



### Tips for writing a letter to the editor

Letters to the editor are a great way to get the message out about child abuse prevention and parenting. Typically, newspapers only print a handful of letters in each issue, so getting yours printed can be hard. Here are some helpful tips to increase the chances your letter is printed.

**Know the newspaper's policies for letters to the editor.** Contact the newspaper to find out word count limits and contact information.

**Read the newspaper's letters to the editor.** Reading letters that have already been printed will give you an idea as to what the editor is interested in printing.

**Be brief and limit yourself to one topic.** Keep sentences short. This makes your letter easier to read and easier for the editor to shorten your letter if necessary. Keeping your message short and focused will also help people understand what you are trying to say.

**Refer to the newspaper.** Be sure to reference to a recent newspaper article. Not all newspapers will print general comments.

**Be timely.** Do not get caught up reviewing and editing your letter. It needs to be submitted to the editor within two or three days of when the original article ran.

**Use statistics sparingly.** Statistics can be overwhelming and take away from your message. (See the tip sheet on reframing the child abuse prevention message.)

**Make the first line count.** You need to capture the reader's attention immediately or risk having them skip your letter all together.

For additional ideas, download the sample letter to the editor from the "Download resources" section.