How to Write an Effective Press Release Plus My Swipe File!

While press releases are optional, you can choose to send one out to your local TV, radio, and print and online newspapers for free. It just takes time to research media and contacts. Build a spreadsheet with contacts to use for future press releases but be sure to confirm the contacts before sending a future press release.

For increased exposure with online releases, I recommend www.24-7pressrelease.com. I've partnered with them several times and it's an affordable service that can gain interest. However, there is no guarantee you will get coverage even with a paid release.

Press release writing tips:

1. A press release structure should include the headline, intro, story basics, quotes, and a brief ending. Journalists follow this format when they write a story.

2. Pick the right angle. A successful press release has a unique angle. Ask yourself, what it is about you and/or your book that will set you apart from the rest?

3. Create a headline that hooks. Your headline is your first impression and inspires a reader to keep reading the article.

4. Shorter releases often perform better. 400-700 words.

5. Include relevant links with internet releases.

6. Inform, don't promote. A good press release delivers information, not opinion. Journalists won't trust an author's opinion of their book. Avoid blatant words that are self-promotional like best, exceptional, unrivaled, amazing, etc. Show vs. Tell works well here. Show them through the story, it's potential to affect people, or your unique story behind it.

7. Send it to the right place. Do your research. Find publications that publish similar content and which journalist is the best contact. Directly address the press release to them.

8. Don't give your book away for free. If your press release is well-written and a journalist is interested in your story, they will ask you for a copy of your book. Let your press release sell your story, much like a query letter sells an agent to request a manuscript to read.

9. Your local towns around you, or county, may have monthly or quarterly magazines. Check out their editorial calendars and deadlines. You may have a better chance here of getting coverage.

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My Press Release Sample:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Berks Author Publishes Heartfelt, Humorous Novel Spotlighting Kids Living with Autoimmune Disease

A powerful new middle grade novel by award-winning children's book author and resident of Berks County, Donna Galanti, shines a spotlight on kids living with autoimmune disease while delivering humor, heart, and high-stakes friendship. *The Secret Winners Club* publishes March 3, 2026, with Wild Trail Press, timed to Autoimmune Awareness Month, and is an ideal addition to spring reading coverage.

Thirteen-year-old Sunny Whitlock is tired of being known as "the bald kid." Living with alopecia, she's determined to change how others see her—by winning. Teaming up with her best friends, who also live with autoimmune skin conditions, Sunny forms The Secret Winners Club, a top-secret pact to dominate school competitions and finally be recognized for more than their differences.

But as victories stack up, so do the consequences. Feelings get hurt. Lines get crossed. And Sunny must decide what kind of winner she truly wants to be—and what friendship really costs.

***The Secret Winners Club* speaks directly to:**

- Kids living with autoimmune and visible skin conditions
- Young readers navigating identity, visibility, and self-acceptance
- Fans of friendship-driven, coming-of-age stories with STEAM elements
- Readers who love theater, swimming, technology, creative arts, and school competitions

"Since becoming an adult, I've acquired five autoimmune conditions that have visible symptoms," says Galanti. "And I thought: how would it be it kids had these conditions and had to deal with them in middle school? With that, came the inspiration for writing a middle grade book that is about seeking identity, especially when it comes to self-image and self-acceptance. This is something I struggled with as a kid, and I know many kids do."

This is a time when children need stories that reflect themselves—particularly those with chronic illness and medical conditions—and *The Secret Winners Club* offers vital representation. Stories like these remind young readers that they deserve empathy, belonging, and the freedom to take up space.

Told in multiple points of view, the novel follows three characters living with alopecia, psoriasis, and vitiligo. Galanti herself lives with multiple autoimmune diseases and brings lived experience to the story, capturing what it feels like to look different—and to want to be seen for who you are beyond your appearance.

"With this story, I also wanted to bring awareness about autoimmune conditions," Galanti says. "And hopefully show that they can be part of us—but they are not *all* of who we are. We can be many other things: a friend, a son, a daughter, an artist, a singer, and more."

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(press release cont'd)

PRAISE FOR *THE SECRET WINNERS CLUB*

"A fine weaving of heartache, grit, humor, and the ethics of what it means to get even."—**Joan Bauer**, *New York Times* bestselling author and Newbery Honor Medalist

"You root for this group of friends as they try to figure out what it means to go after their dreams, to seek help from others, and if winning at any cost is really winning at all."—**Wendy Mass**, *New York Times* bestselling author

"An inspiring and heartfelt story about courage, friendship, and the power of self-acceptance… blending humor, tension, and emotion in perfect rhythm."—**Midwest Book Review**

"A heart-warming, page-turning read for anyone who has ever felt different. A gift for the misfits and adventurers in us all."—**Sarah Allen**, author of *Breathing Underwater*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Donna Galanti lives in Berks County, Pennsylvania, and is the award-winning author of the popular middle grade *Unicorn Island* series, *Joshua and the Lightning Road* series, and *Loon Cove Summer*, as well as the paranormal suspense *Element Trilogy* for adults. She has lived in England, Hawaii (where she served as a U.S. Navy photographer), and at her family-owned campground in New Hampshire. An avid outdoor adventurer and nature lover, Donna volunteers with the Old-Growth Forest Network and the National Audubon Society. Learn more at: donnagalanti.com.

Publication Details
Wild Trail Press | March 3, 2026
Distributed by IngramSpark
Hardcover | 286 pages
ISBN: 979-8-9991384-0-8
Ages 8–13
Book page
Information sheet

Complimentary review copies are available upon request. The author is also available for interviews, guest articles, school visits, and podcast appearances. Please consider featuring this timely, heartfelt novel that celebrates identity, friendship, and the courage to redefine what winning truly means.

Contact:
Name / email / phone

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