

# 112 what?

Brief description of SOS Alarm's information campaign to children and young people about the 112 emergency number



# Introduction

Every new generation of young people must have a fundamental understanding of how to handle emergency situations and the single European emergency number, 112. This has been the starting point for the work that SOS Alarm has conducted in order to approach groups of young people.

The project started in 2003 and is still underway. It has gained new relevance as the government has given SOS Alarm a special assignment during 2006 to advise about 112.

The objective for SOS Alarm's information campaign "112 what?", is to raise awareness amongst children and young people at school of the 112 emergency number, and SOS Alarm in its entirety, and as a result to reduce the number of false calls from the target group. Initially it was decided that the children and young people's campaign should have the theme: "When is it OK to call SOS Alarm?"



## Focus on awareness

One of the objectives was to drastically reduce the number of unnecessary 112 calls mainly from the 9-14 years age group. However, this would take place without a focus on "prank calls" that are easily thought of as something funny. Instead, the campaign would focus on teaching children and young people more about how they should act in an emergency situation.

The dialogue between those seeking help and an SOS operator is important. Training increases the opportunities to act rationally in an acute situation, especially when it concerns children. Information activities that reinforced awareness would be emphasised by means of the campaign.

## Effective information channels

Right from the start, SOS Alarm cultivated the channels that would be most effective for communicating with the age group. It was urgent to attract significant attention and have a wide distribution of the messages from the start. Following which, it was important to establish a working communication channel for children and young people with a personal and credible messenger. For this reason the artist Markoolio, who is very popular with Swedish children and young people, was chosen as the front figure for the campaign.

Briefly, the activities were grouped around the following information channels:

- Milk packages
- School campaigns
- SOS Alarm's website

These channels have reinforced each other, in particular this applies to the information via schools and the special young people's site on SOS Alarm's website.

SOS Alarm's children and young people's campaign has reached almost a million children and young people between 9-16 years old during a three-year period.



*In order to have a successful information campaign SOS Alarm chose to involve the popular pop artist Markoolio as the company's ambassador in the work among young people for a safer society and better use of 112. The proposal to involve the artist came from SOS Alarm's staff.*

*Markoolio has both a sense of humour and a commitment to society. He fascinates young people and they don't just listen to his music but also to his messages. "He wins through in most situations", says SOS Alarm's CEO Sven-Runo Bergqvist, among others, at the launch of the information campaign.*

# Information via milk packages

The first step in the children and young people's campaign for 112 was to join the dairy company Arla Foods and give advice as to what an emergency situation actually is via their milk packages.



The idea was conceived in a series of meetings with all personnel within SOS Alarm. A number of proposals arose during the meetings concerning how the company could improve in reaching groups of young people. A large quantity of milk cartons without printing was supplied by Arla. During the group work they were decorated with illustrations and text on emergency situations and a number of proposals

were chosen as winners and as the basis for continued discussions with Arla. This resulted in a four-week period where Arla had messages on the rear of their milk packages advising of the situations in which 112 should be called.

For SOS Alarm this activity would provide a way in with important groups of young people. There are approximately 600,000 children and young people in the 9-16 years age group.

Different types of emergency situations were presented on the milk packages, along with what should be done in the event of burglary, accident or fire for example, illustrated with the help of simple drawings and texts, so-called comic strips.



*The messages on the milk packages originally came from SOS Alarm's co-workers. During 2002 a number of texts concerning 112 were produced. The best amongst them was then given a final wording by SOS Alarm and Arla Foods in the form of four comic strips that represented different situations concerning the use of 112.*

At the same time as the milk packages were distributed to most parts of the country, SOS Alarm advertised on the commercial TV4 channel and in a number of newspapers in order to achieve high initial attention value. Information was also sent out by letter to the country's schools.

During 2003 and 2004 information went out on approximately 10 million milk packages. The attention value in the target group was the highest that Arla Foods had ever reached.

#### FACTS ON THE MILK PACKAGE

Every month Arla Foods produces approximately 50 million milk packages. However, sales vary from month to month.

The rear side of the milk package has been used to carry different messages for over 20 years. The whole "striped" range is available at Arla Foods, i.e. milk, sour milk, flavoured sour milk and all Eco variants.

The rear side reaches over 60 per cent of Sweden's population – approximately 6.3 million people, and is highly readable.

60 per cent of the message consists of amusing, interesting and educational information aimed at children and young people 9-16 years old. On the rest of the package there is information on new products and other new events at Arla Foods.

Arla's ambition is to convey important civic information in this way to groups of young people. The company does not charge for this but always reserves the right to select messages that correspond with their objectives. Information on the 112 emergency number was considered to be such an area.

