

T O O L K I T

F E B R U A R Y I S

NATIONAL

PARENT

LEADERSHIP[®]

M O N T H



T O O L K I T



Dear Friends,

Parents Anonymous® Inc. has declared February as National Parent Leadership Month in order to recognize and honor parents for their leadership roles in their homes and communities and in state, national and international arenas. Parent Leadership is an essential and effective means of strengthening families and preventing child abuse and neglect. National Parent Leadership Month highlights the many opportunities available for parents, professionals, policymakers and other community members to engage in partnerships with the goal of building and supporting strong and safe families. Each year, events celebrating Parent Leadership take place all across the country throughout the month of February.

We welcome your collaboration in making National Parent Leadership Month an exciting opportunity to honor Parent Leaders. This Tool Kit is provided to assist you in working closely with Parent Leaders to organize activities and outreach opportunities to promote Parent Leadership in your community. We have included a broad range of suggestions and tools in hopes that some or all of them will be useful for your organization. The Table of Contents within the Tool Kit describes each document and provides guidelines for its most effective use.

Be sure to join the Parents Anonymous® Inc. *Parent Leadership Network*, an online e-mail group where parents and staff regularly talk about Parent Leadership and exchange ideas, knowledge and experiences. You can register at www.parentleadershipnetwork.org. Members share valuable examples of their National Parent Leadership Month activities, so it is a helpful place to get ideas. You can also post information about your National Parent Leadership Month activities.

We want to recognize the valuable contributions of Parents Anonymous® Inc.'s National Parent Leadership Team®, National Parent Leadership Month Planning Committee, Board of Directors and our national and local partners in planning for this exciting month. Please join us in this major effort to recognize parents in their important roles. Working together, we can help families achieve positive outcomes.

If you are planning to celebrate National Parent Leadership Month or if you have any questions, please contact Parents Anonymous® Inc. at (909) 621-6184, extension 220 or by e-mail at mlevine@parentsanonymous.org.

Sincerely,

Freddie Gardner, Chair
Board of Directors
Parents Anonymous® Inc.

Lisa Pion-Berlin, Ph.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer
Parents Anonymous® Inc.

PARENTS ANONYMOUS® INC.
675 WEST FOOTHILL BLVD.
SUITE 220
CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA
91711-3475

(909) 621-6184
FAX (909) 625-6304
www.parentsanonymous.org

National Parent Leadership Month Tool Kit

Table of Contents

Everything in this Tool Kit is designed to assist your organization in promoting and gaining visibility for National Parent Leadership Month in your community. This is your opportunity to work closely with Parent Leaders to educate neighbors, colleagues, the media and public officials about National Parent Leadership Month.

I. Parent Leadership: An Overview

These resources will help you discuss and describe Parent Leadership. They can be used as flyers, as handouts, or given to the media to be used with stories about National Parent Leadership Month. One document describes specific examples of Parent Leadership and advocacy.

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II. National Parent Leadership Month: Overview and Activities

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This resource highlights the key messages and talking points about National Parent Leadership Month. Please review it carefully before communicating with the media, parents, community leaders, public officials, etc.

Identifying Potential Partners.....Page 11

Collaboration is essential in any successful campaign. This resource provides examples of potential partners for your organization. Be sure to connect with your local Parents Anonymous® organization if one is available in your community.

Suggestions for Activities and Community Involvement.....Page 12–13

These suggestions will help you let your community know about National Parent Leadership Month. This is your opportunity to collaborate with partners in educating the public about Parent Leadership as well as celebrating Parent Leaders. Activities such as contests, exhibits, workshops and recognition events can help make each February a celebration of Parent Leaders.

Parent Leaders and National Parent Leadership MonthPage 14

This is a list outlining some of the ways Parent Leaders can actively participate in National Parent Leadership Month events and activities.

III. Requesting Proclamations

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This resource can be used to create a letter inviting elected public officials to participate in a National Parent Leadership Month event and/or to issue a proclamation.

Sample ProclamationPage 17–18

Add credibility to your activities and generate media attention by encouraging your governor, mayor or other local official to proclaim February (Year) as National Parent Leadership Month in your state or local area. Use this sample proclamation and make it official!

IV. Preparing for Public Speaking/Interviews

Guidelines for Selecting and Preparing Parent Leaders to be Spokespersons.....Page 19–20

This resource should be used when selecting Parent Leaders who will serve as spokespersons for National Parent Leadership Month in your area. It will help in preparing them for the experience of speaking in public and/or with the media.

Tips for Parent Leader SpokespersonsPage 21–22

This resource provides guidelines that will help Parent Leaders prepare for and understand all issues involved with public speaking or media interviews. Please copy and distribute this document to Parent Leaders who take on these important roles.

Tips for Television Appearances by Parent Leaders and Staff.....Page 23

These are important tips for staff and Parent Leaders to review ahead of time when scheduled for a television appearance.

Proposed Media Questions.....Page 24–26

It is a good idea to send along suggested interview questions after you have scheduled a television or radio interview. This will be helpful to the producer and the interviewer and will help guide them in the direction you would like the interview to go. Always be prepared for questions that are not on the list.

V. Getting the Media’s Attention

Sample Press ReleasePage 27–28

This is your basic tool for generating news coverage. It provides the “who, what, where, why, when and how” of a news story. Adapt the sample release by including information about your organization. Prepare the release on your organization’s letterhead and e-mail/mail/fax it to your print and electronic media. Call first to find out the name of the person to whom it should be sent. Follow-up two or three days after you have sent it.

Sample Pitch Letters.....Page 29–30

If your local radio or television stations have a morning show, a public affairs talk show, or other interview program, use this sample pitch letter to schedule an interview for a Parent Leader and staff person. There is also an example of a “real” pitch letter, which provides additional help. Call the station first to find out the name of the person who should receive the letter. It’s usually the producer of the program or news broadcast. Always follow up.

Sample Letters to the EditorPage 31–32

The “Letters” page, which is often located in the commentary section of a newspaper, has wide appeal. Letters reflect the community and people read them. Take advantage of the opportunity to have a letter about Parent Leadership published in your local paper by using the enclosed sample as a guideline. There is also an example of a completed Letter to the Editor, which provides additional help. Call the paper to find out the name of the person to whom it should be sent and ask what the word limit is.

Sample Public Service Announcement Solicitation LetterPage 33

This letter should accompany the sample Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and should be sent to the public affairs or program director at your local radio station. Call before sending it to determine the person responsible for the PSAs at each radio station.

Sample Public Service AnnouncementsPage 34–36

Public Service Announcements (PSAs) are a resource for nonprofit organizations. Radio stations in some communities require proof of your organization’s nonprofit status. Call your local radio station, and ask the name of the person to whom they should be sent, the lead time and whether or not they require proof of nonprofit status. Send the PSAs with the sample solicitation letter.

VI. Using Newsletters and Web Sites to Promote National Parent Leadership Month

Web Site/Newsletter Copy (Long)Page 37

This resource can be used either on your organization’s web site or in your newsletter. It can also be submitted to other organizations, businesses, etc., with a request that it run in their newsletters and/or be placed on their web sites.

Web Site Copy (Short).....Page 38

A web site is always a great place to post messages. If space is limited, use this resource by placing it on your organization’s web site. Ask other organizations to place it on theirs if space limits do not allow for the longer web copy.

VII. Helpful Resources

Internet Resources Related to Children and FamiliesPage 39–40

The Internet resources listed here provide useful information related to children and families. Some content will be helpful in advocacy, public awareness, and strategic planning activities.

