance notice of your events; provide details of dates, venues, times, what's happening, a quote from you, and your contact details.
- If you are looking for participants to take part in events, you can send a letter to the editor of local papers appealing for volunteers.
- A medical feature in the weeks leading up to the event about the treatment of children born with a cleft lip and/or palate in your area is a good way to gain interest. This would mean developing a suitable 'real life case study' and asking, via your cleft team, the lead surgeon, speech therapist or others if they would be willing to be interviewed.
- Announcement of any celebrity endorsing your event.
- News coverage of the event itself.

If your contact with the media leads to an interview:

- Find out how the interview will work: is it 'live' or is it being recorded? Do they require a picture? When will the piece be published or broadcast?
- Prepare a list of likely questions you might be asked, e.g. 'What do you hope to achieve by participating in this event?'; 'When did you first become acquainted with CLAPA?'; 'How much money do you hope to raise?' – This way you will feel prepared for the interview.

Interview tips:

- Be positive and enthusiastic.
- If you are not sure of the answer, then just say so.
- Unless the question warrants it, try to keep your answers short.
- Try and speak as confidently as possible, especially if your interview is for broadcast purposes – i.e. TV or radio. Remember the interviewer will be on your side.
- Relax and enjoy it - you are helping to raise awareness of cleft lip and palate.
- Do not give the journalist information 'off the record'. You have no guarantee that they won't use it, so it is best to assume that everything you say will be quoted. But don't worry too much – if you are telling a human interest story with emotional content, they will want to show you in a good light.
- If you are being interviewed for TV or radio, always assume that, unless told otherwise, you are 'on-air'.
- If appropriate, we would be grateful if you could mention CLAPA, the work we do, and our website.
- Let people know how they can donate. If you have a Just Giving web page, mention that.

After an interview:

- Not all interviews are used, as sometimes editors have to change articles/programmes at the last minute, because of breaking news. Although you may not have been featured this time, it means that in the future you are more likely to be successful at gaining coverage as they'll have your details on file.
- If your piece is used, then ask for a copy – we'd love to see it!

After the event there are further opportunities for publicity:

The Thank You Letter:

You may wish to write a public thank you to everyone who took part in your event, and/or those who helped by way of providing a venue, facilities or donated goods. This can be sent as a 'Letter to the Editor'.

The Results:

When you know how much your event raised, a short release to the local press is a good idea. It lets everyone who was involved know how their contribution helped. You might also consider a cheque presentation, which is a good photo opportunity!

A SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE AND LETTER:

PRE EVENT PRESS ALERT

[date]

[NAME OF EVENT] in Aid of the Cleft Lip and Palate Association

will be holding a [name of event] on [day, date, month], starting at [time] at [venue].

At the [name of event] [explain what will happen]

The mission of the Cleft Lip and Palate Association (CLAPA) is to tackle the lack of understanding about cleft lip and palate, how it is treated, and how it affects people. One in 700 babies is born with a cleft lip and/or palate. That's about 1,000 new cases every year.

[name] says: 'The [name of event] will be a marvelous occasion. It will be a great opportunity to raise awareness and at the same time will raise funds for CLAPA .' We are also planning [list any other events with dates] [Feel free to put your own quote here instead]

For further press information, contact: [your name on] [daytime telephone numbers]

ENDS

Notes for Editors

The Cleft Lip and Palate Association has for 31 years been the representative organisation for all people with and affected by cleft lip and/or palate in the UK.

They provide [support and information](#) to new parents, [specialized bottles and teats](#) for babies, [activities](#) for children and young people, [advice on accessing treatment](#) for adults, and [volunteering](#) opportunities as individuals or through our [branches](#). They work closely with the [specialist cleft teams](#) and generic health professionals to ensure that people receive the best possible care. For more information, please visit www.clapa.com.

Contact Details

For media enquiries, please contact Rosanna Preston or Sue Carroll on 020 7833 4883, or at info@clapa.com.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

(date)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to ask if I could, through your Newspaper, issue an appeal for volunteers to participate in [or 'help with'] our [name of event], which is in aid of the Cleft Lip & Palate Association (CLAPA). I would like to invite anyone [if appropriate: between the ages of x and y] to take part in this very special event which will be held on [day, date, month] at [venue]. [Explain what the event is and what you require people to do].

CLAPA is the representative organisation for all people with and affected by cleft lip and/or palate in the UK. One in 700 babies are born with this condition, which is around 1,000 every year.

This event is not only a great opportunity to raise awareness, but also to help us raise much needed funds to support both local and national activities.

If any of your readers would be willing to help, please would they contact me at [address and phone number]

Name

Notes for Editors

The Cleft Lip and Palate Association has since 1979 been the representative organisation for all people with and affected by cleft lip and/or palate in the UK.

Cleft means 'split' or 'separation'. During early pregnancy separate areas of the face develop individually and then join together. If some parts do not join properly the result is a cleft, the type and severity of which can vary. The condition affects approximately 1 in every seven hundred babies born in the UK and is the most common congenital craniofacial anomaly.

CLAPA provides [support and information](#) to new parents, [specialised bottles and teats](#) for babies, [activities](#) for children and young people, [advice on accessing treatment](#) for adults, and [volunteering](#) opportunities as individuals or through our [branches](#). They work closely with the [specialist cleft teams](#) and generic health professionals to ensure that people receive the best possible care. For more information, please visit www.clapa.com.

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