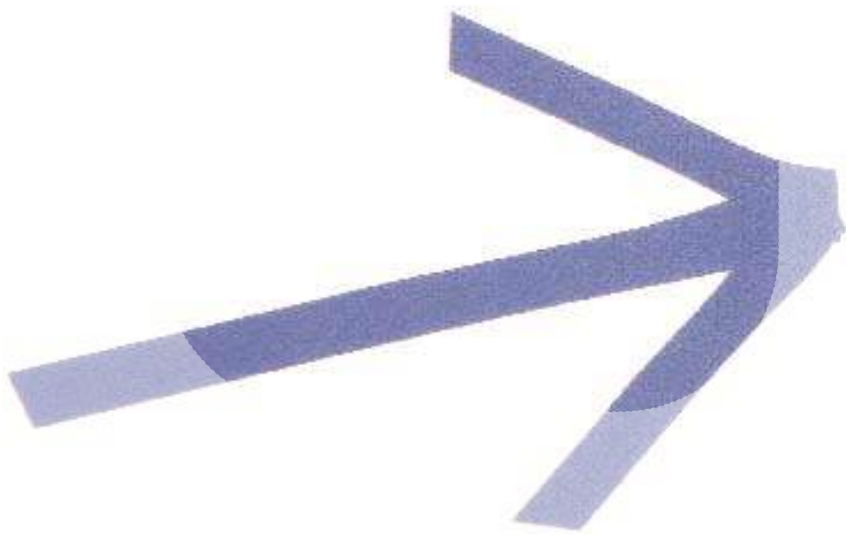
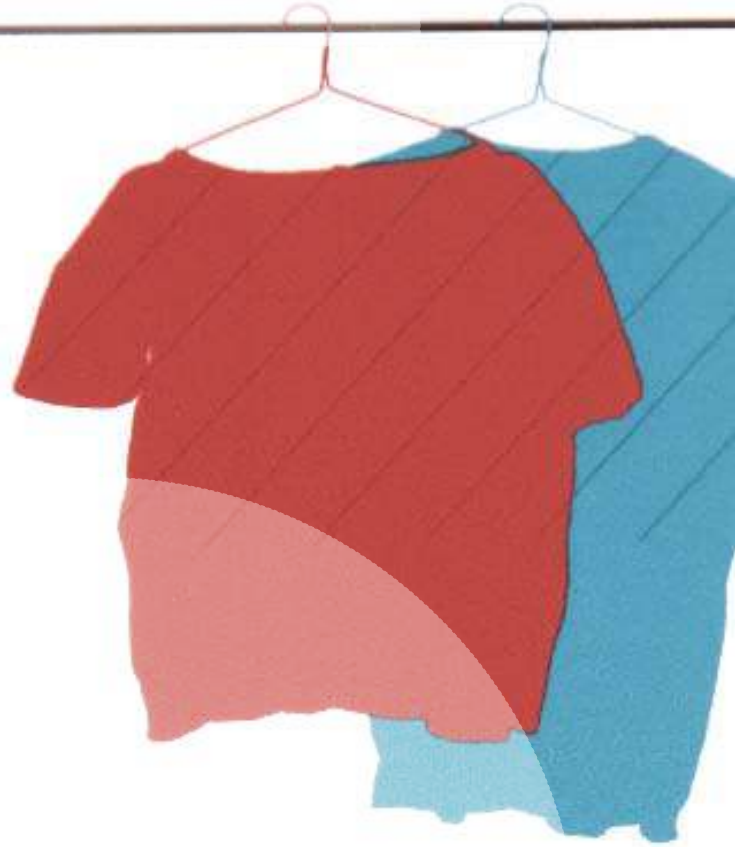


13



20



MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

31 SKILLS FOR CHANGE - (GETTING INVOLVED)

1 BOYS NIGHT
6PM-8PM

2 GIRLS NIGHT
6PM-8PM

3

7 ^{YAWN} FIRST MONDAY PLANNING NIGHT!
~~NIGHT!~~

8 BOYS NIGHT
6PM-8PM

9 GIRLS NIGHT
6PM-8PM

10

14 SEND OUT PRESS PACK
→

15 ^{JOE'S BIRTHDAY} BOYS NIGHT
6PM-8PM

16 GIRLS NIGHT
6PM-8PM

17

21 SEND OUT INVITES FOR LAUNCH

22 BOYS NIGHT
6PM-8PM

23 GIRLS NIGHT
6PM-8PM

24

28 NO CLUB TO-NIGHT

29 BOYS NIGHT
6PM-8PM

30 GIRLS NIGHT
6PM-8PM

31

SKILLS FOR CHANGE - (GETTING INVOLVED)



Section 05

Skills for change

- Introduction
- People skills
 - Getting organised
 - Case study: SpunOut.ie
 - Action plan for change
 - About groups
 - Case study: Club4U
- Points you should be aware of
 - Networking skills
 - Obstacles you may face
 - Dealing with people in authority
- Practical skills
 - Gathering information
 - Asking for information by phone, in person or by letter
- Making news
 - Why is making news so important?
 - Defining your scope – Purpose, message, edge & audience
 - Strategies for successful media communication
 - Preparing your tools
 - Press releases
 - Visuals
 - Media kit
 - Websites
 - Lobbying
 - Petitions
 - Demonstrations
 - Fundraising
- Case study: Twisted Reels Film Company.



Introduction

This section takes a look at some of the skills you may need to use to take action and make things happen. It aims to provide you with some guidelines on how you can become active, introduces some of the basic skills for effective participation and describes different political tactics.

Remember that only practice makes perfect and that some of the skills listed in the following pages may need help from people with experience in the various fields and/or professionals. If this is the case, approach the relevant person. Explain what you are doing and why as well as what you require and ask for their help. You'll be amazed at the amount of people who are willing to give up their time for a good cause. You'll also find loads of useful contact details for different groups and agencies at the back of this resource.

