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How to Work with Newspapers and Magazines

Newspapers and magazines ('print media') are a good way to get your information out to the community.

They can give the reader time to read the information in their own time.

People can also keep the information to look at and read later.

If you are writing a story or article for a newspaper or magazine, you should think about what 'angle' you are going to use.

The angle that the story is taking is called a 'hook'.

Keep your message easy to understand and creative.

Work your story around what is happening in the world around you – current social, economic and political issues.

State and National Newspapers

Send letters to the Editor of the newspaper that you want your article published in.



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For example, if you want to write a story about health issues, contact the Editor of the Health and Medicine section of the West Australian.

Most newspapers have the Editor's name and contact details on the inside of the newspaper.

Monday's paper is usually a good day to have a story published, because the newspaper will be looking for news after a busy weekend.

Journalists will be looking for stories for next week's (or the next day's) newspaper, so find out the deadline and send your media release early.

Community Newspapers

Most Community Newspapers give you a free weekly diary or calendar of events where you can give details of your group's meetings or activities.

Try to send it at least seven (7) days before the next issue of the newspaper.

Community newspapers are a good way for people to find out about your group and they will often write an article for free.



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Magazines

Many weekly magazines choose their articles about three months before they are published.

If the magazine comes out every month, they can plan up to four months in advance.

It is important to be aware of national dates relating to your issue so that you can use that information.

For example, if you belong to a group that is a disabled persons' organisation, you might write a story for International Day of People with a Disability.

You should know and understand who you are writing the story for (your 'target audience') and it should be interesting to that audience.

Remember the age and interests of your audience and choose the magazines who write for the audience you want to reach.

Fax or email your article to the Features Editor.

Phone a day or so to make sure they have received it and to follow up with information.



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Make sure any photographs you send are of a high quality and make sure you ask what format photos should be sent in.

For example, some magazines might ask for a 'high resolution .jpeg file'.

That means that you should send a photograph in jpeg format which is at least 300 dpi (dots per inch).

Magazines often like to take their own photos, so they may send their own photographer.

Journals

If you want to tell people about new research, specialist information or important case studies, you can use a journal to tell people.

Contact the Editor of the journal that covers topics which are like your group issues.

If your group is dealing with a health issue, you may want to contact the Medical Journal of Australia.

To find the journal who is most likely to publish your information, you can find out the names of journals at the public library or on the internet.

You should send in your information ten weeks before you want it to be published.



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Directories and Databases

People can find out about your group if it is listed in an organisational directory or database.

Databases and directories are used so that professionals and members of the public can find you.

The ConnectGroups Online Directory of Support Groups and Community Organisations is a good resource for both professionals and community members who are looking for information about support groups and community services.

Posters, Brochures and Flyers

Posters, brochures and flyers ('promotional materials') can be fun to make and they can work well if they are put up in places that your target group might go to.

Where you put your materials will depend on where your audience goes.

Make sure you ask permission first, as there might be rules about where or when you can put out materials.

Educational institutions (TAFE, universities, schools), hospitals, libraries and shopping centres usually have notice boards where you can put up information.



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You might also want to send out your flyers by email, mail or to other organisations to send out.

If you ask other organisations to send them out, write them a letter to say thank you for their help.

You can also give details of where they can call to get new flyers when they run out.

Make sure that if you send out a flyer by electronic mail that there is also an accessible text description.

You can make the flyer in Word and make sure that the images do not include important text, or you can add the text into the body of your email.

When you make your poster or flyer, include the aims of your group, a description of what you do, meeting times, where the meeting is held, contact numbers and email and website addresses (if you have them).

Keep it easy to read, attractive and informative.

You might want to design a logo.

The best place to put graphics is on the bottom left or top right hand corner.

Use bold print to highlight the name of the group.

Make it large enough to read from a few steps away.



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Make sure you use high contrast so that people can read the words easily.

If you want to keep your costs down, use your own computer and software to make your material.

ConnectGroups can also design a poster or flyer for you.

For printing, find out if someone in your group has access to a photocopier and use your own paper.

Your local MP might also help with photocopying or mailing.

If you are using a commercial printer, ask a few of them for two or three quotes and make sure you tell them clearly what you want.

Connect Groups: Telephone: (08) 9364 6909 Rural Freecall: 1800 195 575

Email: info@connectgroups.org.au

Web Site: www.connectgroups.org.au

Postal Address: PO Box 1209 Booragoon WA 6154

Street Address: 10 Almondbury Road Booragoon WA 6154

New and Existing Support Group Development, Telephone Information Line,
Information Forums, Facilities and Equipment Hire

On-line Directory of Support Groups and Community Organisations, E-News

People With disabilities WA:

1/37 Hampden Road, Nedlands WA 6009

Telephone (08) 9485 8900 Rural Freecall 1800 193 331

Email: info@pwdwa.org Web: www.pwdwa.org