

Writing Letters to Editors

Your voice really does count, so don't be shy when it comes to writing letters!

Writing letters to the editors of newspapers and magazines is an important part of keeping homeschooling issues in the public eye. Letters to the editor columns are often the most widely read section of a newspaper or magazine, and public policy officials usually consider them a good barometer of public opinion. You really don't have to be an exceptional writer to get noticed if you speak from the heart and focus on expressing yourself clearly.

Here are 6 important tips to get you started:

- 1.) Be timely** – If you are responding to a particular article, writing immediately will increase the chances that your letter will be printed.
- 2.) Keep it short** - Most newspapers limit letters to the editor to 200-300 words. A brief letter is more likely to be published and less likely to be edited. Say what you want, but briefly.
- 3.) Get to the point** – Clearly state your subject and try to make just one main point. If you find you have too much to say in two or three short paragraphs, consider writing an Op-ed (guest editorial) piece instead. If you have trouble getting to the point, ask a friend for help.
- 4.) Make it snappy** - Use humor, facts, or a personal viewpoint to add interest to your letter. Encourage your children to write from their points of view as well.
- 5.) Have it proofread** – Nothing makes a worse impression than poorly written pieces. Any editor will tell you that having someone else proofread your work is much better than doing it yourself. Polish it up and then ask a friend to check for grammar or spelling mistakes, rambling sentences, unclear points and other writing issues.
- 6.) Identify yourself** - Give your name, address and phone number so the newspaper can contact you to check facts or verify that you sent the letter.

[Nine Tips for Writing to the Media](#) is a website with more tips for letter writing.

[How to Communicate with Journalists](#) includes information about writing letters to the editor, as well as suggestions for writing op-eds.

Be sure to [let us know](#) if your letter gets printed!