People skills

In this section, we will take a look at some of the skills needed to communicate effectively with others and to start taking action on an issue. We will look at getting organised by yourself, by joining a group or by starting your own group. We will then follow through by looking at some of the informal communication skills required and some of the obstacles you may face along the way. The next section will look at more practical skills.

Getting organised

You have decided you want to take action on a particular issue, so where do you go from here?

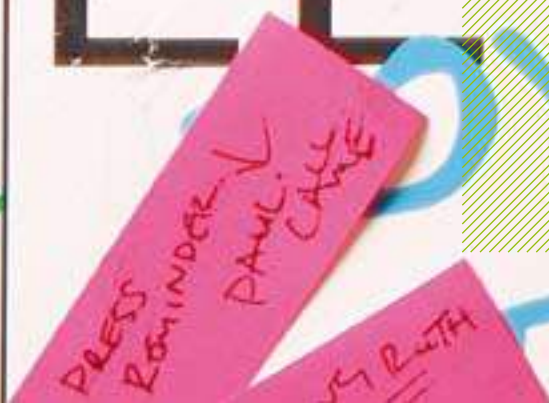
First of all you need to decide how you want to take action, by yourself or with others, within a group that already exists or by setting up your own group. The following are some pointers you may like to keep in mind, whatever road you decide to take.

By yourself:

As an individual, you can achieve a lot if you are prepared to do a lot of work and put in a lot of time and effort. However, remember that what you can take on is limited by your own time, finances and energy – don't try to change the world in one go. Start small and do a little at a time until you get used to the action.

Form a group and organise your own action:

Working as a member of a group is fun and has benefits for both you and the group. However, it can at times take longer to do things because of the need for democracy and agreement if the group is to work well together. But the positives really outweigh the negatives in most cases.



Case study: SpunOut.ie

This is an example of how to maximise the interaction with young people through the medium of a website which is designed to provide significant amounts of information relevant to young people and managed by young people.

Ireland's National Youth Website, SpunOut.ie is designed to inform, inspire and support young people. SpunOut.ie features over 2,000 pages of quality content. This includes the comprehensive help section and database of support organisations, youth information centres, health clinics, participation zone, online magazine, discussion boards and multi-media gallery. The website is updated daily and features the work of young writers, photographers and media makers from all over Ireland. Rather than producing a website that they thought 'the youth of today' would appreciate, SpunOut.ie decided it was time that young people had a chance to create their own media. Youth involvement is central to the success of SpunOut.ie and is fundamental to all their work. There are currently over 100 young people participating in the development of SpunOut.ie, with many more belonging to the vibrant SpunOut.ie community on the discussion boards.

“I came across SpunOut.ie as a regular web surfer and loved what I saw, I wanted to become involved with it and I am so glad that I have... It has given me a great sense of achievement to be part of a great team of people who are trying to do something different for the youth of Ireland...

When I first became involved in SpunOut.ie, I was going through an extremely difficult time. As a result I had no confidence, goals or hunger to achieve anything in life. It sounds cheesy, but being involved in SpunOut.ie has changed that. Now I wanna take over the world! Now not only do I have goals, but I plan to do everything to achieve them. Writing for SpunOut.ie has given me a platform to write and voice my opinion, which has given me the hunger to become a journalist. I now feel I can express my opinion confidently without feeling that people will dismiss it. All I can say is watch this space.”

Action plan for change

The following tips have been written by bunch of young people from SpunOut.ie to give advice to any other young person thinking of getting started in youth participation on how YOU can make a difference.³⁰

1. Be inspired

There are many ways in which you can make a difference. The key is to choose an issue that is important to you and to DO something about it, instead of just waiting for others to take action – you can make a difference!

2. Choose an issue

Once you've decided that you want to get serious about an issue (maybe the environment, discrimination or the lack of facilities for young people!) find out if local or national groups are already involved in tackling a similar issue. It is often useful to get some basic advice and support from other groups but don't give up on your own ideas.

3. Do your research

It is necessary to learn more about the problem before working on a solution. You can start by researching online and keeping an eye on news articles that relate to your topic. Because you are young, some people will challenge your facts. That's why it's important to write down all the bibliographical information about your sources and make sure your information is coming from an informed and reliable source.

4. Build a team

Tell others about the issue and ask them if they want to help. When others hear you explain why it is important to help, some of them will want to get involved. Remember, any successful team respects the rights and opinions of all its members.

5. Make a plan of action

This is one of the most exciting steps. Your action plan will act as your guide and compass when making a difference. How do you make a plan of action? By brainstorming! It is important to come up with creative, crazy and fun ideas and ways to make people aware of your issue. In your brainstorming session, it will be helpful to define your goal, develop a strategy, create a catchy message or logo, map out actions on a calendar and work out how you are going to promote your campaign or issue.

6. Take action and evaluate

Taking action is the key to turning your ideas into reality. Whatever you are planning, make sure you follow through on your ideas. It is actions that create real and lasting change in the world. Once you have acted, it is important to review and evaluate each action so that you can become more effective the next time. You may want to look at how closely your action went to plan, how well your action was advertised, what obstacles you met and how well every member worked as a team.

³⁰ SpunOut.ie, 2007

Tips for getting heard

- Be confident. You know what you want.
- Gather support from friends and family.
- Make a plan of action and stick to it.
- Know your facts and figures.
- Be persistent and don't give up.

Tips for getting your message out there

Remember the aim of your action is to publicise your issue and to make others aware of the difficulties and problems. The idea is to get as many people as possible on your side and start achieving success. Remember to be careful about how you say things as it's very important to use good judgment in how you communicate your message. Being overly aggressive or insulting will only work against you.

