



MEDIA INFLUENCE ON NIGHTLIFE

MEDIA GUIDELINES ON NIGHTLIFE

FOR PUBLIC HEALTH WORKERS

Ever since the printing press came into operation, media mass production has been subject to societal debate with the pivotal question focusing on how mass media influence social behaviour. Also in nightlife, the arena for experimental youth behaviour, the media have an equivocal impact. In the hedonistic nightlife atmosphere very broad media channels are successfully applied for commercial gain, but often at the expense of general public health.

Public health workers often refrain from media use because they fear losing the battle. We believe, however, that the mediatised society offers exciting possibilities for counteraction, strengthening our health improvement efforts. We propose general guidelines for miscellaneous media use for the purpose of health promotion in nightlife.

The guidelines are clustered around two central media practices:

- how to best engage in the news making process
- how to better target your audience.



WHEN ENGAGING IN MASS MEDIA:

1. **Think about the possible policy outcomes for complicated societal issues. Make a clear priority in objectives, distinguishing on site measures and public debate.**

Example: Drink Driving policy:

- Yanovitzky, I. (2002). "Effects of news coverage on policy attention and actions - A closer look into the media-policy connection." *Communication Research* 29(4): 422-451.

Example: Pill Testing

- Australian Government (2005). Drug testing kits: detailed discussion paper on social, health and legal issues. Australia: Department of health and ageing. <http://www.drugchecking.de/pdf/On-site%20ecstasy%20pill%20testing.pdf>
- Benschop, A., Rabes, M. and Korf, J. D. (2002), *Pill testing, ecstasy and prevention: a scientific evaluation in three European cities*, Rozenberg Publishers, Amsterdam.

2. **Anticipate, or even include other points of view in your communication. Scientific facts often meet with common sense or pragmatism in societal debate: bring evidence base in balance with opinion base. These perspectives are at least as important for the establishment or rejection of a policy measure.**

Reference: Hinchcliff, R., S. Chapman, et al. (2006).

"Media framing of graduated licensing policy debates." *Accident Analysis and Prevention* 42(4): 1283-1287.

Reference: Yanovitzky, I. (2002). "Effect of news coverage on the prevalence of drunk-driving behavior: Evidence from a longitudinal study." *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 63(3): 342-351.

3. **Keep a public health point of view in mind, besides the security or control point of view. Regard the social norms mechanism: emphasizing undesired behaviour leads to a misperception that such behaviour is predominant.**

Example: good practices and state of the art:
<http://www.socialnormsforum.eu/index.html>

4. **Make a good press release that you can easily summarize**

- A press release is short (one page), to the point and contains one key message. If needed, air more than one press release.
- Keep your press release simple: no excessive use of adjectives, fancy language, jargon or specialized technical terms and stick to a simple layout.
- Answer at least three of the classic five W's (who, what, when, where and why) in the headline.
- If possible use quotes and statistics.
- Provide essential information on the issuing organisation and add contact information.
- Include links for additional tools and resources: e.g. medical professionals, government officials, advocacy groups and good practices of nightlife professionals.
 - Helplines
 - self-screening tools
- Have at hand an overview on your expertise and maybe a short biography.
- Promote the release online and follow it up. Traditional media increasingly pick up online stories (social media) and disperse it on a wider scale.
- Pitfalls: Most pitfalls are to be learnt en route, however some references:
 - Coomber, R., C. Morris, et al. (2000). "How the media do drugs: quality control and the reporting of drug issues in the UK print media." *International Journal of Drug Policy* 11(3): 217-225.
 - Orcutt, J. D. and J. B. Turner (1993). "Shocking numbers and graphic accounts - Quantified images of drug problems in the print media." *Social Problems* 40(2): 190-206.

References:

http://www.ehow.com/how_8793_write-proper-press-release.html

<http://www.howipromotemywebsite.com/how-to-write-a-press-release.html>

<http://www.press-release-writing.com/10-essential-tips-for-writing-press-releases/>

<http://www.tamingthebeast.net/articles3/press-release-tips.htm>

http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/how_tos/cyw_64_press_release.pdf

<http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Press-Release>

5. **Appoint an institution spokesperson, credible in the eyes of nightlife youth, accessible for local and national media players.**
Example: Doing Drugs with Paul Dillon:
<http://www2b.abc.net.au/triplej/morning/drugsarchive/>
6. **Keep your internet-distributed texts short and understandable.**
Example: <http://www.drugscope-dworld.org.uk/wip/24/facts.htm#>
7. **Catch on new evolutions, in order to be on the forefront with messages and not outdated. Be informed on new party trends.**

Example: online shops
<http://azarius.net/>

Example: botellons
<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/spain/091106/spaniards-fight-their-right-to-par-tay>