## The school campaign

The primary information activities in the campaign would initially be centred around a school project with a competition in which the students would be referred to SOS Alarm's website that was launched in connection with the children and young people's campaign. There the students could also download information material.

During February 2003 an information letter on the campaign was sent to all schools. An information letter was always sent out to the school headteachers

## 112 what?

A dog is standing and barking, I wonder what about.  
A lady is lying still - I think she's fallen down.  
She can't give me an answer - please help me dear.  
What should I do, dial or run a mile?

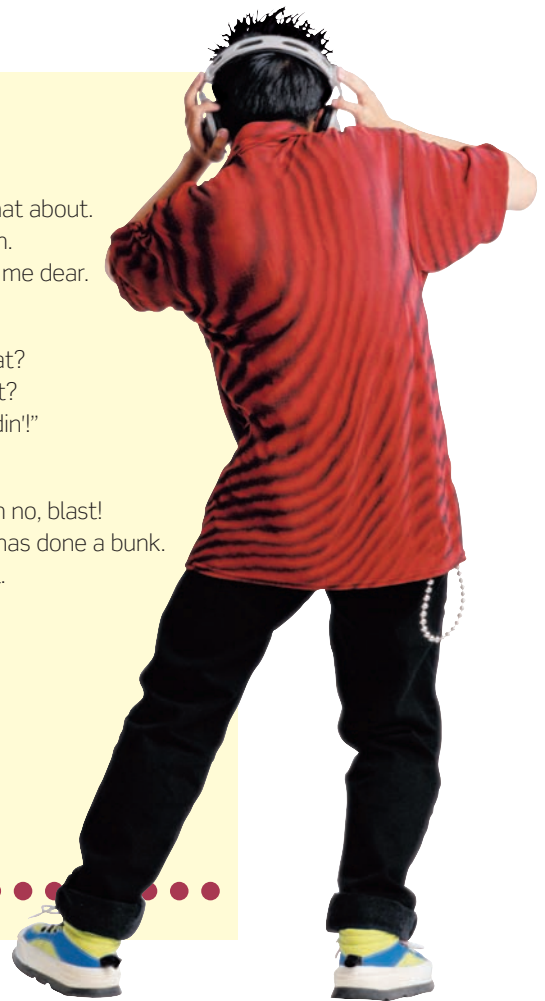
Chorus with Markoolio: "112 what? 112 what?  
respect, respect I said! 112 what? 112 what?  
Don't call for no reason, call if you are needin'!"

There's a fire burning in the cop's house.  
A crook has gone and lit a great big fire. Oh no, blast!  
The petrol's spraying over while the crook has done a bunk.  
But then I go and dial and he ends up in jail.

Chorus with Markoolio: as above

Injury for life is nothing you would want.  
But that's just why SOS is there for you.  
To help those who really need the help  
Don't call if it's not urgent

Chorus with Markoolio: as above



prior to each campaign. Following which, a video film was distributed to schools for years 4-6 showing youth idol Markoolio in different situations and asking questions that encouraged discussion. At the end of the film the class was urged to write a rap using the theme "Respect 112". After which, each SOS Alarm centre would appoint their own winner to take part in a final which included Markoolio in the competition's jury.

"What a great idea to get help from Markoolio to teach children to handle different emergency situations", thought teachers who e-mailed to SOS Alarm. Others testified how much fun young people thought it was to compile a rap song using the theme "Respect 112". The most successful class would eventually have their rap performed by Markoolio himself.



*Class 4-5 A at Norra School in Östersund left with victory in the rap competition that SOS Alarm announced in connection with the children and young people's campaign among the country's intermediate-level schools. Markoolio, the front figure for the campaign, was of course in the jury, here visiting the winning school.*

## Teacher role important

The idea behind a lot of the activities was to involve the teachers. It was also very valuable to listen to their viewpoints on the children and young people's campaign during the progress of the work.

The schools were encouraged to carry out the student activity concerning 112 on SOS Alarm's young people's website and via letters directly to teachers.

Together with the National Agency for Education and the Swedish Schoolnet, SOS Alarm produced teaching material for children and young people in years 3-7 covering the questions "112 What?", "What is an emergency situation?" and "When should you call then?".

Over 4,000 schools, equivalent to 15,000 classes and 350,000 students, received information material during this period, including adhesive badges, a pocket folder and the video "112 What?". The results from a nation wide survey 2003 among 300 children and young people show that almost 72 percent had seen information concerning SOS Alarm and/or the emergency number 112.

