

Overview

GOJO is a major new campaign from the Disability Rights Commission to promote the freedom of travel to young people, and in particular to encourage young disabled people aged 16-25 to use public transport to visit local attractions and events.

This is a well-resourced campaign that we hope will directly impact on young disabled people. It will include national and regional media launches, partnerships with local stakeholders, local street marketing activity (with branded GOJO bus stops and promotional staff), a national website, and giveaway merchandise including event guides. The activity will be focused on five cities – Manchester, Sheffield, Nottingham, Exeter and Newcastle - and their wider regions.

A key part of the campaign will be targeted at transport providers, ensuring they are aware of their responsibilities under the DDA legislation. Taken together, we hope that the campaign kick-starts an increase in public transport usage by young disabled people, helping disabled people to lead more independent lives and increasing their employment and leisure opportunities.

We will be distributing campaign packs in May which will include GOJO branded merchandise including rucksacks, travelcard holders, mobile phone chargers and USB sticks featuring more specific information about the campaign. This merchandise will direct young people to the GOJO website which will feature news stories, interactive travel maps and provide a forum for feedback.

Why this campaign now?

Disability Rights Commission research has indicated that young disabled people lack confidence in getting out and using public transport. Many of you will know this through your own experiences with young people you work with. A recent poll carried out on behalf of the DRC found disabled people are four times more likely to lack confidence using trains and buses than non-disabled people. However, around £600m has been invested by transport providers in recent years to improve public transport for disabled people. Accessibility of services improves every year.

Disabled people also have important new rights to fair treatment on public transport. The companies who provide these services have a responsibility to avoid discriminating against disabled people and a duty to make sure their service is easy for disabled people to use. The rights of disabled people to fair treatment also extend to other service providers including venues and events. By getting young disabled people out and about we hope to get their feedback on how the new laws and new investment are working in practice, and what can be done to improve services for the future.

When is the campaign and where?

Regional launch activity will be in early May 2007, focusing on five cities – Manchester, Nottingham, Sheffield, Newcastle and Exeter. This will include the launch of the GOJO website, promotional staff giving away merchandise in each city, and regional media activity with a group of comedians called Abnormally Funny People. We will also be working with local stakeholders and transport providers.

We will then follow this up by another spike of activity in June when we will be encouraging disabled young people to get out and visit attractions/events via public transport and distributing local event guides. The 21 June is summer solstice, the longest day of the year, and kicks off, (in daylight hours) the 'longest' weekend of the year. The focus of this activity will be from June 21-24 2007 (Thursday to Sunday)