

Library Literacy Marketing Toolkit Press Release Template

Press releases follow a specific format. The following template describes each section of a press release and offers tips on what kind of information to include.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: *These words should appear, in all caps, at the upper left or right-hand margin, just under your logo.*

Contact:

Contact Person - *person with the most information about the news item covered in this release*

Project Name

Telephone Number - *reporters often get in touch after regular business hours.*

Fax Number

Email Address

Web Site Address

Headline

The Headline goes on its own line, in boldface, often one size larger than the rest of the text. Preferred fonts are Arial, Times New Roman, or Verdana. The headline should work to “hook” the interest of the reader. Effective headlines use strong, active verbs, and describe something new or unusual, preferably from the reader’s perspective. Ideal length is 80-120 characters, with Key Words Capitalized. Examples:

**Tutoring Center Welcomes First (or Thousandth, or Millionth) Reader
President Honors Local Literacy Volunteers
Volunteers Fight Rising Tide of Illiteracy
Library Doubles Tutoring Efforts**

City, State, Date – *This is the “dateline,” the city your press release is issued from (usually your headquarters) and the date you are mailing, emailing, or faxing your release. The dateline is followed by a dash – then your Opening Paragraph. From this point on, the press release is double spaced. Your first sentence must grab the reader's attention; keep it to 25 words or shorter. The first paragraph should always cover the five W's: who, what, when, where, why. Preferably, the “who” is not you but someone the reader already knows, finds interesting, or can identify with. If you do talk about yourself, always do so in the third person.*

The most successful press releases run 500-800 words in length. If there is more than 1 page, indicate this with:

-more-

Do not split paragraphs across the two pages. At the top of the second page, use an

Abbreviated Headline (page 2)

The section after the opening paragraph should include relevant supporting information about your event, program, or services. Include benefits to participants and to the community, and why your program/service is unique. Keep paragraphs short, preferably 3-4 sentences each. Be clear and concise, and do not use jargon or terminology the average reader won't be familiar with.

Resist the temptation to make this section an advocacy sales pitch – focus on the facts. Provide specific information to back up your statements. Show cause and effect, and never generalize, exaggerate, or use exclamation points.

Then add the remainder of the text. Include interesting quotes from learners, tutors, staff members, partners, or donors/underwriters. Quotes must be from credible sources; include information such as job title, length of time with the project, civic honors, etc. to establish their credibility. Example: Jane Jones, project founder and recipient of the Mayor's Community Service Award... Be sure to get permission before quoting someone.

Follow with a **brief recap**: summarize the news one last time.

About (project name): Finish with a very brief project history/description – no more than a sentence or two.

or – END – (to indicate text is finished)

For additional information or a free (*schedule, sample, flyer, etc.*), contact: *Example: For more information, call Sally Smith at 123-457-7890 or email Sally at ssmith@abcc.gov.*

And when you're done, don't forget to proofread, proofread, proofread.