Amongst other activities evident in the schools up to today were two poster competitions where school classes were assigned to illustrate why 112 should only be called when it is essential. Like most of the activities this was also run based on SOS Alarm's young people's website which has been the hub for the information campaign the whole time.



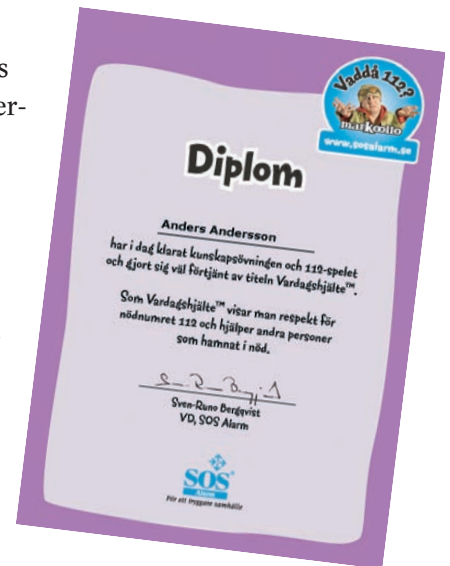
## Young people's site on SOS Alarm's website

In addition to the messages on emergency situations, the rear side of Arla's milk package included an invitation to visit the children and young people's website, which could be clicked onto via SOS Alarm's website and which was opened the same day as the campaign started.

The website was developed to increase awareness among young people in years 4-6 on the 112 emergency number.

Amongst other things in the interactive young people's website there is the chance to be an "everyday hero" by means of an interactive comic, knowledge acquisition on 112 and games.

Here the visitors can run through a number of event sequences, most of which are relevant for using the 112 emergency number, while some are the type for which 112 should not be called. In addition they can test their knowledge in a special test as well as receive simulated 112 calls in an operator's game.



After playing the game and seeing the comic strips the young people can test their knowledge on when to call and when not to call the 112 emergency number by means of a knowledge test. The young people who manage all three parts are certified as everyday heroes and are awarded a diploma to print out.

In a separate section on the website the young people can also write in and tell of their own experiences and recollections of emergency situations and when they themselves have contacted the 112 emergency number.

## Christmas calendars

As a part of the information campaign there were also two campaigns with Christmas calendars, for winter 2003 and winter 2004. The calendars were distributed to the schools by post but were also available on the website so that the



*Class 4B at Hult School in Gothenburg was the winner in SOS Alarm's interactive Christmas calendar competition So Markoolio and representatives for SOS Alarm visited the school to present the students with CD prizes and to sign autographs. A proud class Principal Annika Andersson was also present when the winning rhyming text was recited.*

*How much do your students know about SOS Alarm?*

*"I believe that they are quite good as we have visited SOS Alarm's website and played the games there. It is good to know about SOS Alarm. Now the students know what they should do if they find themselves in an emergency situation. In addition, they understand the importance of not making prank calls.*

schools could print out a front page and a "fill the missing words" page and then cut out and paste together their own calendars.

The Christmas calendars dealt with the 112 emergency number and were designed as competitions. The main character was the youth idol Markoolio and his preparations for Christmas Eve could be followed in the calendars.

The school classes were given the assignment to access the web page and open a new window every day up to Christmas Eve. Behind each window was a short account on Markoolio who got into various difficulties, as well as an event with an assignment connected to the 112 emergency number that the students should resolve:

For example, Markoolio makes some toffee which boils over and burns him. Or Markoolio helps Santa Claus with his sledge – and it gets stuck! Should he or should he not call 112?

The answers were registered on the Internet and it was then possible to see who got most right. There was also a rhyming competition amongst the Christmas activities.

### **"112 WHAT?" POPULAR IN SCHOOLS**

SOS Alarm conducted a school questionnaire for the teachers on the knowledge competition "112 What? – Christmas calendar 2004".

According to the 190 replies that came in 77% of the classes that participated in the competition followed up. In addition, over half (54%) of the teachers indicated that they had used the teaching material available on the SOS Alarm website. Over 60% considered that the knowledge competition had contributed to safety and emergency situations being discussed in the classroom more than before.

Included amongst the comments on the competition were the following:

"It was a good and fun design for the competition. The children really learned why 112 cannot be used for all occasions."

"The students were enormously involved and had many sensible ideas. My contribution was merely to decide which student should sit at the computer."

"Play was mixed with knowledge acquisition which meant that it was more fun. It was good to have an idol as a role model."