Parents Anonymous® Inc. Background InformationPage 41–42

This will serve as a resource when Parents Anonymous® Inc. background is needed.

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This is a special Certificate of Recognition that can be used to acknowledge parents as leaders. The certificate can be awarded to Parent Leaders at events or meetings

Sample Certificate of Recognition for Co-Sponsors and Other Organizations.....Page 44

This is a special Certificate of Recognition that can be used to acknowledge Co-Sponsors and other organizations. The certificate can be awarded at events or meetings and may be used to generate media coverage.

VIII. Tool Kit Evaluation Survey

National Parent Leadership Month Tool Kit Evaluation Survey.....Page 45–48

Please give us your feedback! Share your name, organization, the local events and activities you planned (including the partners who helped you), and any comments or suggestions you have. Fill out the form and mail it to Parents Anonymous® Inc. at 675 West Foothill Blvd., Ste 220, Claremont, CA 91711 or fax it to (909) 625-6304. **You can also fill out the form online at www.parentsanonymous.org.**

What is Parent Leadership?

Meaningful Parent Leadership occurs when parents gain the knowledge and skills to function in meaningful leadership roles and represent a “parent voice” to help shape the direction of their families, programs and communities. Parent Leadership is successfully achieved when parents and professionals build effective partnerships and share responsibility, expertise and leadership in decisions being made that affect families and communities. The parents involved in these collaborations are called **Parent Leaders**.

Throughout the country, parents and professionals are working together in new ways. They are participating jointly in local, regional and national planning processes, collaborating as grant reviewers and program evaluators, and serving on advisory boards and coalitions. Working together, the voices of parents and professionals are shaping policy and practice to make a positive difference in the lives of children and families.

Who Is A Parent Leader?

A Parent Leader...

- ◆ May be a parent, grandparent, kinship care provider, foster parent, or anyone else in a parenting role
- ◆ Has personal experience in using resources/services to strengthen his or her family
- ◆ Is speaking and acting from his or her perspective as a parent
- ◆ Is not speaking and acting in a staff role for an organization or institution.

Parent Leaders can be most effective when the following supports provide a strong foundation for their work:

- ◆ A defined meaningful role as a Parent Leader
- ◆ Access to training
- ◆ Clear opportunities to contribute to program development, implementation, oversight and evaluation, policymaking, training and technical assistance, public awareness and outreach
- ◆ Tangible supports such as assistance with child care and transportation and compensation for wages lost from work while contributing in a Parent Leader role
- ◆ Opportunities to work in partnership with staff and professionals in organizations that address key issues related to the Parent Leader’s area of interest and commitment.

20 Ways to Demonstrate Parent Leadership

There are numerous areas where Parent Leaders can take on active, meaningful Parent Leadership roles. Some of these roles are listed below. What other roles might be available in your own organization or in your community or state?

- ❖ Role Model for Other Parents
- ❖ Co-Trainer
- ❖ Contributor to Written and Audiovisual Materials
- ❖ Participant at Conferences and Working Meetings
- ❖ Grant Reviewer
- ❖ Participant in Quality Improvement and Evaluation Activities
- ❖ Participant in Needs/Strengths Assessment Processes
- ❖ Advocate for Individuals, Families and/or Programs
- ❖ Participant in Focus Groups
- ❖ Advisory Board Member
- ❖ Member of Hiring Committees
- ❖ Member of Boards of Directors
- ❖ Peer Review Team Member
- ❖ Task Force Member
- ❖ Member of Planning Commission
- ❖ Witness at Public Hearings
- ❖ Public Speaker
- ❖ Media Interviewee
- ❖ Fund Raiser
- ❖ Spokesperson

Pathways to Parent Leadership

Ten Steps to Success

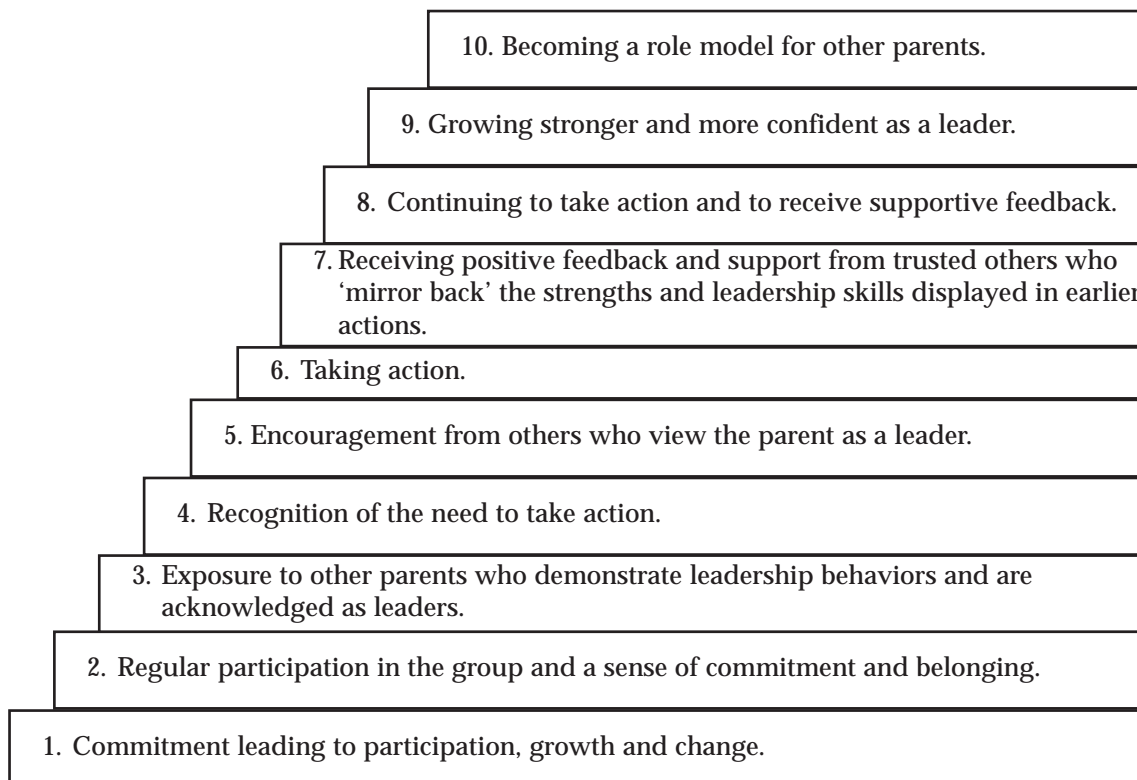
The model below describes the steps many Parent Leaders experience as they move along their personal pathways to identifying and building their leadership skills and taking on leadership roles. This process usually is not linear, and Parent Leaders may move up and down the steps based on their personal life situations, commitments and activities. Parent Leadership is fostered by supporting parents wherever they are along this path of growth and development.

The key elements of this model include:

- Connections with other Parent Leaders in leadership roles
- Opportunities to take on leadership roles, however small at first, and to practice them in a safe setting
- A relationship with another person the Parent Leader respects and trusts and who provides them with important feedback and support
- A sense of belonging to the group or organization where their leadership skills are put into practice.

Pathways to Parent Leadership

Ten Steps to Success



(c. 1998, Based on Results of Two Research Studies Conducted by Parents Anonymous[®] Inc., 1995 - 1997)

Parent Leaders as Strong Advocates

In the normal course of daily life there are many times Parent Leaders take a stand, support people and ideas they believe in, or seek clarification on an issue. Parent Leaders are often strong advocates for themselves, their own and other families and their communities. If you are a parent, use the questions below to help identify the many ways you act as an advocate and a Parent Leader.

