

# Don't keep your book drive a secret!

## *Send a press release to spread the word*

Sending a press release is a great way to let your community know about your book drive. It can lead to donations of books and money. If you are a child or teen, it's a great idea to have an adult review your press release before you send it. And if you are adult it is a good idea too!

Press releases follow a standard—and easy—format. And the best ones are four or five short paragraphs, with short, clear sentences. You will find a sample below.

### What to include

1. At the top of your release, write FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
2. Provide contact information in case the reporter wants additional information or an interview. Include the name, email and day time phone for an adult or parent of one of the book drive organizers. If you created your own page on the ALP website, also include that link here.
3. Write a headline that will grab attention
4. The first paragraph should begin with the city and state where the book drive will take place and the date of the release.
5. In the first paragraph answer the questions—who, what, where, when, why and how.
6. In the second paragraph use a quote from someone involved in the book drive, explaining why he/she is volunteering to collect books.
7. The third paragraph should contain information about the African Library Project. Feel free to use the paragraph in the sample.
8. The last paragraph should give more details about how people can help
9. Add a “tag” about ALP and about your organization. If you have a website, add that web address.

### What you should do

1. Write your press release draft
2. After someone reviews your draft, send it in an email with no attachments to contacts from your local newspaper(s), radio station(s), and TV stations. You can find contact emails on the websites for your local press resources. The email subject line should be brief and descriptive. Include the name of your town or city in the subject line, so the reporters know it is a local story; for example, Mayfield Scouts Start Library in Ghana
3. It's a good idea to call your local paper or tv station the day before any good photo opportunities. If you are having a fundraiser, a book-packing party, or taking all the boxes to the post office, let the media know.
4. If you get local press, let ALP know!

# Sample Press Release

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### For Additional Information

Name  
Phone number  
Email address

## Scouts Start Library in Ghana: Mayfield Youth Send Beloved Books around the World

*[City, State, USA, Date]* --The Mayfield Boy Scout Troop 16 is collecting 1000 books and \$500 to ship the books to start a high school library in Ghana as part of the African Library Project. The Scouts are collecting books at the Mayfield Public Library until April 18<sup>th</sup> and holding carwashes every Saturday in April to raise money. They are working hard to share the gift of books with teens like them who do not have enough books.

"I love to read and I go to the library all the time," says 15-year-old Victor Castrejon, one of the Scouts organizing the book drive. "I was sad to hear that kids in Ghana don't have many books. I'm excited to be part of starting a library at a school that doesn't have one."

The African Library Project has mobilized volunteers from across the United States to start 1,825 libraries in 11 countries over the past 10 years. A volunteer-based organization headquartered in Berkeley, CA, ALP helps Americans work with African partners to create libraries in communities with little or no access to books. "We couldn't do it without the dedication and creativity of book drive organizers," says Chris Bradshaw, founder of the African Library Project.

The troop is requesting donations of paperback books in English at a 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade reading level. Books can be dropped off at [address]. Donations can be mailed to [address] or dropped off at [address]. The troop will be having a carwash on [dates] at [address]. The Scouts are bringing together the whole community to help out a community in Ghana.

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### **African Library Project**

The African Library Project matches schools and organizations in the United States with African communities to create libraries. U.S. children and families donate their books and share the gift of reading with children in Africa. Books are collected in the U.S. through book drives and shipped by volunteers directly to the communities requesting them. [www.africanlibraryproject.org](http://www.africanlibraryproject.org)

Contact: [execdir@africanlibraryproject.org](mailto:execdir@africanlibraryproject.org)

### **Name of your scout troop, school, or other organization**

*[Add a couple of sentences about the organization with website if you have it, just like we did above for the African Library Project]*

Contact: *[List the name, phone number, email of the contact (could be the same person as listed at top of press release or different, but be sure they know about your book drive!)]*

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