Example: table surfing

8. **Anticipate journalists looking for spectacular information that might bring your nightlife scene partner in trouble.**
9. **Ask for review before publication. The phrase you did not want to mention, will probably be exactly the one to be quoted, in bold.**

WHEN TARGETING PARTY PEOPLE:

1. **Explore, try and understand the communication channels that nightlife youth use: Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, MySpace, ...**
Example: Trend watchers are certainly taking the lead here. Palmaerts, T. (2010). Trends in dating and nightlife. Club Health: Media Influence on Nightlife. Brussels.
2. **Use the communication channels and networks that nightlife youth uses.**
Example: Nightlife magazines might give good advertising deals for harm reduction and prevention initiatives.
 Belgian article (Dutch) on harm reduction in nightlife in ID&T's Release magazine: <http://www.partywise.be/docs/PARTYWISE%2010.indd.pdf>
Example: Including information on alcohol and drugs in more global sites on going out
http://www.ibiza-spotlight.com/night/tips_i.htm#drugs
<http://www.thesite.org/drinkanddrugs>



3. **Be present in online communities sharing similar likes and dislikes. Use researched profiling to target specific communities with tailored prevention and harm reduction messages.**
Example: Interesting software packages and research projects exist to automatically scan internet content and find risk behaviour groups: AMiCA <http://lt3.hogent.be/en/projects/amica/>
Example: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/the-rise-of-the-teetotal-generation-2307539.html>
Reference: D'Silva, M. U., N. G. Harrington, et al. (2001). "Drug use prevention for the high sensation seeker: The role of alternative activities." *Substance Use & Misuse* 36(3): 373-385.
Reference: Klein, J. D., J. D. Brown, et al. (1993). "Adolescents Risky Behavior and Mass-Media Use." *Pediatrics* 92(1): 24-31.
4. **Use social network services to spread your messages on a peer-to-peer basis**
Example: Eve and Rave on Facebook:
<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=78366195643>



5. Make your product attractive. Learn from industry marketing, but always keep in mind the image you want to proclaim.

Example: The partywise coke campaign targets clubbers and tries to be attractive by using electronic music on their website and introduces famous radio hosts to tell stories on friends on coke and make their website very dynamic. <http://www.partywise.be/coke/index.html>

6. Give prevention messages that are convincing for the nightlife youth. Don't risk the credibility of your nightlife prevention concept by issuing moralistic messages not touching ground with the target group.

Reference: Sumnall, H., M. A. Bellis, et al. (2010). "A choice between fun or health? Relationships between nightlife substance use, happiness, and mental well-being." *Journal of Substance Use* 15(2): 89-104.

7. Try to involve the nightlife crew and crowd, implying early adopters and trendsetters.

Example: Ask for party pictures to include on the prevention campaign website in a contest for funniest party picture.

http://www.partywise.be/pf_index.asp (dutch).

Example: Having a DJ-contest to participate in the City Parade which is organized in your city.

Example: Game on nightlife

http://www.goforzero.be/_nl/index.php#/home

Example: Peer support organisations

http://www.ryd.eu/heroes/actions_view.php?id=87

8. Think about how you can reach nightlife youth before, while and after they go out. Applications on smart phones are a promising practice.

Example: Give some tips on the websites of the organisers of events, of the clubs. Information on ear damage on the website of a big rock festival in Belgium <http://www.rockwerchter.be/en/practicalInfo/index.aspx?id=433>

Example: In the clubs or at the events you can introduce a peer support stand with information, games etc.: <http://www.europeannightwithoutaccident.eu/>

Example: Twitter can be used while going out to give prevention information or can be used when emergencies are happening.

<http://twitter.com/#!/drugfreeil>

<http://www.informationweek.com/news/healthcare/mobile-wireless/231002905>

Example: After going out: after a big event drivers are going home tired and possibly intoxicated. This project introduces pit stops: http://www.ryd.eu/heroes/actions_view.php?id=42

Example: Dour Festival 2011 application provides real time festival info, but could be deployed for prevention messages, and real time crowd control. <http://itunes.apple.com/be/app/dour/id380372376?mt=8#>

Example: Police spotter is a mobile application for spotting of alcohol controls, speed limit controls, traffic jams, etc. However, the same channel could be deployed for real time warnings and preventive messages: <http://www.policespotter.com/>

Example: Working digitally/online with groups at risk: The Incluso Project manual gives an overview of interesting and often free online tools to use. <http://www.incluso.org/manual>.



9. News topics on nightlife related to drugs and alcohol are an excellent opportunity to issue a tailor made message.

Example: A famous person uses coke while going out. Press is tempted to generalize and enlarge. Coke campaign launches press release immediately. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/sport/2009/may/09/tom-boonen-quick-step-positive-cocaine>

CONTACT CLUB HEALTH AND MEDIA INFLUENCE:

johan.jongbloet@hogent.be, Faculty for Education,
Health and Social Work, University College Ghent, Belgium