Can you imagine yourself doing any of the following?

1. Getting together with other parents to start a new program for parents in your community.
2. Helping a neighbor who gets a confusing letter from school about his or her child's behavior in class.
3. Making a presentation at your church about how you became a Parent Leader, or how they can strengthen and support families.
4. Responding when your child's school says they may change the rules about whether pregnant teens can stay in school, and they want to hear from parents.
5. Testifying as part of a panel before a state legislative committee on the importance of state funding for family strengthening programs.

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, then you are an advocate, because each one is an example of advocacy. For example:

- ✓ The first question relates to “self” advocacy, something we do all the time when we speak up for ourselves or our families.
- ✓ The second question relates to “case” advocacy, which often involves helping someone else resolve a concern with a complicated bureaucracy.
- ✓ The third question relates to “public or community education,” which is another form of advocacy.
- ✓ The fourth question relates to “administrative or regulatory” advocacy, which includes responding in writing when a governmental department asks for feedback from the public when it proposes a change in its rules.
- ✓ The fifth question relates to “legislative” advocacy, which includes taking steps such as testifying, making a phone call or writing a letter to educate and influence a legislator's position.

National Parent Leadership Month

Key Campaign Messages and Talking Points

Key Campaign Messages

- * National Parent Leadership Month was created in order to recognize, honor and celebrate parents for their vital leadership roles in their homes and communities and in state, national and international arenas.
- * Parent Leadership is an essential and effective means of strengthening families and preventing child abuse and neglect.
- * Meaningful Parent Leadership occurs when parents gain the knowledge and skills to function in leadership roles and represent a “parent voice” to help shape the direction of their families, programs, policies, and communities.
- * Research on Parent Leadership shows that all parents have the potential to become strong Parent Leaders.

Talking Points

- * Parents Anonymous® Inc. has declared the month of February as National Parent Leadership Month as a means of honoring and celebrating parents for their leadership roles in their homes and communities and in state, national and international arenas.
- * In 1969, Parents Anonymous® Inc. was founded through a partnership between a Parent Leader and a professional and, to this day, continues to operate in partnership with Parent Leaders in all aspects of its work.
- * Parent Leadership is a vital family strengthening and child abuse prevention strategy.
 - All parents have the potential to become Parent Leaders.
 - Parent leadership strengthens families and prevents child abuse on multiple levels – the individual and the family – and creates positive change in the systems that serve and support children and families.
 - The experience of having influence on issues of personal importance helps parents who take on leadership roles expand their strengths and their ability to develop and implement plans to reach specific goals.
 - Serving as a Parent Leader provides opportunities for growth and helps parents gain increased self-esteem and a stronger sense of personal power.

- Often, parents who take on leadership roles in their homes, communities and other settings become more confident and assertive, transferring their leadership skills to other areas of their lives, such as advocating in their children's schools.
 - Parents who are Parent Leaders are role-modeling positive, productive behaviors for their families, and this can have a positive impact on all family members, as well as generate increased respect for the Parent Leader in his or her own family.
 - Often, children of Parent Leaders begin to take on leadership roles appropriate for their age group, based on their parent's modeling and ability to provide increased guidance about these new behaviors.
 - Health, education, social service and any other systems that affect children and families will achieve more positive results, utilize resources more effectively and expand their ability to create change when they partner with Parent Leaders to plan, implement, oversee and evaluate their services.
- * A Parent Leader...
 - May be a parent, grandparent, kinship care provider, foster parent, or anyone in a parenting role
 - Has personal experience in using resources/services to strengthen his or her family
 - Is speaking and acting from his or her perspective as a parent
 - Is not speaking and acting in a staff role for an organization or institution
 - * Parent Leaders can be most effective when the following supports provide a strong foundation for their work:
 - A defined meaningful role as a Parent Leader
 - Access to training
 - Clear opportunities to contribute to program development, implementation, oversight and evaluation, policymaking, training and technical assistance, public awareness and outreach
 - Tangible supports such as assistance with child care and transportation and compensation for wages lost while contributing in a Parent Leader role
 - Opportunities to work in partnership with staff and professionals in organizations that address key issues related to the Parent Leader's area of interest and commitment
 - * Parents Anonymous® Inc. research has shown that parents are more likely to become Parent Leaders when they:
 - Feel accepted, encouraged and supported by other parents and professionals
 - Are recognized for their successes and contributions
 - Receive positive feedback and reinforcement
 - See other parents like themselves taking on leadership roles

Identifying Potential Partners in Celebrating National Parent Leadership Month

Celebrating National Parent Leadership Month. can be a communitywide effort. Your organization can be the catalyst for bringing together diverse organizations and individuals with an interest in supporting and honoring Parent Leaders. We strongly encourage your organization to coordinate National Parent Leadership Month activities with the Parents Anonymous® Program in your area or with Parents Anonymous® Inc. State and local Parents Anonymous® Programs can be found at www.parentsanonymous.org. Check out the sample list of potential partners below and see how many you might want to contact:

- ✓ American Association of University Women
- ✓ Businesses (such as McDonalds, Burger King, Toys R Us, etc.)
- ✓ CASA (Court Appointed Special. Advocate) Programs
- ✓ Chambers of Commerce
- ✓ Child Abuse Prevention Councils
- ✓ Child Care Settings
- ✓ Children's Toy and Clothing Stores
- ✓ Children's Trust or Prevention Funds
- ✓ Civic Clubs (such as the Kiwanis, Rotary, Civitan, etc.)
- ✓ Community Groups (such as Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, Parents Without Partners, etc.)
- ✓ Head Start Programs
- ✓ Juvenile Justice Organizations
- ✓ Mental Health and Counseling Centers
- ✓ Parent Teacher Associations
- ✓ Public and Private School
- ✓ Public Health Organizations
- ✓ Social Service Organizations
- ✓ State Public Agencies (such as Children and Family Services, Maternal and Child Health, Mental Health, Education, etc.)
- ✓ The Mayor and/or Governor and His or Her Staff
- ✓ United Way
- ✓ Women's Organizations (such as Junior League, Soroptomists, etc.)
- ✓ Youth Organizations (such as Boys and Girls Clubs, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, YMCAs, YWCAs, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, etc.)

Suggestions for Activities and Community Involvement

The following suggestions are designed to assist your organization in promoting and gaining visibility for National Parent Leadership Month in your community. This is your opportunity to work closely with Parent Leaders to educate neighbors, colleagues, the media and public officials about National Parent Leadership Month.

Raise Public Awareness

- ✱ Publicize National Parent Leadership Month and related activities on your organization's Web site and in newsletters and other publications.
- ✱ Disseminate information about National Parent Leadership Month in your community through newsletters, bulletin boards, web sites and targeted outreach to early childhood programs, schools, parent/teacher organizations, advocacy groups, community centers, special interest groups and businesses. Be sure to highlight successful Parent Leadership stories when possible.
- ✱ Promote awareness of opportunities where Parent Leaders can participate in meaningful Parent Leadership activities in your community such as serving on Child Abuse Prevention Councils, PTAs or boards of directors, working with the media or speaking publicly about issues related to children and families.
- ✱ Highlight the benefits for organizations, systems and communities to partner with parents such as (1) creating more visibility and referrals; (2) advocating for specific needs or services; and (3) participating in new or expanded collaborations among community partners to maximize effective use of resources.
- ✱ Make use of the *Parent Leadership Network*, a unique online community for parents and other interested parties such as staff, community members, professionals, and policymakers from across the country to talk about Parent Leadership development, opportunities and National Parent Leadership Month activities. Membership is free. To join, complete an online registration form at www.parentleadershipnetwork.org.