About groups

Most groups have some form of committee to organise activities, keep records of actions and plans and advise and update all other members. The committee holds its own meetings and also reports back to the general group. We will now look at the membership of committees and the roles they play. We will also briefly look at how meetings are organised and the paperwork involved.

The Committee

A committee is made up of at least four officer positions – Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Public Relations Officer (PRO). In addition, ordinary group members can also be voted to sit on a committee. The committee members are elected by the group – remember to vote for someone you think will be good at the job. A chairperson should be a good listener. A treasurer should be careful with money and a secretary should be good at taking minutes and writing them up – so don't just vote for your friends!

When voting people into these positions, a group of members proposes someone's name for a position and another member seconds it. Then all members vote either by a show of hands or a secret ballot. All officers are elected in the same way.

The duties of each officer position are as follows:

- Chairperson
 - Calls meetings
 - Decides on the agenda
 - Chairs (manages/facilitates) the meeting
 - Keeps order throughout the meeting
 - Makes sure that everyone gets their say
 - Makes sure that speakers are not interrupted
 - Ask people to vote in order to reach a decision if necessary
 - Makes sure that all topics on the agenda are covered within the time
 - Organises action to follow decisions
 - Closes the meeting

- **Secretary**

- Draws up the agenda together with the chairperson
- Notifies the members of the next meeting
- Keeps a record of the members present
- Reads out any apologies from those absent
- Reads out the minutes from the last meeting
- Reads out any correspondence received
- Keeps a written record of the main points of the meeting (minutes)
- Deals with all correspondence

- **Treasurer**

- Keeps the accounts (income and expenditure)
- Makes sure receipts are obtained for all monies spent
- Makes sure that two signatories (treasurer and one other as agreed) are on every cheque and the accounts
- Pays the bills when they are passed by the group
- Presents the accounts to the group

- **Public Relations Officer (PRO)**

- Organises publicity and public relation for the group events
- Writes press releases for the media (newspaper, radio, TV, newsletters etc)
- Arranges photographs for publicity
- Keeps a record of publicity (media file)
- Informs and meets guest speakers at events
- After an activity advises group to thank those who have helped
- Presents PRO's report to group

- **Individual Group Members**

- Attend meetings
- Give their opinions
- Listen to others
- Act on decisions taken

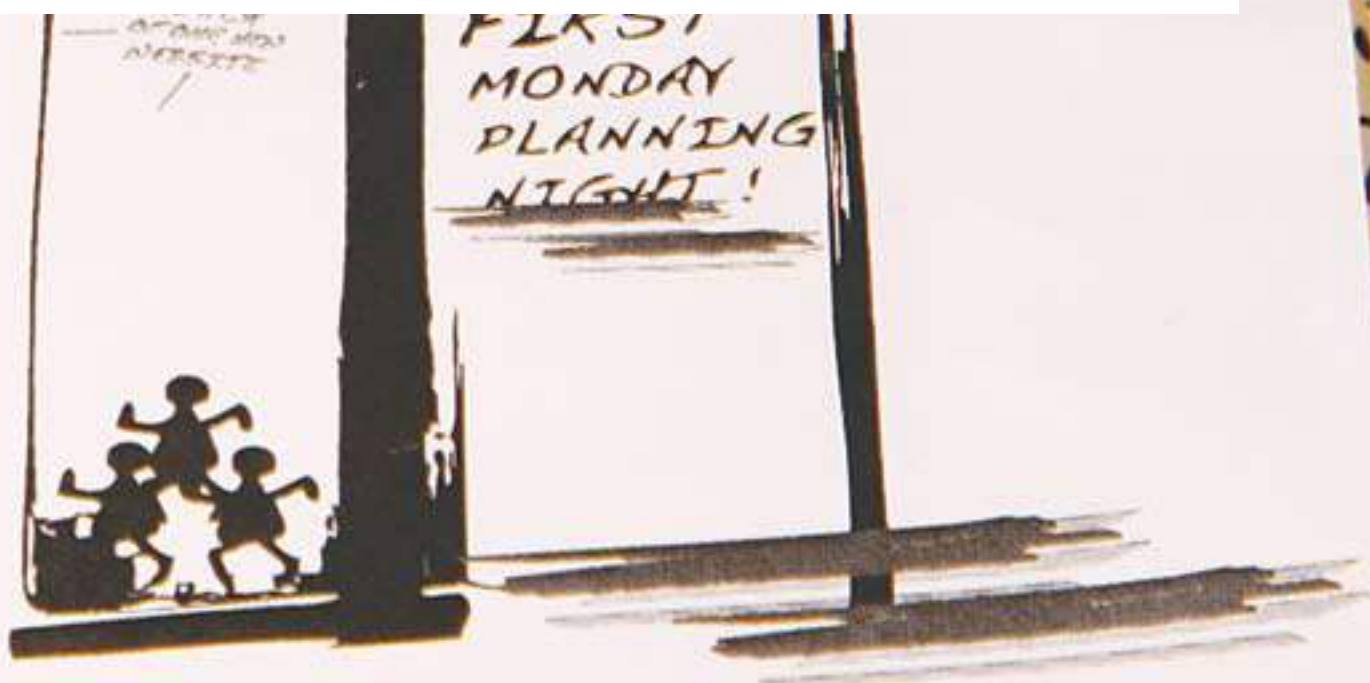
Formal meetings

The Chairperson and secretary decide on the agenda together. They then give members notice of the meeting in writing, at least 10 days beforehand, saying when and where the meeting will be and enclosing a copy of the draft agenda (this means that at the meeting others can add topics to discuss before the group agree on the final agenda).

So how does it work?

All meetings have a beginning, middle and an end.

