

IDEAS FOR PARENT NEWSLETTERS¹

Make your own “Good News” headlines! Create a bi-weekly or monthly parent newsletter to keep parents informed about what’s happening in your program. Keep the newsletter short - one or two pages at most. If parents and the program have access to the Internet, post the parent newsletter on your program Web Site or distribute the newsletter via email. (Suggestion: Provide both a Parent Newsletter and a Parent Bulletin Board to increase the change of connecting with all parents in your program. Some parents will read the newsletter; others will check out the Bulletin Board, and some will take advantage of both.) Here are some ideas for sections or columns to include in a newsletter for parents:

- Weekly or monthly calendar of planned activity offerings.
- Announcements about any changes in the calendar or schedule.
- Brief, “down to earth” discussions about program philosophy, goals, objectives, policies, and procedures - discussions to help parents understand why you do what you do.
- Reports about favorite activities, trips, etc. written by children.
- News about club activities.
- Children’s favorite jokes of the day or week.
- Family riddle of the week or month.
- Quotable quotes from children at work and play in the program.
- Children’s artwork - drawings or cartoons.
- Announcements of upcoming events and meetings:
 - ✓ *parent get-togethers*
 - ✓ *parent advisory group meetings*
 - ✓ *performances by the children*
 - ✓ *field days and field trips*
 - ✓ *appearances of special visitors from the community*
 - ✓ *community events of interest to parents*
- Announcements of parent workshops and seminars sponsored by the program.
- Invitations for parent participation in specific activities.

¹ Excerpted with permission from Roberta L. Newman. *Building Relationships with Parents and Families in School-Age Programs, 2nd Edition, Revised*. New Albany, OH: School-Age NOTES, 2008. (Originally published in conjunction with Work/Family Directions, Boston, MA, AT&T Family Development Fund.) Page 99.

- Requests for contributions of re-cycle-able materials for use in the program.
- Requests for help in other areas of the program that could benefit from parent assistance or ideas.
- Information about new staff or staff changes, including brief bios and special interests.
- News about families in the program - accomplishments, awards, promotions, special trips, etc.
- Thank you announcements and acknowledgments to parents who share their ideas, comments, suggestions, resources, and expertise with the program.

Design a newsletter that is easy and inviting to read - lots of "white space," short paragraphs (just a few sentences), illustrations by the children, etc.

Other Ideas for Parent Newsletters...