

## Getting Your Letter to the Editor in Print

AOTA, like most associations, encourages its members to write letters to the editors of publications that print inaccurate or negative messages about occupational therapy. Statistics show that letters written by local citizens, rather than officers of an association, tend to get published more frequently, particularly in smaller newspapers.

So, if you want to write but need a push, or if you have written a letter to the editor before and been disappointed that it wasn't published, here are some tips to improve your chances for publication:

1. Keep the letter as brief as possible and focus on the issue at hand. Citing research or statistics is also good.
2. Send the letter with a cover note introducing yourself. Include your credentials or affiliations that explain your ability to address the issue.
3. Don't use technical jargon in the letter; instead, make an effort to use words and phrases that any reader could understand.
4. Don't promote yourself, your organization, or an event. Letters that appear to be self-promoting generally get ignored.
5. Have something of substance to say and take a stand.
6. Relate the letter to the publication's readers. Explain why what you have to say is important to readers and to the community at large.
7. Be persistent. If the first letter to the editor you write doesn't get published, don't be discouraged—keep trying.