



How to use the Early Achievers customizable news release

If you decide to use the customizable news release provided in the Early Achievers Toolkit, here are some guidelines:

1. News releases are best when they are sent via email, either in the body of an email or as an attachment.
2. Introduce your news release when sending it by writing an interesting subject line that explains the purpose of the email. For example, “News Release: Spokane’s XYZ (your child care name) Child Care Recently Recognized for Quality.”
3. Set up the news release in the body of the email. For example “Attached please find a news release from XYZ Child Care on their exciting achievement.” Or write it more like a typical email:

“Dear x: I am the director of XYZ Child Care and our center recently achieved a Quality Level of Excellence. The news release below contains more details.”
4. Send the news release in a timely fashion. For example, if you are announcing you’ve been rated, send the release within a day or two of getting your rating. News organizations are reluctant to cover something that is weeks or months old.
5. Be prepared for phone calls and be responsive. If you are contacted by a reporter, and you are truly busy, ask the reporter if you can schedule a time to talk. Try to avoid this, as reporters may not want to wait. Also, media outlets may ask for an opportunity to get video or photographs. If this is not something you want to do, you might reconsider sending a news release. You also could offer to provide the media outlet with digital pictures via email. Make sure you have photo release forms from families.
6. When sending a new release, a mass email is fine, but you should send the news release to yourself and blind cc the people you are emailing.
7. Creating a list of people to send the news release to is perhaps the most time consuming step. (More in point 8) Knowing where to look and who to contact will make it easier. Here are a few suggestions.
 - Send the news release to the big three TV stations that broadcast in your area, ABC, NBC and CBS affiliates. Bigger cities such as Seattle and Portland will also have news operations at the FOX affiliate and at independent stations.
 - Send the news release to any local radio station that provides news.
 - Send the news release to the local paper. Don’t forget smaller publications such as weekly or specialty papers and publications.
 - Send the news release to supporters. For example, if your site is part of a larger nonprofit, let the parent organization know. Consider sending the news release to nearby businesses.
8. Gathering email address is easier than you might think. Nearly every media outlet has a website. Pull it up and look for a contact page, or a place to send news tips. If you have a relationship with a particular reporter, contact him or her directly.