

meltwater
group



The Child Growth Foundation's Meltwater story



Executive Summary:

Founded in 1977, the Child Growth Foundation (CGF) is an independent charity set up to support children, families of children and adults with growth related problems, as well as educate the public about these disorders and fund research into possible solutions.

The training of doctors, nurses and health visitors has become a significant activity for the CGF, together with the publication of many papers in medical journals. In more recent times, the new challenge of childhood obesity has emerged and the CGF has become a powerful force relating to the awareness and control of this growing problem.

Thanks to Meltwater, the Child Growth Foundation now benefits from:

- The ability to stay well informed of the latest developments on child growth issues from across the world through a regular daily news aggregation service
- The use of this information to provide authoritative comment and analysis to a range of news and media outlets and so, raise awareness of child growth disorders and, increasingly, the child obesity epidemic
- A raised profile for the organisation thanks to the high level of coverage it attains, which is instrumental in attracting funding and interest from other agencies
- The advantage of promoting best practice in the UK by staying informed of what initiatives and treatments have proved a success in other countries around the globe

"The value of Meltwater News to our organisation can't be quantified. It is priceless in terms of the ability it gives us to be an authority on child growth disorders and maintain our high profile in the media. Being without the service would be like losing an arm."

Tam Fry

Honorary Chairman
Child Growth Foundation

www.childgrowthfoundation.org

Child Growth Foundation achieves healthy standard of news monitoring with Meltwater



The Background

As a former BBC director of current affairs programmes, Tam Fry, the honorary chairman of the Child Growth Foundation, is conscious of the power of the media in terms of getting a message across to the public and raising awareness of health issues. He also fully understands the tight deadlines journalists work to and the need for commentators working with reporters to be responsive, well-informed and available with authoritative comment at short notice.

For this reason, one of Tam's key roles is to be a spokesman for the Foundation on news items relating to child growth. "I have to be there when the media want me and respond to questions about the story as best and accurately as I can," he says.

Over the past fifteen years the number of media requests for Tam's expertise has mushroomed as awareness of growth disorders has increased and the 24-hour news services have established themselves. During this time, the issue of childhood obesity has also become a major social problem with Tam, who is also a spokesman for the National Obesity Forum, estimating that up to 40% of 11-year olds in the UK are either overweight or obese.

Consequently, the subject is of interest to the wider media and not just the specialist medical journals. "Childhood obesity is proven as a substantial trigger for heart disease later on in life and that is why there is so much interest in the issue. It has reached epidemic proportions and for that reason not a day passes without there being a story related to the problem," says Tam.

"Today, for example, I was speaking to a radio reporter about new research which shows a link between junk food and the furring up of arteries. Obesity is a problem across the developed world, so stories may not originate in the UK and reporters pick research from absolutely everywhere."

To keep abreast of the latest news on these issues from around the globe, Tam uses Meltwater News – a service he has subscribed to for over five years. The online media monitoring service offers him real-time access to the latest breaking news worldwide and can be customised to search for whatever subject he chooses.

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Tam Fry

Honorary Chairman, Child Growth Foundation

Delivering results, as well as news

To fit in with news schedules, Tam’s day starts early and his first port of call is his PC in order to access the latest Meltwater News report.

“Most days I’m up at four o’clock and straight into looking at Meltwater’s e-mailed summary of relevant items off the web,” he says. “This allows me to be ready to respond to media requests by six o’clock - I might be called by news reporters, radio journalists or researchers from breakfast television.

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Tam says on busy days he might get over 300 items from around the world, all written in English, sent through on his daily Meltwater News service. His approach

is to scan through the headlines making notes on the items of interest, filing some away for reading later on and highlighting others that require immediate attention and further online research if necessary.

As well as talking to journalists from the UK, he is also regularly contacted by reporters from Europe and the US interested in talking to him about UK initiatives or reports that cover the wider European or OECD regions.

Tam has also been impressed by the support he has received from the Meltwater team both in terms of the advice he gets on conducting effective searches and broader queries he sometimes puts to them concerning his IT network.

“Boolean searches can sometimes be complicated and Helena at Meltwater is always there to help out,” he says. “And if I have a problem with my IT system, the team are happy to come out to put things right. The service is both excellent and extremely prompt.”

He describes the value of the service provided by Meltwater News as ‘priceless’ in terms of the opportunities it provides for raising the profile of the organisations he works for and the medical conditions he is spreading awareness of.

He says: “Meltwater News is crucial to the work we do. If, for some reason the computer, misbehaves and I can’t access the internet, I realise how much I depend on the service to stay in touch.

“The fact that I receive news alerts 365 days a year and am able to represent two organisations, who might find their name in print in national press 10 times in a day, makes signing up to Meltwater News a no brainer.

He adds: “We could spend twice as much employing PR agencies to promote our work and not get half as much coverage as we do using Meltwater.”



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