



Press Release

20 March 2008

News programme for learning disability audiences to launch on Community Channel

[ITN](#) and Media Trust Productions have joined forces with Mencap, the UK learning disability charity, to produce a news programme, *Your News* (working title) premiering on the Community Channel, for viewers with a learning disability or difficulty. There is no news programming that currently exists in the UK for people with learning disabilities and difficulties and research shows there is an appetite for it.

Initially a pilot, with plans for a weekly fifteen minute news bulletin, the programme is co-presented by ITN On journalist, Olivia Hill, and Andrew Lee, Director of People First. The programme will feature a round-up of the week's leading national, international, sports and showbiz news stories, as well as airing special features produced by journalists with a learning disability about issues of concern for the audience. ITN and Media Trust Productions have been advised by Mencap on accessibility issues and suitable feature ideas.

Jon Godel, Editor of ITN On said: "ITN is delighted to be involved with this project and to use its news production expertise to deliver a bespoke product for an important audience. News is a powerful tool for bringing people together and keeping them informed. We aim to produce a news bulletin that is engaging, lively and easier to follow in terms of its style, presentation and language."

Dame Jo Williams, Mencap's Chief Executive, said: "People with a learning disability enjoy watching television but find that mainstream news bulletins can be too complicated. We congratulate ITN and Media Trust Productions coming together to meet this need and hope that this programme becomes a regular feature."

Peter Weil, Director of Production & Digital Media, at the Media Trust said: "This is an exciting initiative which is long overdue. The news should be accessible and available to everyone."

The project is supported by Ofcom and Robinia. In the coming weeks Mencap will be running a series of focus groups to evaluate all aspects of this pilot programme, including its working title, *Your News*, with the audience. The pilot programme will air on Community Channel (Sky 539/Virgin Media 233/Freeview 87 (6-9am)) on March 28 at 8.30, 14.30, 20.30, and 02.30.

Your News is also looking for funding partners to enable the programme to run as a weekly news service for an initial 12-month period. For further information on how your organisation can be involved please contact Sarah Cable (cable.sarah@btinternet.com).

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To view a DVD copy before March 28 broadcast please contact Sophie Busch – Media Trust sophieb@mediatrust.org

Notes to Editors

About ITN

ITN is one of the world's leading news and multimedia content companies creating, aggregating, packaging and distributing news and other multi-platform content to a wide range of customers around the globe.

In the UK ITN produces news programmes for ITV1, ITV London, Channel 4, and More 4 as well as supplying news to over 250 commercial radio stations (IRN). ITN also produces Setanta Sports News, the 24 hour sports news channel jointly owned by Virgin Media and Setanta. ITN's multimedia division ITN On has led the way in producing news and entertainment content for mobile and online platforms including Vodafone, 3, T-Mobile, MSN and Yahoo. ITN On's content can also be viewed on YouTube (www.youtube.com/itn) and Bebo.

ITN Source is one of the world's leading providers of motion imagery, representing the largest collection of moving image libraries in the world, selling video clips from over 800,000 hours of footage captured over three centuries. As well as ITN's own news material, ITN Source represents the British Pathé, Reuters, Channel 4 (including E4, More 4 and Film 4), Granada, FOX News and FOX Movietone content libraries.

ITN's headquarters are in London with international bureaux and offices in New York, Berlin, Beijing, Brussels, Paris, Sydney, Johannesburg, Bangkok and Tokyo. For

further information please visit www.itn.co.uk or www.itnsource.com

About Media Trust Productions

Media Trust Productions produces award-winning films for charities and the wider not-for-profit sector. Uniquely positioned between the charity sector and the media industry, Media Trust Productions has made hundreds of innovative and creative films for a large range of clients from charities, both small and large, to local authorities and major broadcasters. As well as producing thought-provoking factual films, Media Trust Productions also produces communication tools such as interactive CD Roms, DVD's and media-rich web content for fundraising, education and promotional purposes.

About Mencap

Mencap works with people with a learning disability and their families and carers. 1.5 million people in the UK have a learning disability. Learning disability affects someone's intellectual and social development all their life. It is not mental illness. It is not dyslexia. It used to be called mental handicap but we don't use this term anymore because most people with a learning disability find it offensive. People with a learning disability don't get an equal chance in life. That's why we fight to change laws and services, and directly support thousands of people to live their lives the way they want. For information about learning disability issues please call the Learning Disability Helpline (England) on 0808 808 1111 or visit www.askmencap.info. For online press information, go to www.mencap.org.uk/press

About Community Channel

Community Channel is dedicated to engaging audiences with the charitable and voluntary sector, showcasing stories and issues that inspire action and encourage involvement. Broadcasting original shows, the best of terrestrial TV and showcasing the work of new directors and community programme makers, Community Channel is the place for real-life stories from communities around the world. The channel is broadcast 24 hours a day on Sky 539, Virgin TV 233 and from 6am to 9am on Freeview 87. The channel is a free-to-air TV station available to 16.5 million digital households in the UK and to 41 million potential viewers. Around 1.5 million people tune in every month and we receive more than 12,000 interactions with viewers a week.

About Ofcom

The project is supported by Ofcom - which has a responsibility to promote media literacy as well as a general duty to have regard for the needs of disabled people. Visit www.ofcom.org.uk for further information.

About Robinia

The project is supported by Robinia Care Solutions, a national provider of support services to people with learning disabilities. Visit www.robinia.co.uk

for further information