Write, Visit, Fax, Phone or E-mail your Elected Officials

- ✱ Contact your Governor and other key officials to request that they proclaim February as National Parent Leadership Month and provide a written proclamation/resolution. *(Please refer to the Sample Letter and Sample Proclamation in this Tool Kit.)*
- ✱ Invite your U.S. Congressional members and state and local officials to participate in National Parent Leadership Month activities in your community and/or state.

Honor Parent Leaders in your National Parent Leadership Month Activities

- ✱ Plan Parent Leadership Recognition Events in your organization and at any public events or conferences that your organization sponsors.
- ✱ Talk to other organizations or businesses locally and in your state about jointly honoring specific Parent Leaders at key events and conferences.
- ✱ Co-sponsor an event, such as a coffee gathering, breakfast, picnic, or auction to honor parents. Invite families, community agency representatives, business owners and public officials to this event.
- ✱ Recognize employers who have supported the concept of Parent Leadership by giving Parent Leaders time off from work to engage in Parent Leadership activities.
- ✱ Recognize organizations that have created successful Parent Leadership roles and are actively engaging in partnerships with parents.

Enlist Local Newspapers, Television and Radio Stations

- ✱ Hold a press conference to announce National Parent Leadership Month in your community or state to promote the importance of Parent Leadership.
- ✱ Meet with reporters and the editorial board of your newspaper and urge them to write positive stories about Parent Leaders and highlight the activities built around National Parent Leadership Month. Educate them about the importance of Parent Leadership as a vital child abuse prevention strategy.
- ✱ Request interviews on local television and radio news and talk programs. ***(Please refer to Tips for Television Appearances by Parent Leaders and Staff and Sample Pitch Letters in this Tool Kit.)***
- ✱ Encourage radio stations to run public service announcements. ***(Please refer to the Sample Public Services Announcements and Solicitation Letter in this Tool Kit.)***
- ✱ Encourage your local newspapers to run press releases and human interest stories. ***(Please refer to the Sample Press Release in this Tool Kit.)***

Parent Leaders and National Parent Leadership Month

Some of the ways that Parent Leaders can assist prior to, and during, National Parent Leadership Month are:

- ✓ Sign up on the *Parent Leadership Network* (www.parentleadershipnetwork.org) to get and share ideas about National Parent Leadership Month and Parent Leadership
- ✓ Help find a venue for a conference or other event
- ✓ Find someone to design an invitation pro bono
- ✓ Offer to speak at a conference
- ✓ Offer to tell personal stories at an event (For example, A day in the Life of a Parent Leader)
- ✓ Serve on a National Parent Leadership Month committee
- ✓ Help raise money for an event or offer to find required in-kind services
- ✓ Serve at the check-in table
- ✓ Help create promotional materials and/or distribute them (flyers, posters, pamphlets and other materials)
- ✓ Bring awareness of National Parent Leadership Month to local organizations, schools, community centers and others and share this Tool Kit, either in hard copy or by directing them to www.parentsanonymous.org
- ✓ Be an official greeter at an event
- ✓ Offer to do television, radio or print interviews
- ✓ Help to establish relationships with known media contacts
- ✓ Help to establish relationships with business owners who might contribute money or an in-kind service or resource
- ✓ Identify and contact potential partners in the community
- ✓ Send letters to the editor of local newspapers, such as the sample included in this Tool Kit
- ✓ Contact local radio and television stations and ask them to run the PSAs available in the Tool Kit
- ✓ Help to search out donated door prizes
- ✓ Facilitate distribution of certificates to Parent Leaders being honored
- ✓ Offer suggestions for the best ways to honor parents
- ✓ Offer suggestions for conference topics and take charge of a session
- ✓ Help ask public officials for their support and for proclamations
- ✓ Tell friends and relatives all about National Parent Leadership Month and encourage them to honor the Parent Leaders they know
- ✓ Write articles for agency newsletters, community newspapers, church bulletins, etc.
- ✓ Ask the leader of places of worship to make an announcement about National Parent Leadership Month and to honor Parent Leaders in the congregation
- ✓ Personally contact parents you view as leaders and acknowledge their important work

Sample Letter to Public Officials Requesting a Proclamation

Date

Name
Address

RE: National Parent Leadership Month

Dear

We would like to propose a unique opportunity for **(Name of your organization)** and the **(State, City, County)** to join together to promote an exciting initiative, **National Parent Leadership Month**. Each year throughout the month of February, National Parent Leadership Month will recognize, honor and celebrate parents for the vital leadership roles they hold in their homes, communities and in local, state, national and international arenas. This annual event will acknowledge the strengths of parents as leaders and generate awareness about the important roles parents play in shaping the lives of their families and communities.

Child abuse and neglect remain a national crisis, taking the lives of four children every day and affecting millions of children and families every year. In 2003, nearly three million reports were made concerning child abuse or neglect.

Strong Parent Leaders are more likely to be effective parents, so promoting Parent Leadership is an essential means of strengthening families and preventing child abuse and neglect. Therefore, Parents Anonymous® Inc. has created National Parent Leadership Month to recognize the extraordinary courage and tenacity of parents who have reached out to make improvements in their families and communities.

We believe that preventing child abuse and providing nurturing, safe homes for our children can best be achieved when professionals, policymakers and concerned citizens work in partnership with parents to improve systems, neighborhoods and policies. **(Insert brief sentence here about your organization.)**

We ask that you proclaim February (Year) as National Parent Leadership Month in **(City, County, State)**. We have enclosed proposed text for such a proclamation for your consideration.

I will follow up with your office in the next few days; however, please don't hesitate to contact me at **(Your phone number)** or email me at **(Your email address)** if you have any questions or need further information.

We hope you will join us and others throughout the country in promoting this important initiative to help strengthen families by recognizing the importance of Parent Leadership.

Sincerely,

Name

Title

Enclosure: Suggested Text for Proclamation/Resolution

National Parent Leadership Month

Sample Proclamation

- **WHEREAS**, meaningful Parent Leadership occurs when parents gain the knowledge and skills necessary to function in meaningful leadership roles and present a “parent voice” to help shape the direction of their families, programs and communities; and
- **WHEREAS**, Parent Leadership is an essential and effective means of strengthening families and preventing child abuse and neglect; and
- **WHEREAS**, Parents Anonymous® Inc. has created National Parent Leadership Month to recognize the extraordinary courage and tenacity of parents who have reached out to make improvements in their families and communities; and
- **WHEREAS, (Name of your organization)** recognizes the vital importance of partnering with parents and assists public systems and private organizations, policymakers and other key stakeholders to effectively implement Parent Leadership strategies; and
- **WHEREAS**, Parent Leadership is a necessary component in any effective family strengthening and family support program; and
- **WHEREAS**, Parent Leadership is successfully achieved when parents receive support and training and share responsibility, expertise and leadership in the planning, implementation, oversight and evaluation of policies, practices and programs that affect families and communities; and
- **WHEREAS**, more parents each year are developing vital partnerships with service providers, policymakers and key stakeholders to shape policy and practice and build stronger, safer communities for children; and
- **WHEREAS**, the power of parents speaking publicly about their experiences has made, and will continue to make, an impact on the lives of families everywhere; and
- **(INSERT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION’S LOCAL PARENT LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES)**

We inserted this example for Parents Anonymous® Inc.:

- **WHEREAS**, *Parents Anonymous® Inc. developed the National Parent Leadership Team®, an innovative model that actively supports parents in meaningful Parent Leadership roles to help shape programs, practices, policies and legislation that impact families everywhere; and*
- **WHEREAS**, *Parents Anonymous® Inc. developed the first state-level Parent Leadership Team in California to work as their partners to provide Parent Leadership training and technical assistance to parents and professionals in all counties throughout the state; and*
- **WHEREAS**, National Parent Leadership Month recognizes, honors and celebrates parents for the vital leadership roles in their homes and communities and in local, state, national and international arenas; now, therefore be it

Resolved that I, _____ **(Name)**,

_____ **(Title)**
of the Town, City, County, State of _____ do hereby declare
February **(Year)** as National Parent Leadership Month in the Town, City, County, State
Of _____ and recommend this observance to
all of our citizens.

