

# Letter Writing

## *The Key To Making Your Voice Heard*

by Catherine Daw

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How many times have you heard from us that you must write letters? Believe it or not, letters count, and politicians (and researchers) know that behind every letter they receive there are likely another hundred people with similar thoughts who simply haven't voiced them. The power of letters and petitions is alive and well.

But how to get started and motivated to actually sit down and write that letter? One effective way that has been used by other lobby groups is to conduct letter-writing as part of your regular meeting - perhaps as the first item on the agenda. How you do it is up to your group, but here are some suggestions.

- Provide paper, stamps, envelopes, addresses and pens.
- As a group, brainstorm a topic(s), issues and basic ideas to include in a letter.
- As a group, select whom you will write to (one person or many?)
- Spend about 15 minutes actually hand-writing the letter - it doesn't need to be longer than a page and should highlight the key points.
- Sign the letter, address the envelope and put the stamp on.
- Designate someone to actually collect and mail the letters.

Within a half hour to 45 minutes, you have generated some effective action which ultimately reaches the politicians. This process can work in a wide variety of circumstances and, with a little bit of imagination, you can generate a lot of ideas, whom to target and different methods of sending the message. Just to get you started, here are some of my own ideas.

- Respond to an article in the newspaper.
- Target a trustee on a specific issue.
- Write to your MP, MPP or municipal official (mayor, councillor).
- Write to support a teacher or school (be sure to copy the newspaper and others).
- Write to the Minister of Education and Training, and copy the Premier.

No matter what, just keep on writing! The power of the written word is incredible.