

HOW TO WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

Letters to the editor usually relate to a story that was in the newspaper. If you feel passionately, either way about a topic, you should consider writing a letter the editor. Letters to the editor are usually 250-300 words (many times less) so you need to make sure that you are able to get your point across in a succinct and compelling way. Timing is everything with letters to the editor. Try to respond to an article the same day or the next day. If you have statistics or examples that back up your stance, use them.

Look on the Web site of the publication to which you want to send the letter to the editor for guidelines. Most papers will confirm with you before they print the letter. Make sure that you include day and evening phone numbers. Finally, sign your name, and include any information that would indicate why you have a specific interest in this topic.

Ernie Muppet
Ernie is a Public Relations Pro at PR Agency, Inc.

EXAMPLE OF A PUBLISHED LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The Boston Globe

Social Workers at Risk in Flawed System
February 12, 2008

I read with much dismay and sadness about the murder of a social worker during a home visit. Some lessons need to be learned to avoid such tragedies in the future.

Home visits during times of mental health crises are in face dangerous work. One does not know what awaits on the other side of the door. You are one someone else's turf. You are alone. There is much risk attached to these visits.

Because of the risk, such visits often are made by two clinicians. This does not prevent tragedy, but it does provide a modicum of safety and some control to the clinicians in such a situation.

-A. Berns, Brookline
The writer is a social worker.