_____ **(Name)**

_____ **(Title)**

_____ **(Town, City, County, State)**

Guidelines for Selecting and Preparing Parent Leaders to be Spokespersons

Parents Leaders can be powerful spokespersons for National Parent Leadership Month and can educate the public about the importance of Parent Leadership, reach out to other parents interested in leadership roles and help shape policies and practices that support Parent Leadership. Human interest stories about Parent Leaders will be an essential part of media outreach during National Parent Leadership Month and throughout the year. It is these men and women who will attach a “human face” to the concept of Parent Leadership. It is important that public speaking and media events are shared jointly by Parent Leaders and staff so that no individual has to assume full responsibility.

Professionals should offer tangible and emotional supports to Parent Leaders throughout this process. In addition to reviewing this information, it will be helpful to give the enclosed document, *Media Tips for Parent Leader Spokespersons* to any Parent Leaders who are considering taking on these important roles. If Parent Leaders and staff will be appearing on television, the enclosed *Tips for Television Appearances by Parent Leaders and Staff* will be a useful tool.

When Identifying Parent Leaders as Spokespersons, be sure:

- * You are familiar with the Parent Leader’s story.
- * The Parent Leader’s story will help inform the public about Parent Leadership.
- * The Parent Leader believes this is the right time for him/her to speak out and is prepared for the attention that may follow.
- * You know how much (or how little) the Parent Leader wants his/her face, name or voice used publicly, particularly on television.
- * The Parent Leader understands the possible effect that speaking out publicly can have on him/her and family members, especially children.
- * The Parent Leader is comfortable talking about his/her story.
- * The Parent Leader is at ease when speaking publicly.
- * The Parent Leader is prepared to talk to the press.
- * The Parent Leader understands his/her rights as an interviewee.

If a Parent Leader is ready to speak out, you may wish to offer him/her the following suggestions:

- * Speak from your heart and from your own experiences.
- * Decide what you most want to say. Focus on three main points throughout the interview, especially at the beginning and the end.
- * Rehearse what you say. Have a friend or family member ask simple questions so that you can practice your responses.
- * Keep it simple. Don't talk in jargon or slang or use big numbers. Avoid angry responses.
- * Anticipate difficult questions. It is always okay to say, "I'm not comfortable responding to that," or "I don't know the answer to that."
- * Always assume that anything you say to a representative of the media is "on the record" and might be repeated in a story.
- * Don't feel the need to volunteer information to fill in uncomfortable silences.
- * Talk only about the things you want to see in the story.
- * Be aware that a media story or headline may be portrayed in a more dramatic way than you expect.
- * If you are asked questions that require a simple "yes" or "no" answer, use them as a springboard to elaborate your main points and to give real-life examples. Remain focused on the positive changes in your life and how your involvement in Parent Leadership activities has made a difference.
- * Emphasize the Key Talking Points about Parent Leadership included in this Tool Kit.
- * Encourage other parents to take on Parent Leadership roles and encourage others to partner with and support the work of Parent Leaders in all areas of policy and practice related to children and families.

Remember to thank Parent Leaders for sharing their experiences and to debrief and provide support to them after the media event. By sharing their expertise and life experiences with others, Parent Leaders are sharing a valuable gift and are helping to make their community a better place.

Excerpt from the *Media Guide for Parent Leaders, Parent Leadership Series*, © Parents Anonymous® Inc. 2000. Courtesy of Parents Anonymous® Inc. Copies of this document may be reproduced and distributed.

Tips for Parent Leader Spokespersons

The courageous stories of Parent Leaders who have made positive changes in their lives are an important tool for reaching out to other parents and professionals during National Parent Leadership Month and for demonstrating the importance of parents as leaders. Some activities for this month will focus on working with the media and others might involve public speaking opportunities. As a Parent Leader, you have much to offer others by sharing your personal story and reaching out to other parents in need of support. To decide whether or not you wish to talk with the media or participate in a public speaking event, think about the following questions:

- ✓ Is this the right time for you to speak out? Are you prepared for the attention that may follow? Is your life fairly stable right now?
- ✓ How much (or how little) do you want your name, face or voice to be used publicly?
- ✓ What do you most want to share in an interview or speech?
- ✓ Does your personal story help inform the public about Parent Leadership?
- ✓ Are you comfortable sharing your story with the public?
- ✓ Do you believe you can use your personal story to highlight broader issues related to Parent Leadership?
- ✓ How does your family feel about your interest in speaking publicly about your life experiences? Do your family members mind if you refer to them in your presentation?
- ✓ What effect will your exposure have on you and your family members, especially your children?

If you decide that the time is right and you want to speak with the media or give a talk, the following suggestions will help you:

- ✓ Speak from your heart and from your own experiences.
- ✓ Decide what you most want to say and choose your words carefully. Focus on three main points throughout the interview, especially at the beginning and the end.
- ✓ Rehearse what you say. Have a friend or family member ask simple questions so that you can practice your response.
- ✓ Anticipate difficult questions and come prepared to reply. It is always OK to say “I don’t know,” or “I’m not comfortable responding to that.” If you are talking with a representative from a newspaper or magazine, you can always offer to get information you don’t have and send it to them.

- ✓ Keep it simple. Don't talk in jargon or slang or use big numbers.
- ✓ Avoid sounding upset or angry.
- ✓ Always assume that anything you say to a representative of the media is "on the record" and might be repeated in a story.
- ✓ Don't feel the need to volunteer information to fill in uncomfortable silences.
- ✓ Talk only about the things you want to see in the story.
- ✓ Be aware that a media story or headline may be portrayed in a more dramatic way than you expect.
- ✓ If you are asked questions that require a simple "yes" or "no" answer, use them as a springboard to elaborate your main points and to give real-life examples. Keep the focus on the positive changes in your life and how your involvement in Parent Leadership activities has made a difference.
- ✓ Emphasize the Key Talking Points about Parent Leadership included in this Tool Kit.
- ✓ Encourage other parents in the audience to take on Parent Leadership roles and encourage other listeners to partner with and support the work of Parent Leaders in all areas of policy and practice related to children and families.
- ✓ It is normal to be nervous – almost everyone is, no matter how much experience he or she has. Talk with your staff partner or a friend about your feelings and be sure you feel supported in your efforts.

After a media interview or a public speaking event...

- ✓ You may feel tired, excited, successful or even unsure about how you came across.
- ✓ Give yourself credit for being courageous and for showing strong leadership skills by taking part in the event.
- ✓ Take time to discuss how you feel about the experience with a staff person from the program you are representing.

By sharing your expertise and Parent Leadership experiences with others during National Parent Leadership Month, you can reach out to other parents and make a difference in your community.