- 1 At the beginning of a meeting, the chairperson declares the meeting open, asks if there are any changes to be made to the agenda and has it adopted (accepted) by the group. The secretary then reads the minutes. If the group agrees, then they are also adopted (someone proposes and another seconds) by the group and signed by the unfinished at the last meeting. The secretary then reads out any correspondence and moves onto the Treasurers and PRO's reports (if there are any).
- 2 In the middle the meeting moves on to the items on the agenda and these are discussed in relation to the time permitted.
- 3 At the end of the meeting, when the main issues on the agenda have been discussed, the last heading will always be Any Other Business (AOB). This allows members to bring up any issue they wish, which was not on the agenda. Finally, the Chairperson suggests a date, time and place for the next meeting.



A sample agenda

The agenda for your meeting will be different to those used by other groups. Therefore, you should compile one that suits your group.

However, it could look something like this:

Meeting of the Youth Action Group	
Date: 14/09/07	Time & Place : Community Hall 6-7p.m
1	Adoption of agenda
2	Minutes of last meeting
3	Matters arising from minutes
4	Correspondence
5	Treasurers report
6	PRO's report
7	Main topic for discussion
8	Next topic for discussion
9	Any other business (AOB)
10	Date & Venue of next meeting

Minutes

The secretary of the group will keep the minutes which are agreed by the group at each meeting and signed by the chairperson. The following are some guidelines which may help when you are starting to write minutes:

- The secretary should have a 'Minutes' book in which the official minutes are written.
- Standard minutes start with a list of those present and apologies received.
- Using the agenda as a structure for the minutes, just make a note of what was discussed in plain English under each section and what action was agreed.
- The important thing is to listen carefully to the discussion. Watch out for the main points/issues being raised and write down accurately the final decisions.
- Minutes normally end with a statement of time and place for the next meeting.



Case study: Club4U

This is an example of committee work in action with young people and adults from the local community working together.

Club4U was set up as a National Organisation during 2006. Local Club4U clubs arrange discos and events for teenagers run by senior students, parents and Community Gardaí. The Youth members are known as “Crew” and are easily identifiable at events in their Crew t-shirts. Without Crew Members, these social events would not take place! The biggest events organised by the Crew Members are the monthly discos that attract in the region of 2,000 young people. Club4U is run by local young people for young people. An adult committee made up of local adults and members of the local Gardaí were eager to get the club up and running and launch it in the Drimnagh area. Club4U recruited the youth members, also known as Crew Members through the St. John Bosco Youth Centre and the local secondary schools. The adult committee members and the crew members meet once a week to discuss their plans for the year and which social events they are going to host for their community and for the other Club4U local clubs.

The crew members learn to organise and run their own events by working as a team and are given the chance to see how other clubs run by visiting other Local Club4U social nights. The chance to form friendships and meet other young people from different clubs is a great reason to partake in Club4U. It provides young people with the opportunity to mix with other young people from their own community and from different communities around Ireland. Activities include club nights, table quiz nights, interclub discos, variety shows and the National Crew Member of the Year Awards. The National Crew Awards is the highlight of the Club4U calendar.

“I was delighted to win the award but the best thing of the day was not the award. It was making six great friends... Besides this, my other voluntary work includes The DYCE (Drimnagh Youth Café 4 Everyone) and the Leaders In Training programme, which are both in the St John Bosco Youth Centre, which has been a great place for me throughout my childhood... It has been great to be able to get involved with other teenagers and to participate in my local community. From my experiences with Club4U and volunteering in my local community I have developed a keen interest in youth advocacy work and youth participation!”

Points you should be aware of

Networking skills

Networking is about using your personal contacts to let people know what is happening and what you are working on. Many people network without realising it. The trick is to actively plan what you are doing, who you will speak to and what you are going to say. Networking can be used for anything and everything, from promoting your issue to letting people know you are looking for a job. You need to let people know what is happening in an interesting and non threatening way.

Obstacles you may face

Change is never easy as it involves people shedding ideas, feelings and actions they have held for quite a while. It means taking on new ideas which, like a new pair of shoes, may take a while to fit comfortably.

You may, therefore, meet with some obstacles along the way. We have singled out one area where you may experience some difficulty and have included some pointers on how to deal with it, i.e. dealing with people in authority.

Dealing with people in authority

Deciding to confront any issue and take action will bring you into contact and discussion with a wide range of people. This range can include traditional decision makers, such as your school principal, youth leaders, parents, local T.D.'s etc, as well as other professionals such as members of the Gardai, Community Welfare Officers etc.

Coming face to face with those in authority and the 'red tape' of bureaucracy can make some people feel anxious and this can lead to a lack confidence in themselves and in what they believe in.

Some practical points to remember:

1. Be familiar with your issue and all the information surrounding it.
2. Practice talking through the details out loud, so that if you are asked any difficult questions you can answer 'off the top of your head' without any hesitation.
3. If it is a pre-arranged meeting, prepare answers to questions you may be asked and remember to relate your answers specifically to the needs and area of work of the person you are talking to.
4. Explain your issue clearly (practice on your friends and family first) and ask questions if you need clarification on a point made - never presume.
5. If you can't get your point across or people won't listen to you, don't shout, get annoyed or get hassled. Keep calm and restate your points clearly....eventually someone will listen!!

Practical skills

Gathering information

You have decided that you want to take action on a particular issue either by yourself or with a group or by joining a group. You now need to go about gathering information and passing it on to others.

You have decided that you want to take action on a particular issue either by yourself or with a group or by joining a group. You now need to go about gathering information and passing it on to others.

Using the six questions “WHAT, WHY, WHERE, WHEN, WHO & HOW” you can get the ball rolling. You need to ask yourselves:

WHAT - information do you require? Do you need to start at the very beginning or do you need to build on the information you have to gain a better understanding and enable you to put your case across better? Do you need examples and case studies to back up your research?

