

NEW: CRIN's media toolkit

Need advice about writing the perfect press release? Want to ensure your emails make it to the top of the pile? Wondering how you can get something published on CRIN?

We have compiled a media toolkit, a single site offering guidance on interacting with the media, advocacy and networking. The project is a work in progress, but elements include:

- Advice on writing press releases;
- How to get your emails read
- Advice on writing articles and reports, particularly with a view to publication on CRIN
- How to write for websites
- Guidelines for interviewing children and reporting on children
- Media contacts in your country

As an introduction, below are some summary tips for writing a good press release*:

Turning your press release into news

The first question to ask yourself is: **what is the story?** Journalists publish stories, not just information about your organisation. The better the story, the closer it will be to the front page. So make sure the information is newsworthy, and ask how you can make it of interest and relevance to readers. Can you issue the press release to coincide with a more recent news event?

Know what you want to say.

This may seem obvious, but if you are not clear what it is you want, or want to say, the press release will reflect this.

Who are you writing for?

This will affect how you write and what you say.

Once you are clear about the content of the press release, you can concentrate on **how to write it**, with our five-step guide.

1. Keep it simple. Good, clear writing is crucial and an otherwise interesting press release may be snubbed if written badly. Keep asking yourself: what is it I am trying to say? Then write as if you are recounting a story to a friend or family member. **DON'T** say, for example: "The National Group for the Protection of Child Rights has decided to integrate its strategic plan into national protection mechanisms through a process of consultations beginning with an event this September." **DO** say: The National Group for the Protection of Child Rights is hosting a conference on 17 September 2007 on the subject of child protection in Swaziland. Avoid jargon and 'UN-speak'.

2. The What, Who, Where, When, Why, How rule. In other words, what is happening/happened? Who is/was involved? Where is it/did it happen? etc. Journalists are taught that all this information should be in the first three paragraphs of any story.

3. Keep it short. Use short sentences and short words. Is each word in the press release absolutely necessary? For example, 'policymaking process' can just be 'policymaking.'

4. Make it accurate. Check for grammar and punctuation, and keep it factual while avoiding exaggeration.

5. Include ALL contact details: address, email, telephone, website, fax etc. If issuing a call for information, applications etc, double check you have included the correct email address.

*The complete guide includes examples and links.

Download the full media toolkit at this link:
<http://crin.org/resources/infoDetail.asp?ID=15268&flag=report>

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