Excerpt from the *Media Guide for Parent Leaders, Parent Leadership Series*, © Parents Anonymous® Inc. 2000. Courtesy of Parents Anonymous® Inc. Copies of this document may be reproduced and distributed.

Tips for Television Appearances by Parent Leaders and Staff

Television is an important medium for promoting National Parent Leadership Month. When Parent Leaders and staff appear on television, they will want to consider the following tips.

- ✓ If at all possible, watch the television program so that you will be familiar with the format, the host and the set.
- ✓ If someone from the program pre-interviews you before the program, be sure you only share what you would want included in the interview or the segment.
- ✓ Write down anything that is important to be sure you don't forget it, such as important telephone numbers and/or Web sites.
- ✓ Don't be surprised if things are disorganized and confused backstage.
- ✓ Be aware of your body language. Communicate confidence by sitting forward in the chair with both feet on the ground.
- ✓ Show warmth by smiling at appropriate times.
- ✓ Look directly at the interviewer; the camera will find you.
- ✓ Use your hands. If you are comfortable with hand gestures, make them occasionally. If not, rest your hands in your lap and change hand positions every few minutes.
- ✓ Wear attractive, yet comfortable clothing on camera. You may be sitting an hour or longer.
- ✓ Avoid wearing clothes with small patterns for television interviews because they don't show up well.
- ✓ Avoid wearing all white, all black or all red. Softer colors are your best bet.
- ✓ Avoid wearing big necklaces, pins or other jewelry because they get in the way.
- ✓ Apply bolder makeup to help you look best under the bright lights.
- ✓ Speak in your own words; avoid reading from notes during a television interview.
- ✓ Avoid using the expressions "uh" and "you know" and "like" or any slang expressions.
- ✓ Talk slowly and stop to think before answering questions.
- ✓ Assume you are always on camera.
- ✓ Most importantly, be yourself!

Adapted from the *Media Guide for Parent Leaders, Parent Leadership Series*, ©Parents Anonymous® Inc. 2000. Courtesy of Parents Anonymous® Inc. Copies of this document may be reproduced and distributed.

National Parent Leadership Month

Proposed Media Interview Questions

✓ What is Parent Leadership?

Parent Leadership occurs when parents gain the knowledge and skills to function in meaningful roles and represent a “parent voice” to help shape the direction of their families, programs and communities.

It is successfully achieved when parents and professionals build partnerships and share responsibility, expertise and leadership in decisions that are made affecting families and communities. Examples are:

- Parents, staff and community members serving together on community planning committees, advisory boards and boards of directors
- Parents and staff advocating for greater resources for families and children in schools, communities and programs
- A parent and a teacher working together to ensure the most effective learning environment for a child
- Parents testifying before the city council or the state legislature regarding issues that affect families and children
- Parents taking the initiative to contact community organizations to seek assistance or provide input into decisions.

✓ Why is it important to create awareness about Parent Leadership?

Parents across the nation are working in partnership with professionals to create positive changes in their own lives and in the lives of others. They are doing this quietly and effectively and we feel that it’s important to not only honor these parents, but to encourage others to join in partnership with parents. Great things are happening as more parents, professionals and community members work together in new ways and it’s important to spread the word.

✓ What does it mean to be a Parent Leader?

A Parent Leader may be a parent, grandparent, kinship care provider, foster parent, or anyone else in a parenting role who speaks or acts from his or her perspective as a parent to effect change. There are many different ways that men and women use their experience, knowledge, skills and other resources to exhibit leadership. We believe that any parent has the potential to be a Parent Leader.

✓ What are steps that parents can take to become a Parent Leader?

- Begin by recognizing the need to take action on an issue that is important to you. Then, seek out others who demonstrate leadership behaviors and are acknowledged as leaders. They may become good role models and potential mentors.

- Make the attempt to meet others who demonstrate leadership behaviors and are acknowledged as leaders. They are good role models and potential mentors.
- When you find a project/program of interest, take steps to participate.
- Make a commitment to make a positive difference.

✓ **What are some examples of how parents can become advocates for children and families?**

- Join with other parents to start a new community-based program for parents.
- Provide assistance to another parent who wants help with an issue, whether it is at home or in the community.
- Make a presentation at your local church, temple or mosque about how you became a Parent Leader and offer to provide assistance to others who are interested in doing the same.
- Be aware of what's happening at your child's school and speak up if there is something you believe needs to change.

✓ **How can Parent Leadership impact a family? A community?**

- When parents take on leadership roles they have opportunities to grow and change and to develop new skills.
- Children who see their parents take on leadership roles learn how to become stronger leaders in their own lives.
- Communities are strengthened when parents become involved and offer their perspective and wisdom.

✓ **Why is Parent Leadership a vital strategy to strengthen families and prevent child abuse?**

When parents become Parent Leaders, they are better able to shape their families and communities to meet their needs and interests. They feel more capable and more in control of their life situations. They have opportunities to grow as individuals and to have a more positive influence in their children's lives.

✓ **What can community members do to encourage Parent Leadership?**

Community members can seek out parents who are interested in issues that impact families and the community and provide them with opportunities to assist. It might be asking them to join a committee, serve on a board, meet with a local legislator, or provide input into a new program that will impact them. Invite parents to speak at meetings and conferences or participate in some way.

✓ **How does your organization work with Parent Leaders?**

Describe the various ways your organization works with Parent Leaders. If you would like to increase the role of Parent Leaders in your organization, invite parents to contact you if they are interested in becoming involved.

✓ **How have you served as a Parent Leader?**

(To be answered by parent) This is not a time to be modest. You are serving as a role model for other parents so be sure to share your experiences as a Parent Leader and the results that have been achieved.

✓ **What is (Your organization)?**

To be answered by organization's spokesperson.

✓ **What is Parents Anonymous® Inc.?**

Parents Anonymous® Inc. is the nation's oldest child abuse prevention organization dedicated to family strengthening through mutual support and Parent Leadership. It was founded in 1969 by Jolly K., a courageous parent who sought help to create a safe and caring home for her family. Parents Anonymous® involves weekly group meetings that are co-led by parents and professionally trained Group Facilitators and are free of charge to participants. Most often, there are Parents Anonymous® Children's Programs that run concurrently.

✓ **What activities are planned for February (Year) to celebrate National Parent Leadership Month?**

Discuss the activities you have planned in your area, particularly the event you would like to promote. You might suggest that everyone can celebrate National Parent Leadership Month by recognizing and appreciating the Parent Leaders in their own family, at work and in their community.

✓ **How can parents and other interested parties learn more about Parent Leadership and working together in this new way?**

Parents Anonymous® Inc. developed and operates the *Parent Leadership Network*. This is a unique online community for parents and other interested parties such as staff, community members, professionals, and policymakers from across the country to talk about Parent Leadership development and opportunities. Membership is free. To join, complete an online registration form at www.parentleadershipnetwork.org.

✓ **How can viewers/listeners become involved in National Parent Leadership Month activities?**

They can call us to discuss various opportunities for participation in National Parent Leadership Month activities.

Provide your local information. Make sure you have it written on a piece of paper that you have with you, just in case your forget.

Sample Press Release for National Parent Leadership Month

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Release Date:

Contact: Name/Title
Telephone number
Email address

FEBRUARY MARKS THE OBSERVANCE OF
NATIONAL PARENT LEADERSHIP MONTH
Parents Lead the Way to Strengthening Families

CITY, STATE (**Month, Day, Year**) – February (**Year**) has been designated National Parent Leadership Month. (**Name of your organization**) will be recognizing, honoring and celebrating parents for leadership roles in their homes and communities.

