



A request for the press from the Norwegian Ombudsman for Children's expert group of Utøya survivors

Only children are experts on being children, and only survivors from Utøya can say something about how their lives have been after the massacre.

This is why the Norwegian Ombudsman for Children has established an expert group of young survivors from the terrorist attack on Utøya 22nd of July 2011. The group consists of 9 children and young people from different parts of Norway. During the meetings with the Ombudsman they have discussed several issues related to the aftermath of the massacre, one of which is how the media has been handling the situation.

The expert group understand that the media interest and coverage of the court case will be extensive. Therefore, the young survivors would like to call for the media's consideration on the following points during interviews and covering of the case:

Interviews

- Assess whether your interviewee is fit to be interviewed.
- Introduce yourself before asking questions.
- Be compassionate and think before posing a question.
- Don't put pressure on children and young people to do an interview. Give them time to consider your request. Respect a decline, also after initially reaching an agreement to do an interview.
- Don't share contact information with other journalists without consent.
- Offer your interviewees the chance to check their quotations unasked.
- Don't seek out the young victims unannounced. Make an appointment either through their lawyer, or by e-mail or text message.

Coverage

- Use pictures and headlines carefully. Remember that front pages are not easy to avoid.
- Consider how you use pictures and detailed descriptions. Be aware that children can react differently from adults.
- Be careful referring to the victims as one group. They are all individuals, with different reactions and opinions.

For additional information on the Norwegian Ombudsman for Children, click here:

http://www.barneombudet.no/english/about_the_/

More information about how the Ombudsman involves children here:

<http://barneombudet.no/english/communicat/>

Regards

Reidar Hjermann

The Ombudsman for Children in Norway