

Quick Reads

Short, sharp shots of entertainment

A guide to planning events

Ideas and publicity

The best events will go unnoticed if you don't tell people about them!

- Quick Reads produce free promotional material that can be used to promote events:
 - Use the posters to promote your activity;
 - Hand out free goody bags; and
 - Use the individual items to create vibrant displays or to give away as prizes in competitions
- Raise awareness through local newspapers, radio and community newsletters
- Use local shops/libraries/GP surgeries/post offices to display posters of the events
- Ask local schools if they would distribute Quick Reads to parents through the children, or if they would like to run a Family Learning Breakfast using Quick Reads. Schools are often keen to help their pupils' development through family learning and parental involvement; visit www.quickreads.org.uk/resources for more information on how to get them involved.
- Create your own event material to tie-in with the national publicity by visiting the Quick Reads branding suite at www.quickreads.org.uk.
- Look for opportunities to spread the word about your plans. You could speak at other local meetings or social events, or distribute flyers or bulletins to playgroups, community centres, libraries, workplaces, churches or businesses.
- If you want a VIP guest to attend your event, identify a local personality or MP and send them a letter of invitation. Remember to be clear about what you want them to do, for example, to open the event or present a prize.

- If you hold an event using Quick Reads, we'd love to know how it went. Fill out our feedback form at www.quickreads.org.uk for the opportunity to receive a set of free books.

Top tips for success

Planning

Think about...

- What you want to achieve, what would you like the outcomes to be
- Who is likely to attend your event and how will you attract them
- Setting a date and time when your audience will most likely be available
- Planning a timeline of activity and ensuring you stick to deadlines
- Involving colleagues and sharing the responsibilities, or working with a partner organisation with mutual aims and objectives
- How you will encourage feedback and how you will evaluate whether it was successful

The ingredients of a successful event are energy, commitment and good forward planning.

Drum up some enthusiasm!

Think about...

- Who your target audience will be and what they enjoy doing
- How much support material you will need
- Consider developing an email bulletin, newsletters or flyers to advertise your activities and circulate them actively
- Use local meetings or events as a means of promotion. Community groups are often keen for new initiatives and ideas to engage the local community.

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- Your workplace may also be interested in new ideas that can be promoted to staff. Talk to your HR department to see if they would be keen to support your ideas for Quick Reads 2008
- Make use of the media
- Could you involve a local celebrity?
- Use case studies. Individual stories that people can relate to are a great way of getting people involved. You could use quotes from current staff or the Quick Reads team may be able to provide you with quotes from people who read the books previously

Location

Think about...

- The cost of venues
- How much space you will need
- Where people would feel most comfortable
- Somewhere easy to find, close to rail or bus facilities
- Proper access and facilities for disabled people
- Car parking
- Good facilities so that people feel relaxed and enjoy their visit
- Refreshments

The event day

Think about...

Making it fun so people want to join in:

- Create attractive displays using banners, balloons, music, etc.
- Use the Quick Reads posters to identify your event as a Quick Reads event and to encourage people to come
- Make it children friendly with entertainment and activities

- Make sure someone is available to welcome people and answer enquiries
- Remember signs or maps for toilets, refreshments, and activity areas
- Have hands-on taster sessions for people to try out what you have on offer. Make the sessions interactive so that people enjoy trying something new
- Make it stand out – consider local bands, a town crier, theatre groups and entertainers

Evaluating the outcome

Evaluation helps an organiser assess the success of their event. This will provide evidence that the project has performed well and give you ideas and tips that can be shared with colleagues and used in the planning of future events.

You could identify certain elements from your activity to evaluate:

- How many people took part?
- Age, gender, ethnicity, disability, employment status, marital status of participants
- How much media attention and press coverage was gained?
- Number of leaflets distributed/taken away/handed in
- Number of telephone calls/enquiries generated
- You can use the information you have gathered to provide feedback to key players, who may be able to offer you increased funding or other support for your work.

How you can help us evaluate

Please tell us about your event. This information will help us determine how many events are being organised, how much publicity material is being distributed and how many people are being reached. You can email us at quickreads@niace.org.uk. Your feedback will help others to plan events in future so please tell us what worked or didn't work for you.