National Parent Leadership Month was created to:

- ◆ Educate the public about this vital family strengthening and community building strategy; and
- ◆ Encourage professionals, policymakers and other community members to create opportunities to partner with parents to address issues that affect children and families.

Parent Leadership occurs when parents gain the knowledge and skills to function in meaningful leadership roles and represent a “parent voice” to help shape the lives of families and communities, as well as shape the direction of programs and policies that impact them. Parents, grandparents, kinship care providers, foster parents, and anyone in a parenting role who has personal experience in using resources and/or services to strengthen their families, have the potential to become Parent Leaders.

“Parent Leadership is an essential component in all effective family strengthening and child abuse prevention programs,” says (**Add your name, title and organization**). “Better outcomes for families are achieved when parents have the opportunity to use their knowledge and expertise through meaningful and active roles in the planning, implementation, oversight and evaluation of programs that affect families and children. Parents find themselves accomplishing things that may have seemed impossible before.”

Throughout the country, parents and professionals are working together in new ways. They are participating in local, regional and national planning processes, collaborating as grant reviewers and program evaluators, and serving together on advisory boards and coalitions. When parents are speaking and acting from the parent's perspective rather than as staff from an organization or institution, they are Parent Leaders.

Here in **(Name of your city) (Name of your organization)** is joining with Parents Anonymous® Inc., the nation's oldest family strengthening and child abuse prevention organization and the founder of National Parent Leadership Month to honor anyone in a parenting role who has taken steps to provide leadership in their home or community or at the state or national level.

(Insert a paragraph here describing your organization. For example, Parents Anonymous® Inc. included the paragraph below:)

Founded in 1969, Parents Anonymous® Inc. is the nation's oldest child abuse prevention organization dedicated to strengthening families through mutual support and Parent Leadership. Parents Anonymous® Inc. was established through the extraordinary efforts of Jolly K., a courageous parent who sought help to create a safe and caring home for her family. Working in partnership with her social worker, they launched a unique solution for parents who wanted to strengthen their families — the Parents Anonymous® Group. These weekly groups are co-led by parents and professionally trained Group Facilitators and are free of charge to participants.

For more information about activities related to National Parent Leadership Month, please contact **(Insert your organization's contact information.)**

#

Format For A Pitch Letter to Radio/Television Talk/News Programs (To be Sent on Organization's Letterhead)

Date

Name

TV/Radio Station

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear

Parents Anonymous® Inc. has designated the month of February as **National Parent Leadership Month**. It is a time to recognize, honor and celebrate parents whose words and actions have led and guided others to create change for the betterment of families and communities.

(Name of parent) is a resident of **(Name of town/city)** and a Parent Leader who has taken steps to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to function in a leadership role and to present a "parent voice" in helping to shape the direction of **(her/his)** family and community. **(Describe here what Parent Leader has done)**.

We hope you will consider scheduling an interview with **(Name of Parent Leader)** and **(Name of organization's spokesperson)** on **(Name of program or station)**. We believe that your audience will find the interview interesting, informative and inspirational. The work **(First name of Parent Leader)** has done has made an important difference in the lives of so many children and families.

I've enclosed material about Parent Leadership and about **(Name of your organization)**, in addition to several suggested interview questions. I will contact you in the next few days to determine your interest. Please don't hesitate to call if you have any questions or would like additional information. Thank you for your consideration.

Warm regards,

(Your name and title)

Enclosures

- ✓ Information about Parent Leadership
- ✓ A brochure about your organization
- ✓ Proposed Media Questions

Format For A Pitch Letter to Radio/Television Talk/News Programs (To be Sent on Organization's Letterhead)

Date

Judy Smith, Producer
"Morning Show"
WTFM-TV
111 West 3rd Street
Los Angeles, CA 90036

Dear Judy:

February (**Year**) has been designated as National Parent Leadership Month. It is a time to recognize, honor and celebrate parents whose words and actions have led and guided others to create change for the betterment of families and communities.

Susan Linden is a resident of Los Angeles and a Parent Leader who has taken steps to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to function in a leadership role and to present a "parent voice" in helping to shape the direction of her family and community. Two years ago, Susan attended a Parents Anonymous® Group seeking help to be a better parent. Her life was filled with stress, and she was afraid of losing control with her children. Susan wanted to learn better coping skills. Soon Susan became the Parent Group Leader in her Parents Anonymous® group, which is co-led by a professionally trained Group Facilitator and a parent. Not long after, she began serving as a co-trainer in workshops for parents and professionals, in addition to advocating for child abuse prevention legislation.

We hope you will consider scheduling an interview with Susan and with Linda Smith, Executive Director of the Los Angeles-based Parents Anonymous® Program. We believe that your audience will find Susan's story interesting, informative and inspirational. The work Susan has done has made an important difference in the lives of so many children and families.

I've enclosed material about Parent Leadership and Parents Anonymous® of Los Angeles, in addition to several suggested interview questions. I will contact you in a few days to determine your interest. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact me at (909)-621-6184 or by e-mail at bameltzer@parentsanonymous.org if you have any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Warm regards,
Barbara Meltzer
Public Relations Consultant

Enclosures

- ✓ Information about Parent Leadership
- ✓ Parents Anonymous® of Los Angeles Brochure
- ✓ Proposed Media Questions

Format For a Letter to the Editor

Some newspapers will print letters to the editor on their editorial pages. If the newspapers in your area have this feature, it can be a useful, no-cost tool for spreading the word about National Parent Leadership Month.

Dear Editor,

I would like to make our community aware of the fact that February has been designated National Parent Leadership Month. It is a time to celebrate, honor and give recognition to all parents who take on leadership roles in their homes and communities. A Parent Leader may be a parent, grandparent, kinship care provider, foster parent or anyone else in a parenting role.

(Name of your organization) is promoting National Parent Leadership Month. I know this is an important issue because **(Insert your personal reasons for promoting National Parent Leadership Month based on either your personal life or your work experience.)**

(Insert a closing paragraph promoting any activities that are planned or just asking readers to consider ways they might support Parent Leadership. Give them the name and contact information for the organization mentioned above, and encourage them to call for more information.)

Sincerely,

(Insert Parent Leader's name or name of other individual sending this Letter, along with address and phone number, to the Editor. Parent Leaders may request that only their first names be printed, although the newspaper will most likely require the full name, phone number and address for their files.)

Sample Letter to the Editor

Below is one example of a Letter to the Editor from a Parent Leader promoting recognition of National Parent Leadership Month and encouraging readers to participate in a special celebration to honor Parent Leaders.

Dear Editor,

I would like to make our community aware of the fact that February has been designated National Parent Leadership Month. It is a time to celebrate, honor and give recognition to all parents who take on leadership roles in their homes and communities. A Parent Leader may be a parent, grandparent, kinship care provider, foster parent, or anyone else in a parenting role.

The Northwest Family Center is promoting National Parent Leadership Month. I know this is an important issue because I personally have been attending the Parents Anonymous® Group at the Center for almost two years. It has made a tremendous difference in my life and that of my daughter. I have had opportunities to take on leadership roles and to help shape the programs at the Center. I hope the parents and professional staff in this community will join me in encouraging our public officials to acknowledge National Parent Leadership Month and to engage in partnerships with Parent Leaders. In this way, we can all work together to build strong families in our community.

The Center will be hosting a special recognition event for Parent Leaders on Saturday, February (**Date**), and all members of the community are invited to join us. Please call (**Phone number**) for more information.