WHY - do you need the information? This will have a bearing on what information you gather and the way you go about it. Do you need it for yourselves or to convince others of your case?

WHERE - will you get the information and who will be able to help you? There are many places to get information. In recent years the internet is the most commonly used method and it a good place to start. The local library is also useful. People who have expertise in certain areas that you require information will, in most cases, be willing to give advice and help when you explain what you require the information for. Many organisations have their own resource centres which can be of great help to you. Don't forget the local authorities, local doctors, nurses, TD's, councillors, members of the county boards etc.

WHEN - will you gather the information? Opening times of the library, organisations, resource centres, times of meetings with people who can help.

WHO - will gather the information and who will you target to help? It is a good idea to record, in writing, which person is going to do which job and make sure that everyone agrees on what is to be done and the type of information required.

HOW - will you get the information and how will you put it to effect? You can gather information by reading up on the various issues, talking to people in person or over the phone, writing and requesting details etc. You can put the information into effect and across to others in writing, over the phone, by using posters, leaflets, flyers, verbally at meetings, by lobbying or by petitioning people.

All the above points are interlinked and overlapping, but once the group is clear about its aim, why the information is required and what is required, everything should fall into place. It can be tough going at first, but remember to learn by your mistakes and keep going.

In the following pages, we will look at some pointers worth remembering when gathering information by telephone, letter and in person. We will then move on and look at some hints and suggestions for putting this information across to others.

Asking for information by phone, in person or by letter

- Work out the questions you need to ask before you make contact.
- If possible, try to get the name of the person you need to make contact with.
- When you do make contact, ensure that your communication, whether oral or written, is clear, concise accurate and polite.
- Keep a record of the information gathered and the details of the person/s that provided it.
- Think of what your group can do for the person who is giving you the information and offer to help in the future, if you have the time and resources to do so.
- Thank the person/s who have helped you. You may wish to send a brief thank-you note and keep the person/s advised of your activities.
- Be sure to share the information gathered with the other group members.

Making news!

Why is making news so important?

- It lets other people know what is going on (in your school, job, youth club and community).
- It puts pressure on decision makers to take action, to listen to your voice and to allow you to participate.
- It helps create support for your group/issue/campaign.

Defining your scope³¹

Your purpose:

In order to help you maintain a strong and clear focus throughout your media campaign, it is important that you write down the details of your purpose.

1. What is the final outcome you hope to achieve by gaining publicity?
2. Why do you want to reach your target audience?

E.g.: "My purpose is to attract enough people who might buy my band's new CD, to cover the cost of the launch event."

Your message

You need to be clear about your message. Think carefully about what it is you want to say. Don't be sidetracked by other issues. Keep it short and sweet. A muddled message is a muted message!

E.g.: The Spinning Misfits Youth Band invite you to come to the launch of our new CD called.....at.....on

Sometimes your message will contain all the information you need to pass on to media but there could be an important aspect that is not covered in your message. Deciding on your message can help you to identify your 'newsworthy edge'!

³¹ Adapted from *Generating the News, A Young Person's Guide to Getting Media Attention*, 4th Edition, 2005, Dept of Communities, Office for Youth. Pg 5

Your newsworthy edge

News has four key elements:

1. News is new. It must be immediate. It's either a new story or a new angle on a current story.
2. News is relevant. It must be interesting to a large number of people.
3. News is usually about people.
4. News is about conflict.

Identifying your newsworthy edge helps you to sell your story to the media and makes it easy to work out who you need to aim your message at to achieve your purpose.

Your audience

Your audience is made up of the types of people you want your message to reach. They could be other young people, specific organisations, community groups or government.

Ask yourself a few simple questions:

1. Who would be interested in my message?
2. Who needs to hear my message in order for me to achieve my purpose?
3. What age are they?
4. Where are they located? (local, regional, national)
5. What is their cultural background?

Strategies for successful media communication³²

To get the attention of a media professional, you first have to make sure that he or she actually receives the information you want to share.

To ensure your information is received by the appropriate person, contact the print or broadcasting organisation by phone, fax or email and ask for the contact details of the people producing the section or programme you want to target.

Build relationships

Try to establish a working relationship with individuals in each organisation and ask each person if you can contact them in the future.

Take note of deadlines

Find out the deadlines of the media organisation. Different organisations will have different deadlines so you have to be well prepared. Some broadcast programmes are produced weeks and sometimes months in advance, so you should make contact sooner rather than later and ask when they will require your information. The more time you give them, the better.

Use email wisely

If you have access to the internet you could use your existing email address or create one that reflects your issue (e.g. www.skatecomp@hotmail.com) You can choose to send your media release as an attachment or as part of your main message. When sending it as an attachment make sure that it is saved in .rtf format so that it can be read by different types of computers (Apple and PC). Alternatively, just copy and paste your release into the body of your email message. It is important to remember that, just like traditional mail, while your message may reach the destination account quite quickly, there is no guarantee that the recipient will read it or respond in a timely manner.

³² Generating the News, A Young Person's Guide to Getting Media Attention, 4th Edition, 2005, Dept of Communities, Office for Youth. Pg 20

Preparing your tools

The media can act as a powerful influence over our behaviour, attitudes, thoughts and perceptions. Some of the most frequently used methods of providing information to the media include press releases, visuals, media kits and websites.

Press Releases

A press release is a clear and concise summary of your story. Its purpose is to attract a journalist's attention to your issue. The media look for stories and issues that will excite and interest their audience.

- Start with attention grabbing headline which sums up your story's most important point
- Next jot down who, what, when, where, why and how of your issue or event and try to include this information in your first 2 sentences.
- The information that forms the body of your press release should follow in descending order of importance.

