



## *How to Write a Letter to the Editor*

An important way to communicate the importance of how OhioRISE impacts families across Ohio is to write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper. If you live in a suburban community, you can write to both your daily newspaper and your suburban weekly paper.

Here are some tips:

- 1. Read the directions.** Go to the newspaper's website or look on the page that contains the letters to the editor to find the specific directions for sending a letter to the editor of that paper. It may give you a maximum word count and directions for sending the letter.
- 2. Be informative, not promotional.** The purpose of letters to the editor is to give members of the community a platform to inform readers on important issues. Make sure to take a position and support your position with facts. This is not an area for promotional or commercial messaging. Promotional content is reserved for advertising sections of newspapers.
- 3. Be concise.** Your letter should not be more than 200 words and three paragraphs. Even so, the editors reserve the right to edit your letter to make it more brief without changing your position. You should be respectful and professional in your letter.
- 4. Stay focused.** If you are responding to an article, mention the name of the article in the first sentence of your letter. (You should respond to any article within a few days, or your letter may not be used.) Your **first paragraph** should state your support for blood donation. Your **second paragraph** can include facts or a brief statement of why you think this is important. Your **third paragraph** should sum up your position.
- 5. Include your contact information.** When you send a letter to the editor, you must include your name, home address and daytime phone number. Typically, a newspaper editor will call you to confirm that you sent the letter. You can ask the paper not to publish your name, but this may cause them not to publish the letter. They will not print your address or phone number.
- 6. Proofread.** Make sure you do not have grammatical mistakes or typos in the letter.
- 7. Submit the letter through the newspaper's website, if possible.** You can check the printed newspaper as well as the website to see if you are published. Many papers are now posting most letters to the editor online.