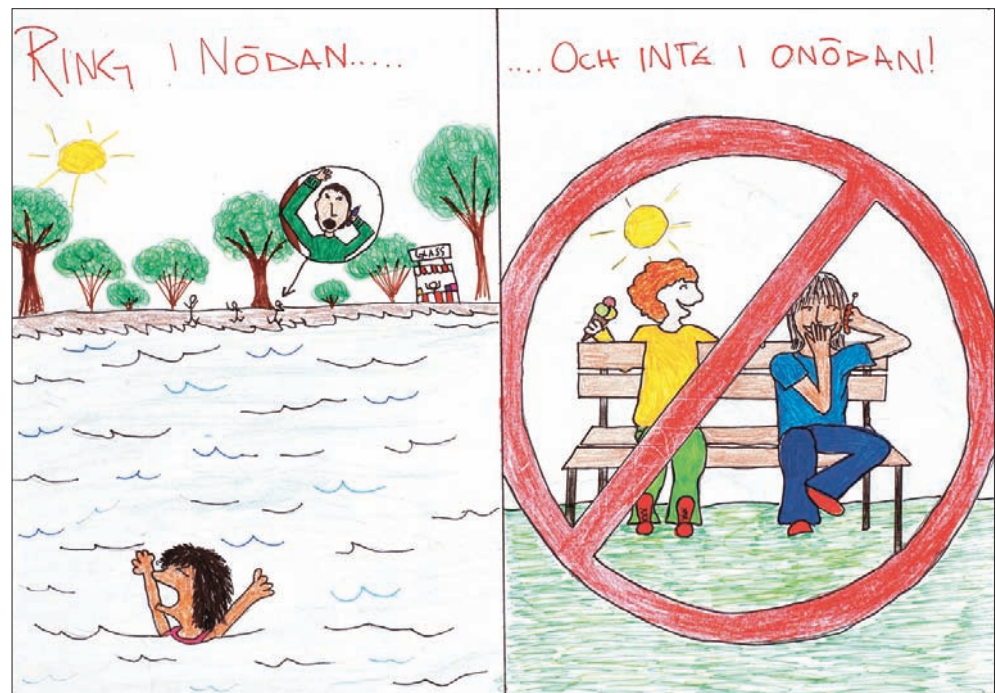
## Two poster competitions

Two poster competitions were run as a part of the information campaign, the first was in the spring of 2004 and the second in the spring of 2005.

The school classes were given the assignment to illustrate one or more posters aimed at informing other young people about the 112 emergency number and "not to call unnecessarily but only in an emergency". A total of over 5,000 competition entries were submitted for both poster competitions.

Information on the competition was available on the website for both teachers and students. When 20 finalists were chosen their posters were presented on the web page.

The posters have also been used in SOS Alarm's big calendar for 2006 that is distributed to partners and customers.



*One of SOS Alarm's poster competitions had the theme "Safety on water and at sea" which was run together with The Swedish Life Saving Society. Twenty regional winners were chosen from the entrants, and these could then be viewed on SOS Alarm's website.*

## Facing the future



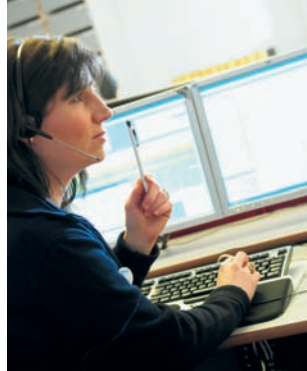
SOS Alarm currently considers its information campaign as being continuously ongoing work for distributing knowledge to children and young people.

As new batches of young people are growing up the whole time SOS Alarm has to ensure that continuous information is available for children and young people so that they learn to use 112 correctly.

SOS Alarm's broadly planned information campaign on TV, on milk cartons and on the website has been extensive. It is important that children and young people in particular learn about when to call and when not to call the emergency number. SOS Alarm's assessment was that the age level was right for children and young people to then carry the knowledge with them throughout their lives.

SOS Alarm's experience of the campaign so far is that the company has a better understanding of how to draw up information for young people and how to best communicate with them. Knowledge that should form the foundation for approaching groups of young people more systematically in the future. It should take place in contact with other countries in Europe that have a similar situation as the one in Sweden.

A cooperation that could provide improved conditions for promoting the message of how important it is that the 112 public function is used correctly.



*SOS Alarm is a publicly-owned limited company with 18 SOS Alarm centres around the country.*

*SOS Alarm is responsible for the 112 emergency number, i.e. for the general public to alert the ambulance service, rescue services, police etc. Wherever someone is in Sweden or in any other EU country they can quickly call for help by dialling 112.*



 **SOS Alarm**®  
*For a safer society*