Example:

The Young Meadowlands Dance Group (**who?**) said that it is important to improve and enhance people's understanding of youth culture (**what?**) today (**when?**) at their Community centre in Meadowlands (**where?**) because increased understanding will minimise conflict between young people and the local community (**why?**). They released a statement and invited local media to attend their rehearsal for a photo opportunity (**how?**).

It is good practice to:

- Include at least two points of telephone contact and your email address;
- Double check your contact details for clarity and accuracy;
- Make sure you spell out all names and acronyms, e.g. MYAG (Muddlehill Youth Action Group);
- Avoid using jargon;
- Make sure your media release contains no spelling mistakes;
- Include facts and figures that strengthen your message;
- Include snappy quotes from the people involved.

Visuals

One way of encouraging the media to attend your event or cover your story is by providing them with a good opportunity for photographs to be taken and interesting footage to be recorded. When it comes to the media, pictures really do speak a thousand words. You can invite the media to take photographs and footage or provide them with your own. You'll find that clear, simple, colourful and striking photographs will enhance the likelihood of your story going to print. Try to frame your photographs tightly and include a caption or short description. Make sure you provide a list of full names and ages. The Privacy Act requires you to obtain the written permission of any people appearing in your photographs.

Television scripts are written to go with pictures and rely heavily on visuals to keep an audience entertained. If the pictures aren't there, the story won't go to air. If you have the facilities you could capture some of your own images on video and provide them to the station as 'fill' or library footage for use in your story.

If you are inviting the media to an event, try to arrange an interesting visual activity or location that will allow for 'good footage'. You may want to organise a formal photo opportunity for the media. Include the time, place and description of what will be happening in your media alert. description of what will be happening in your media alert.

Media kits

There are a number of communication tools you can put together to create your media kit and make sure your issue grabs attention. Media kits usually contain a media release and one or more of the following:

- **Fact sheets** that contain information about the different aspects of your issue, including:
 - The history or background of the issue, group or event;
 - An overview of the issue, its effects and elements of conflict;
 - Factual ideas and solutions - lists of useful and up to date statistical information;
 - Short case studies or 'human element' stories;
 - Quotes from prominent supporters and professionals;
- **A list of events** related to your issue;
- **A list of spokespeople** available to talk with the media about your issue.

Websites

Websites are places in cyberspace where you have the power to increase public awareness of an idea, event, organisation or issue online. If you have time and access to the technology, you can build your own website.

- Unless you are a web designer, it's a good idea to begin by thinking small and creating a site that meets your immediate needs.
- There are a number of free do-it-yourself web hosting services that will provide you with up to 20 Megabytes (20MB) of free space, templates to help with site design along with tips, tools and resources to help with site construction. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but it's a good place to start:
 - Free WebSpace Inc. @ www.fws1.com
 - GeoCities @ <http://geocities.yahoo.com>
 - Free servers @ www.freeservers.com
 - Angel. re @ <http://angel.re.lycos.com>

To compensate for the hosting costs incurred with your free website, these services may display banner ads, popup advertising and send 'special offers' to your email account. If you are aiming for something bigger and better then you could purchase your own domain name. This is like owning your own piece of cyber-real estate rather than renting someone else's. There are a number of steps involved when purchasing a domain name (e.g. www.mysite.org) and building your website from scratch.

Before publishing your website, ask yourself the following questions:

- Does your site load quickly?
- Do all the links and images work?
- Is your content clear, concise and free of spelling errors?
- Does your site react and expand upon your message?
- Are your contact details correct and easy to locate?
- Now you can use other media (print, radio, television) to promote your web address. Make sure you include your website address, commonly known as a URL, on all of your media releases and provide a link to the site in any emails you send.

Lobbying

Lobbying is the process of informing and facilitating change. It is talking face-to-face with decision makers about issues and influencing decisions about actions to be taken by decision makers. Lobbying gets decision makers to state where they stand on particular issues.

Who and where you can lobby

- Councillors, politicians, senators, members of boards of directors, members of local business groups, youth organisations, school principals, school staff, doctors, members of the various churches, public bodies, anyone in a decision making capacity connected with your issue.
- The above can be lobbied in council offices, at meetings, in town halls, at clinics, party headquarters, Dail Eireann, the Seanad, in education offices; youth orientated offices etc, wherever the relevant person happens to be at a convenient time.

Points to remember about lobbying

1. Know who is meeting you and where you are to meet – share this information with other members of your group.
2. Prepare and plan in good time. If the opportunity to lobby arises unexpectedly - use it to good effect.
3. Know who the opposition is and what the arguments are – Have counter arguments from your point of view.
4. Connect lobbying with other aspects of your campaign and hand in a petition, write a letter for support or plan an activity for the same time. Remember to publicise your lobby if this will help your cause.
5. Know about the political process and the rules.
6. Keep a record of the key points made at the meeting.
7. Follow up by sending a thank you letter summarising what was said.
8. Inform your members of the results of the meeting. Keep going with the campaign and if possible release a press statement on the results of the meeting.

Petitions

A petition is a collection of signatures submitted to someone in authority in connection with a specific issue. It is a request for change or action. Petitions can be used to make the public aware of an issue and are a means of demonstrating public concern over certain problems.

Do's

- Decide the content and be clear about who is being petitioned (age group, gender etc) and where you want to petition (area).
- Decide who is going to carry out the petitioning, that is, who is going to collect the signatures who will collect the forms and who will deliver the completed data.
- Have a prepared statement of what the petition is about for each of those collecting signatures and ensure the collectors have all the necessary details and information.
- Set a limit for the collection, ensuring you have enough time to collect the completed forms and deliver them to the destination
- When laying out the petition ensure you have at least three columns – name, address, signatures (all written in BLOCK CAPITALS)

Consider

- Decide whether it is the number of people who sign or the type of people who sign that are most important.
- Check if people who seem to be most affected by the problem sign the petition. If not, why not? You may have to reconsider the area you are collecting in, times of collection etc. Check whether or not you need permission.
- Start the petition by signing yourself.

