



**THE DARFUR CHALLENGE**  
Canadian students making a difference  
for young people in Darfur, Sudan.  
[www.DarfurChallenge.org](http://www.DarfurChallenge.org)

---

*A sub-campaign of Save Darfur Canada, a national advocacy coalition: [www.SDCanada.org](http://www.SDCanada.org).  
[info@DarfurChallenge.org](mailto:info@DarfurChallenge.org) / 1030, rue Cherrier (local 210) - Montréal, QC - H2L 1H9 / 514-935-8806*

## **MEDIA GUIDE**

*This section describes how to effectively engage local media outlets. There are many forms of media that you can use to reach the public.*

### **DIFFERENT FORMS OF MEDIA INCLUDE:**

*Local TV stations*

*Radio*

*Newspapers (school newspapers as well as local ones)*

*Newsletters*

*Community Bulletins*

### **AUDIENCE**

When you are deciding which form of media to use, it is best to think first of whom your audience is (i.e.: who you want to read/hear about your message) and then approach different types of media accordingly.

### **WRITING MEDIA RELEASES**

When trying to contact different local media, it is best to write a media release. A media release is a short (no more than one page) description of an event/topic you want to highlight. This can be quite similar to writing a letter to the editor (as outlined below), but can be used for multiple different approaches.



## **WHEN WRITING A MEDIA RELEASE MAKE SURE TO:**

*Keep it concise* and focused.

*Put the most newsworthy item* at the top of your document.

Your headline and first sentence are the most important parts of your release - make sure they grab your reader's attention and intrigue or interest them enough to make them want to read on.

*Use simple language* - avoid too many adjectives and fancy language.

*Present your facts clearly.*

*Proofread* your media release before you send it off, and correct any spelling or grammatical errors.

*Provide detailed contact information* including names, phone numbers, fax numbers, email addresses, web site addresses

## **WRITING LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

Local papers often take an interest in a story about Darfur if it has a local focus. One effective way to reach newspapers is to write a letter to the editor.

Letters to the Editor (LTEs) are a great way to raise awareness in your community and to push newspapers to increase their coverage of Darfur. The main objective of LTEs is to make readers aware of what is happening in Darfur and prompt them to get involved. Your ability to tie a letter to your community will be the most critical factor in getting the letter printed.

For a sample letter to the editor, see page 5.

## **BASIC LETTER WRITING TIPS**

*Keep it brief* and focused.

*Make your letter personal.*

*When possible, cite any specific facts and figures you use.*

*Include your contact information* so that the paper can get in touch with you to verify the letters authenticity.

*Don't send the same letter to multiple newspapers.*

*Make sure to send the letter in the mail or in the body of an email, not as an attachment.*

## TIPS FOR REACHING LOCAL MEDIA

***Make it your own.*** Update the sample release below with your schools information. Dont forget to add contact information.

***Send it out.*** Email and fax the release to local newspapers and radio stations two to three days before your event. Ensure TV stations receive your release at least a week ahead of time.

***Follow up, follow up, follow up.*** Call the news desk and ask to speak with a reporter who covers community events two days before the event or a couple days after you send the media release/letter to the editor. When you speak to a reporter introduce yourself, explain why your event is important, and make sure they received the release. It's best to call in the early afternoon between 2 and 3 pm.



## SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

VIA EMAIL

Letters Editor

NAME OF PAPER

RE: Darfur

Dear Editor:

[AUTHORS NAME]'s article, [INSERT ARTICLE TITLE, DATE], drew necessary attention to the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, Sudan and to the awareness and fundraising efforts of students in [INSERT CITY] through the Darfur Challenge National High School Challenge. One month into our campaign, the [INSERT SCHOOL] Darfur Challenge committee has already raised [INSERT AMOUNT] through the generous support of our community. Our goal is to raise \$5,000 [INSERT GOAL] by the end of the school year and we are well on our way to meeting that goal. At [INSERT SCHOOL], we are honored to have the opportunity to help young people in Darfur. So far this year, [XXX] students have contributed to the Darfur Challenge campaign. It is safe to say that our community is very concerned about helping to end the suffering of the Darfuri people.

As high school/junior high students, it would be easy for our generation to dismiss the crisis in Darfur as something that we cannot affect one way or another. Instead, my peers at [INSERT SCHOOL] – along with thousands of other students and community groups across the country – have united for this important cause. I encourage you to continue to shine a spotlight on the ongoing atrocities in Darfur until this horrendous tragedy has ended. Together, the people of [INSERT CITY] can change the lives of so many Darfuri youth.

Sincerely,

Name

Group Affiliation (if applicable)

City

Phone number