

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND UTAH PTA ORGANIZATIONS



Welcome to the world of Public Relations -- as it relates to the PTA.

For many PTA leaders, this may be your first experience with public relations, but in reality if you have spent any time in the PTA organization, you have already been directly involved with public relations.

Public Relations is merely the art of getting word of your organization to your key audiences through a specific medium.

This medium may be as simple as the handout a child takes home from school that announces the next PTA meeting or activity. It may be a formal letter to the editor of the local newspaper. It may be inviting the print or broadcast media to cover your fundraising project, recognizing the outstanding teachers and students at your school, or a special event that promotes community awareness in education.

Successful public relations begin with a purpose and is supported by the PTA leadership, school teachers, administrators and PTA volunteers.

Now that you have been asked to volunteer your time, talent and energy to this important position, let's answer two of your most important questions; *What am I supposed to do and How am I going to do it?*

The role and responsibility of the PTA Public Relations officer.

Your role and responsibilities are determined by the PTA president, and the board, as they decide how they want the PTA publicized and marketed to the community.

The following are examples of various functions performed by a PTA Public Relations officer:

1. The PTA President is the PTA organization's elected spokesperson and you are the delegated contact with the local media.
2. You are the PTA organization's primary communication's officer.
3. You are the editor/coordinator of the PTA's newsletter.
4. You are the editor/coordinator of the PTA's website.
5. You provide support to other members of the PTA board in membership, teacher appreciation and community relations.
 - See Utah PTA 2004-2005 Handbook, Public Relations Section, for complete listing of responsibilities.

Fulfilling the role and responsibility of the PTA Public Relations officer?

1. Know and understand the mission of PTA.
 - a. To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children;
 - b. To assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children;
 - c. To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.

- 2. Know where you can go for help, ideas and assistance.**
 - a. Utah PTA Public Relations Handbook**
 - b. Utah PTA Vice President for Public Relations**
 - c. Utah PTA (www.utahpta.org)**
 - d. National PTA (www.pta.org)**
 - e. Utah PTA Region Public Relations officer, or Region Director or Council President.**
 - f. Local PTA president and board members**
 - g. PTA parents with expertise in community communications**

- 3. Develop an active and consistent PTA public relations program, under the direction of the local PTA president and board members.**
 - a. Be involved in all PTA calendaring activities.**
 - b. Be the PTA organization's coordinator of communications.**
 - c. Make communicating with your key audiences an essential element of every PTA activity.**
 - d. Begin each PTA activity with a communication purpose in mind.**
 - e. Produce communication tools that support the purpose of the PTA activity.**
 - f. Tailor your communication efforts to the needs of the PTA organization.**
 - g. Use other members of the board and PTA parents to evaluate your communication efforts in order to make them better.**

Public Relations is an essential element in the success of the PTA. If your members don't know what you are doing, how do you expect the non-members to find out and want to become part of the PTA?

When you communicate with your key audiences; those who support PTA and those who sit on the sidelines, it is important that everyone knows what the PTA is and how it functions for the benefit of children and their education.

Remember the medium you choose to communicate your message is just the channel; the communication is between you and the audience.

The best spokesperson for an organization is one who truly believes in the product represented by the organization. To believe in that product, you have to know and understand the values that are represented by the product.

As a parent, nothing is more important than our family and children. We seek to provide our children with the best opportunities to help them grow into responsible and productive members of society. These same values are found in the local PTA. The more people become aware of and involved in the PTA, the benefits to the community are immeasurable.

You are the voice of the local PTA, you know and understand the values of the PTA and you can tell the PTA story because it is your story and that of your children's future.

Lights, camera, ACTION !