What to do after the signatures have been collected

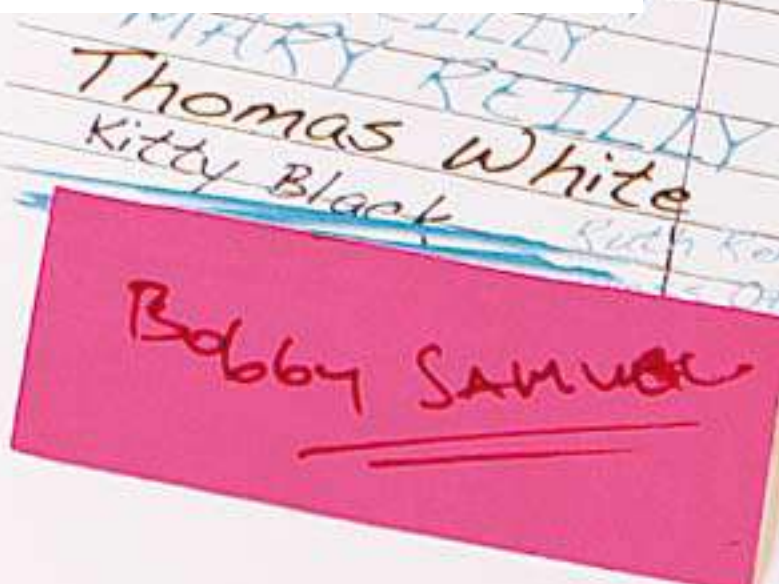
- Decide if you have got what you wanted.
- Check for any joke signatures and people who have signed twice.
- Take a photocopy for your records and in case the originals get lost or mislaid.
- Present the petition to the relevant people/organisation (s).
- Accompany the presentation with a press release to local papers and radio stations. Arrange for additional media coverage in the form of photography, reporters, radio interviews etc.
- Lobby the petitioned people/organisations for a response by letter and/or telephone.
- Review what worked and what was did not work.
- Keep up the other tactics and campaigns until the issue is resolved.

Sample petition

Meadow Lands Youth Club

We the undersigned call for the Local Council to actively involve young people in the consultation process for the newly proposed community resource centre.

NAME	SIGNATURES	ADDRESS
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
ETC		



Demonstrations

Demonstrations can take many different forms and can be very imaginative and effective. They can be old-style marches with banners or newer style demonstrations such as street performances (drama, music, mime). The main thing is that they must illustrate your issue (be it youth unemployment, lack of appropriate transport etc).

Pointers

- Decide on the type of demonstration – big or small.
- Smaller demonstrations are quick and easier to organise and may be more effective at local level.
- Big demonstrations tend to be organised around issues which concern people at national level.
- When picking the date, keep in mind the time needed to get organised and to rally support. Also, make sure you try to pick a date that does not clash with any major events (Example: All Ireland Rugby Final).
- Plan the demonstration in detail from the assembly and start, right through to the end and everyone leaving (times, places, speakers, refreshments, crowd control, first aid, banners, permission etc).
- When deciding on the time and place, take into account where and what will have the most effect. Good timing is all important in terms of when people can organise to meet, when the public will see you and take part and when it is best to target officials and decision makers

Public demonstrations and the law

There are certain restrictions placed by the law for example the Public Order Bill. You may have to obtain permission from the Gardaí and Local Authorities both of whom must have advance notice.

