

Program Resources

Public Relations and Marketing for [Family] Literacy Programs

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Most of the people involved in conducting [family] literacy programs are educators, who are unfamiliar with the marketing strategies of running a business, such as advertising or crafting a public image. But just like a business, a [family] literacy program must promote itself in order to stay alive. A program needs the awareness AND support of the community, including lawmakers, public figures, business, other agencies, and the general public on an *ongoing basis*, if it is to thrive.



Staying Alive

One of the major reasons for a [family] literacy program to do marketing and PR is to stay funded. This bears repeating...*don't wait until funding is cut to start promoting your program*. Just like a business, you have to start advertising before you need it. If you wait until you lose your funding, it may be too late. Become familiar with the following media approaches to reach the public.

Press Releases

The key is to stay in the public eye by getting as much publicity as possible. Using press releases is *crucial*. A press release is just a brief news story written by someone on your staff and mailed out or faxed to any and all newspapers, radio stations, TV stations and magazines in the community. A press release is not difficult to write. The key is to include something new, or "timely," and to put that in the first paragraph. It's all about what's going on now.

In larger metropolitan areas, the purpose of the press release is to stimulate media interest and get them to call you. *They won't print your news release as is*. But they may want to do a bigger story. Make sure the release contains a contact name and phone number for this purpose. The Great Oaks Even Start Family Literacy Program has developed the following press release. Be sure to print your news release on letterhead.

Live Oaks Career Development Campus

An Alliance of Business and Education

December 8, 1997

On November 21, 1997 The Great Oaks Even Start Family Literacy Program celebrated reading at Barnes & Nobles at Waterstone Boulevard. The *First Book Program* and Barnes & Nobles sponsored the event for the Even Start Families. Each parent and their children enjoyed choosing a book to keep for their very own. There is a special sparkle in the eyes of a child choosing his or her very own first book. The Book Party was a huge success.

The Even Start Program helps parents with young children go back to school by offering career counseling, computer enrichment, and life skills instruction. To qualify for the Great Oaks Even Start Program, a parent has to have a child between the ages' of birth to seven years old and must want to study for a GED or improve basic skills. For more information on the Even Start Program at Live Oaks Campus call (513) 575-1900.

Sincerely,

