

Producing a club newsletter

One way to keep members informed about things happening within the K-Kids club is through a club newsletter. This can be a fun and rewarding project that also will serve as an educational tool. Writing articles for the newsletter will sharpen writing skills and build students' vocabularies.

If a computer is not available for use, club members can write the newsletter by hand and use the cut and paste technique—using real scissors and glue. Having fun and providing information to the members is what is important!

If your club has access to a school or home computer with a newsletter-publishing program, members are encouraged to use computer software.

If the elementary school produces a newsletter, request that a K-Kids page be added to the school's newsletter. Club members would still write the articles but not be responsible for producing the newsletter.

If the elementary school does not have a formal newsletter, the club should consider producing a school/K-Kids newsletter that incorporates activities of both the school and club. Every student and teacher would receive a newsletter, keeping the student body up-to-date regarding the club's activities.

After club members make the decision to produce a newsletter, assign a special committee to handle this project. Remember, school policy will influence newsletter production, especially if the club is utilizing the school's equipment. The faculty advisor who is well-informed about school policy should be included in all the newsletter-planning phases.

Newsletter committee members will want to discuss the following items before finalizing the newsletter:

- Develop a name for the club newsletter.
- Establish a newsletter production schedule (bi-monthly, monthly, etc.).
- Establish a timeline for newsletter production. The following tasks should be completed by certain dates for each issue: article submission, layout, proofreading, duplicating and distribution.
- Decide what information will be included in every issue.
- Appoint one individual to collect articles for the newsletter.
- Appoint an individual to type or write the information and produce the newsletter layout.
- Appoint a group of newsletter proofreaders.
- Talk to school administration and develop a strategy for duplicating and distributing the newsletter.
- Establish an effective reminder system to motivate members who write for the newsletter.
- Develop a newsletter mailing list, which includes individuals and organizations that should receive information about the club, such as the Kiwanis district bulletin editor, school newspaper editor, local newspaper editor and school yearbook editor. Include a note with the newsletter saying that all articles are available for reprint, and list a club contact person.

Most club newsletters include specific information in every issue. You can use all or a few of the following suggestions to assist with development of your newsletter.

Monthly checklist of newsletter articles

- Upcoming meeting schedule: A listing of the day, date, time and the scheduled program for upcoming meetings.
- Special announcements: Announcements of special activities, club board meetings, etc.
- Recognition/thank-you section: Recognize others for assisting with club projects, etc.
- Special member news: Special announcements about member accomplishments.
- Birthdays: A listing of those individuals celebrating birthdays.
- Kiwanis news: Informative and interesting facts about Kiwanis International from the Kiwanis Web site www.kiwanis.org.
- Current club projects: Update on the club's current service projects.
- Fun items: Tips, jokes, quotes, cartoons, contest, crafts, recipes, etc.
- Kiwanis contest information: Information about Kiwanis International contests to recognize K-Kids members.
- Personals advertisements: Maybe a listing of items for sale.

All club members should have the opportunity to write articles for the newsletter. If there is someone in the club who enjoys writing, ask that person if he or she would be interested in writing a column for the newsletter every issue. The newsletter committee should establish a timeline for submission of articles and remind club members at each meeting when articles are due. If enough club members are involved with writing, compiling information for the newsletter every month will be an enjoyable task.

For creative newsletter layout ideas, visit the K-Kids Web site at www.kkids.org and download the newsletter template. Remember, the sky is the limit, be creative, use two or three different font styles, and insert fun clip art. If you do not have a computer, print the newsletter template from the Web site and type or write the information you would like to include in the appropriate areas. Remember, producing a newsletter should be a fun way to provide your members with useful information.