Fundraising

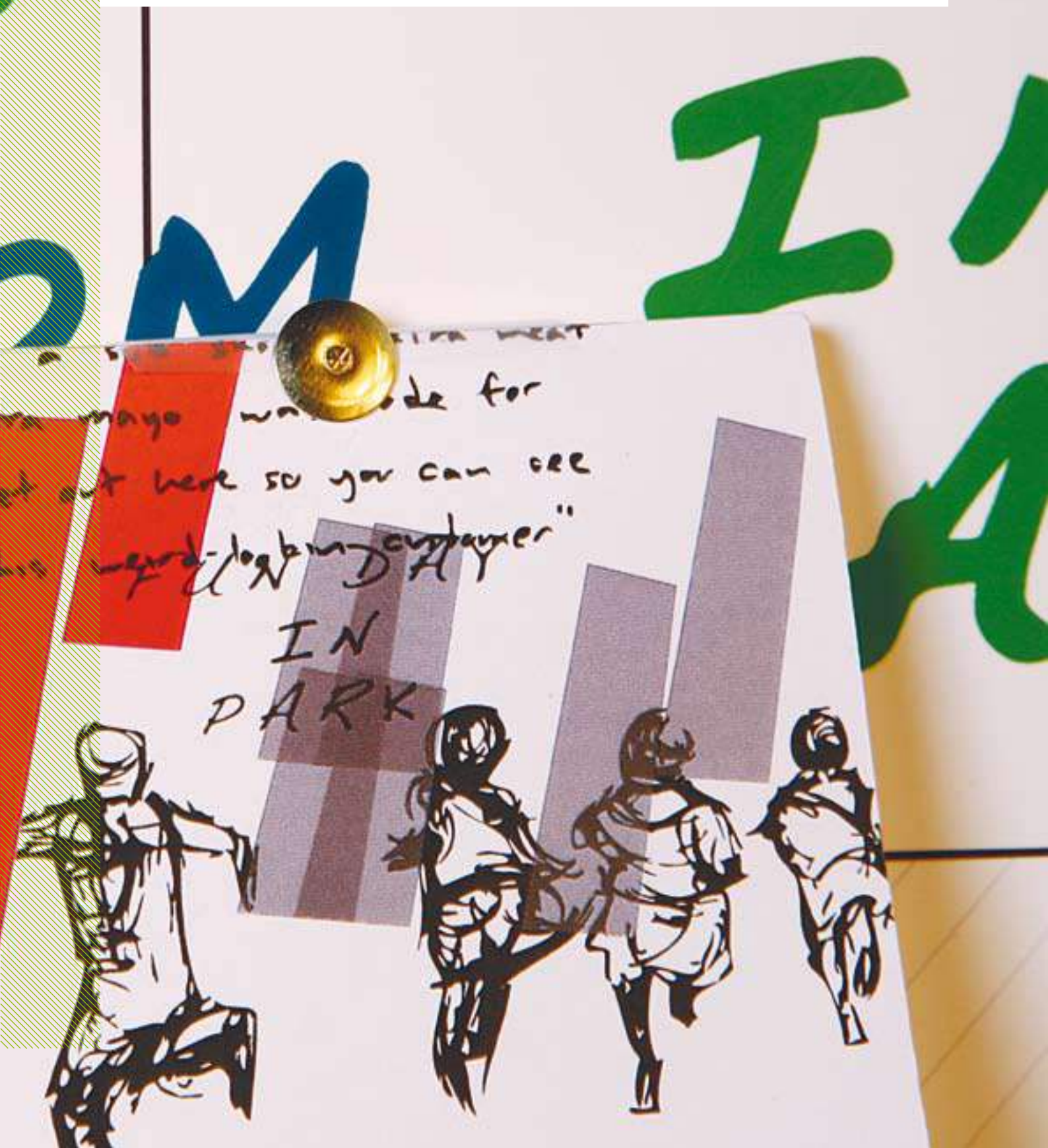
Planned campaigns and actions involve money. There are different ways of raising money such as cake sales, jumble sales, sponsored events such as walks, swims etc, social events, stunts, receiving donations from firms, organisations and grants from the Local Authorities, Government and EU. No matter what type of fundraising you decide to do, you must remember to plan. The following pointers may be of some help to you:

Clarify with the group

- Why you need the money (those who donate/sponsor will want to know the full details).
- How much money will be required? Is it a short term target and are you being realistic?
- Form a sub-group to organise the fundraising. Remember it takes time and, if possible, seek advice from experienced people in other groups (try local trusts which raise money regularly).
- If you are holding an event or activity plan and prepare carefully. Cost the event, choose the date, time and venues. Let people know by whatever means you think most suitable. Recruit helpers and officials and most importantly of all **MAKE SURE YOU ARE INSURED** (this goes for every event/meeting not just fundraising ones).

Fundraiser follow-up

- Thank everyone who helped out on the day and who donated money.
- Publicise how much you raised and who donated/sponsored the event and any future actions.
- Have a review meeting and congratulate the group on the successes.
- Draw up a list of what went well and what didn't.
- Spend the money on what it was raised for ensuring that records are kept and sponsors who donated are being kept up to date on what is happening.





Case study: Twisted Reels Film Club - The Model Arts and Niland Gallery Sligo

This is an example of youth participation through the medium of film and also making an art gallery interesting and accessible.

“Twisted Reels” film club (formerly Red Rainbow) is a film club for young people, run by young people. Since its inception in 2004, the club hosts regular screenings at the Model Arts and Niland Gallery, Sligo. Three young people from Sligo with a passion for alternative film formed the Twisted Reels (TR) Film Club. The young people were mentored and encouraged by members of Sligo Film Society, an adult run club, which was already up and running at the Model. One member of Sligo Film Society is still a committee member of the TR film club.

When starting the club the young people decided that it would be a good idea to recruit two students from each school in Sligo town to join their committee. The committee members in each school were responsible for spreading the word and publicising the club’s launch of each new season and the fortnightly screenings thereafter. The club has two seasons per year, autumn and spring. The committee, whose average age is 16, meet about eight times before and during the season to organise all that needs to be done. They meet after school for about an hour and a half at the Model. Per annum, the club screens twelve films on a full size cinema screen in the Black Box at the Model. The films are on 35mm and are hired from access CINEMA Dublin. A projectionist is also hired by the club.

It is important to mention that these movies are not just the latest blockbusters. Twisted Reels takes great pride in showcasing independent or lesser known cinema to the youth of Sligo, often screening critically acclaimed and foreign language films. The goal is to provide young people in the area with the opportunity to see films on a big screen that they may not otherwise have been aware of, often exposing and introducing them to different cultures or ideas through these films.

The most important aspect of the club is that young people are responsible for all aspects of running it successfully, and must look after all aspects of its maintenance.

The relationship between youth and adult committee members is very relaxed. If the group need advice on something, for example, marketing, the Model is there to show them different options. However, the group have the last word. It’s their club! At this stage, the group know what needs to be done. They might need a little reminding from the adult members from time to time but that’s normal too. The meetings are formal with minutes, agenda, updates, treasurer report, AOB and actions for the week but there is lots of chat in between. It works for the group. They know what work has to be done in order for their club to be a success but they also catch up on the gossip in each school while doing so.

“It is my belief that film is a valuable art form, in that it is highly visual and accessible, and of course entertaining, and so very popular indeed. Many of our chosen films raise the important issues inherent in today’s society, and are often starkly thought provoking. I feel it’s vital the club continues and that we expand the number and range of films available, to give Sligo’s young people a sense of involvement, and an opportunity to take part in a worthwhile and constructive activity in their spare time.”

Alan - Treasurer Twisted Reels Film Club.



SATURDAY

5

DEMONSTRATION



MEET IN TOWN

GUN SHARP

12

GIVE PETITION
GOVERNMENT

1