



HOW TO SUBMIT AN OP-ED

General Guidelines

An Op-Ed is an opinion piece usually published opposite the editorial page, hence its name. Op-Eds are frequently written by columnists, public officials or heads of organizations. However, anyone can submit an Op-Ed.

Before writing an Op-Ed, check the newspaper's web site or call your local newspaper and ask for the name of the Op-Ed editor (verify that you have the correct spelling) and guidelines for submission. Your Op-Ed should be longer than a letter to the editor; 750 words is usually a good length. Be sure to type it double-spaced.

After you have written the Op-Ed, submit it along with a cover letter addressed to the Op-Ed Page Editor. Follow up with a phone call a few days later to confirm that he/she received it and to ask if it will be published. Be sure to submit the piece at least two weeks prior to the time you want it to appear because space for Op-Eds is often planned in advance. If the Editor declines your Op-Ed, then try another paper. Just don't send your Op-Ed to more than one paper at the same time.

It takes a little longer to write and place an Op-Ed than a letter to the editor, but the extra effort is worth it. Op-Eds are more widely read by policymakers than letters to the editor, and they are much more influential.

If You Get Published

If you get published, SHARE the news! It inspires people to use their voices as well. Email or send a copy of your letter or Op-Ed to the Kids Are Priority One Coalition's Communications Coordinator: Melissa.Riegel-Garrett@vaeyc.org We will post it on the Kids Are Priority One web site.

Maximize the political impact of your letter by sending it to your Senator or Representative. If your letter or Op-Ed mentions your legislators by name, it is likely that they will see it. However, sending them a copy of your printed opinion (by fax or snail mail), along with a brief personal letter or marginal note, will reinforce your message.