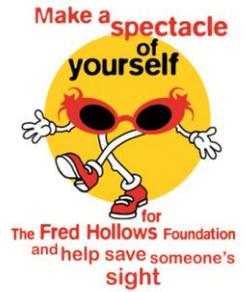


Writing a Press Release

Make a spectacle of yourself by making NEWS!!



Let's promote your school's involvement in 'Make A Spectacle of Yourself' as much as we can! Here are a few tips on how to get your school in the news.

The best way to get your story in the media is by sending a press release to local media prior to your event. A press release is simply a written statement informing the media of your news. To get attention it needs to be short, bold, snappy and follow an expected format. Perhaps this could be a project for your students.

Follow these steps and you should find the reporters knocking at your gates.

You will also find an example press release on the next page, which you are welcome to adapt.

Firstly, you are competing with other stories (and possibly other local schools taking part in 'Make a Spectacle of Yourself') so do something as **weird**, **wild** and **wacky** as you can! You're most likely to attract the interest of your local paper and radio station this way.

Remember you already have a few things on your side:

- Local media like to cover school and community events and are always looking for new stories
- Fred Hollows is a Kiwi, someone to be proud of; the media will be interested in a link to a Kiwi hero

Writing the press release:

- 1) Make it short and snappy, no more than one page.
- 2) Type the release, and check the spelling.
- 3) Write the date and 'For Immediate Release' at the top.
- 4) Make the headline big and bold, and interesting.
- 5) Get your message across in the first paragraph, saying who, what, where, when and how. Keep it short!
- 6) Include a quote from your school Principal or Deputy Principal if you can.
- 7) Write //ENDS at the end of your release and add your contact details after //ENDS.

When:

- 1) Don't post media releases on Friday – they get lost in the weekend newsroom.
- 2) Monday is a good day, so the Monday of the same week of your event is a good time (no later). Check with your local paper for any copy deadlines – remember that community papers often print only once a week and they might need copy up to a week in advance. So don't leave it too late.

How to send it:

- 1) Email or fax your press release. Call the paper to check contact details so it reaches the right person. With small papers, this is usually the Editor but larger papers might have a Chief Reporter covering local news.
- 2) Follow up with a phone call, either later on or the next day. Check if they got your release and see if they are interested in following it up or need any other information.

Photo opportunities:

From the paper's point of view an original and visual activity is going to be of most interest- so get **weird**, **wild** and **wacky**! It is a good idea to take some of your own pictures. That way, if they don't send a photographer, you can offer good quality copies to the local press immediately afterwards - this action often pays off as it makes their job easy! The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ would also like your pictures to put up on our website, so please take some for us too!

And that is it. Simple! Now please have a look at the sample press release over leaf, and feel welcome to adapt it.

EXAMPLE:

[DATE]

For Immediate Release

Making a Spectacle to Restore Sight

Local school [SCHOOL NAME] will be making a spectacle of themselves this Wednesday to help restore sight to over 80,000 people in the Pacific region who are needlessly blind.

The students will be raising funds for The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ by [ACTIVITY eg. holding a Cataract Olympics*** plus explanation].

“QUOTE FROM PRINCIPAL/OTHER SPOKESPERSON ABOUT WHY YOUR SCHOOL IS TAKING PART/ LOOKING FORWARD TO THE EVENT/WHAT YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE,” says [Name and position of spokesperson].

[SCHOOL NAME] is one of many schools across New Zealand who support The Foundation every year through their “Make A Spectacle of Yourself” day.

“We’re looking forward to hearing about all the wacky activities schools will be getting up to,” says Executive Director Andrew Bell.

“Fred Hollows was a Kiwi and a brilliant man and it’s important that the next generation remember one of our most revolutionary heroes, and help carry on his legacy of restoring sight to the blind.”

The Fred Hollows Foundation works to restore sight and end avoidable blindness in the Pacific where 4 out of 5 people who are blind don’t have to be. They carry on the work of Professor Fred Hollows, a world-renowned Kiwi eye surgeon and humanitarian, who set up The Foundation shortly before his death twenty years ago.

// ENDS

For enquiries please contact [SCHOOL CONTACT NAME, TELEPHONE NO. AND EMAIL]

Editors Note:

- The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ: 24 hour donation line 0800 227 229 www.hollows.org.nz
- Fred Hollows: Ophthalmologist and humanitarian. Born in Dunedin, raised in Palmerston North. Studied medicine at the University of Otago. Worked throughout the world fighting for ‘eyesight for all’, firstly in Aboriginal Australia and then in Eritrea, Nepal and Vietnam. Awarded Australian of the Year 1990. Voted one of New Zealand’s Top 100 History Makers 2005.