Sincerely,

Renee Smith

National Parent Leadership Month Sample Solicitation Letter for Public Service Announcements

Date

Contact Name, Title
Company
Address
City, State, Zip

RE: **PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT FOR
NATIONAL PARENT LEADERSHIP MONTH**

Dear

We all know parents who have made a difference – parents who have championed a cause to help strengthen families, parents who have had a positive impact on the lives of children, parents who have led the way to change. These special people are called Parent Leaders, and each day they make a difference in our community.

In order to recognize, honor and celebrate Parent Leaders, and encourage others to develop their potential to become Parent Leaders, February (**Year**) has been designated National Parent Leadership Month. (**Insert the name of your organization**) asks that you join us in this important national effort by airing one or more of these public service announcements.

I've also enclosed material (**Attach the National Parent Leadership Month Press Release**) about National Parent Leadership Month, in addition to information about (**Insert the name of your organization**).

Please don't hesitate to call if you have any questions or need additional information. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Name
Title

Enclosures: Public Service Announcements
Press Release
Organizational Brochure/Information

Sample Radio Public Service Announcements for National Parent Leadership Month

Organization:
Name
Address
Phone Number

Contact:
Name/Title
Phone number/email address

RE: NATIONAL PARENT LEADERSHIP MONTH

Start Date: February 1

Stop Date: February 28

Reading Time: 10 Seconds

FEBRUARY IS NATIONAL PARENT LEADERSHIP MONTH.

ALL PARENTS HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO LEAD.

FOR INFORMATION CALL

(INSERT YOUR PHONE NUMBER).

#

Reading Time: 15 Seconds

FEBRUARY IS NATIONAL PARENT LEADERSHIP

MONTH. TAKE THE TIME TO HONOR PARENTS WHO HAVE HELPED TO

STRENGTHEN FAMILIES IN YOUR COMMUNITY. FOR INFORMATION CALL

(INSERT YOUR TELEPHONE NUMBER).

#

Reading Time: 20 Seconds

FEBRUARY IS NATIONAL PARENT LEADERSHIP MONTH. ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY, PARENTS ARE BEING RECOGNIZED AND HONORED FOR THEIR LEADERSHIP ROLES AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY. PARENTS' VOICES ARE BEING HEARD AS THEY USE THEIR PERSONAL EXPERIENCES TO CREATE CHANGE. TAKE THE TIME TO CELEBRATE YOUR FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS, AND COLLEAGUES WHO HAVE HELPED TO BUILD STRONG AND SAFE FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES. FOR INFORMATION CALL (INSERT YOUR PHONE NUMBER).

#

Reading Time: 20 Seconds

ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY, THE VOICES OF PARENTS ARE BEING HEARD. THESE MEN AND WOMEN ARE JOINING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PROFESSIONALS, POLICYMAKERS, AND OTHER COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO CREATE CHANGE. CELEBRATE AND HONOR THEM DURING FEBRUARY, WHICH IS NATIONAL PARENT LEADERSHIP MONTH. PARTNER WITH PARENTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY TO BUILD STRONG AND SAFE FAMILIES. FOR INFORMATION CALL (INSERT YOUR PHONE NUMBER).

#

Reading Time: 30 Seconds

FEBRUARY IS NATIONAL PARENT LEADERSHIP MONTH. ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY PARENTS WILL BE RECOGNIZED AND CELEBRATED FOR THEIR LEADERSHIP ROLES AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY. PARENTS' VOICES ARE BEING HEARD AS THEY JOIN IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PROFESSIONALS, POLICYMAKERS AND OTHER COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO CREATE CHANGE. PERSONAL EXPERIENCES ARE BEING SHARED TO HELP INFLUENCE OTHERS AND MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE. IF YOU WANT TO HONOR OR JOIN IN PARTNERSHIP WITH A PARENT TO HELP BUILD STRONG AND SAFE FAMILIES, CALL **(INSERT YOUR PHONE NUMBER)**.

###

Web Site/Newsletter Copy (Long)

National Parent Leadership Month Get Ready to Recognize Parent Leaders!

(Name of your organization) is pleased to celebrate National Parent Leadership Month in February (**Year**). This major initiative will include a series of national, state, and local activities to recognize, honor, and celebrate parents for their leadership roles in their homes and communities. National Parent Leadership Month will highlight the many opportunities available for parents, professionals, policymakers and other community members to engage in partnerships with the goal of building and supporting strong, safe families.

Public and private organizations such as social services, education, juvenile justice, childcare, mental health, health, businesses and policymakers will promote National Parent Leadership Month in communities all around the world to:

- Raise public awareness about the important roles parents play in shaping the lives of children and families
- Publicize and expand opportunities for Parent Leaders to participate in meaningful Parent Leadership activities at the local, state and national levels
- Recognize individual Parent Leaders whose contributions make a positive difference to their families and communities
- Build successful partnerships between Parent Leaders and professionals in sharing responsibility, expertise and leadership in decisions being made that affect families and communities.

By partnering together to promote National Parent Leadership Month, we can generate many benefits such as:

- ✓ Celebrating Parent Leaders in local communities
- ✓ Educating communities about Parent Leadership
- ✓ Inspiring parents to become leaders in their homes and in their communities
- ✓ Providing opportunities for parents to demonstrate Parent Leadership
- ✓ Encouraging staff and professionals to reach out and partner with parents in leadership roles.

Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to honor Parent Leaders in your community. Contact **(Name of your organization)** today to see how you can become involved:

(Contact information)

Web Site Copy (Short)

(Name of your organization) is pleased to celebrate National Parent Leadership Month in February (Year). This major initiative will include a series of national, state, and local activities to honor, and celebrate parents for their leadership roles in their homes and communities. During National Parent Leadership Month, **(Name of your organization)** is planning **(Describe your planned events and activities)**. We encourage everyone to become involved in this worldwide opportunity to honor Parent Leaders. For more information, **click here** (Note: Please use *here* as a link to the Long version of the web site Copy. If there is only enough space for this short version, rewrite the last sentence in the copy as follows: “For more information, please contact **[Name]** by phone at **[Phone number, including extension if needed]** or by e-mail at **[E-mail address]**”).

Internet Resources

Related to Children and Families

The Internet resources below provide useful information related to children and families. Some content will be helpful in advocacy, public awareness, and strategic planning activities.

Parents Anonymous® Inc.

www.parentsanonymous.org

The Parents Anonymous® Inc. Web site provides information about Parent Leadership, Shared Leadership, National Parent Leadership Month activities, finding a local Parents Anonymous® Group, tips on parenting and child abuse prevention, as well as links to other sites.

Parent Leadership Network

www.parentleadershipnetwork.org

The *Parent Leadership Network* is a unique online community, developed by Parents Anonymous® Inc., where parents and staff can talk about and promote Parent Leadership and Shared Leadership in their communities, states and even nationally.

ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center

www.archrespite.org/archserv.htm

This Web site helps parents, caregivers and professionals find respite services in their state and local areas. Information is provided on respite care for children and the elderly.

Child Welfare League of America

www.cwla.org

This Web site provides free publications online focusing on children's issues including federal legislation and policy and other valuable resources.

CIVITAS

www.civitas.org

This web site links to resources provided by CIVITAS in their effort to transform essential child development information into understandable language and useful tools for parents, professionals, and grandparents working with young children.

Family Support America

www.familysupportamerica.org

This web site describes family support principles and practices and includes numerous articles and publications for parents and professionals.

I Am Your Child

www.iamyourchild.org

I Am Your Child is a national public awareness and engagement campaign to make early childhood development a top priority for our nation. This Web site provides useful information and helpful links.

Kids Health

www.kidshealth.org

This site, from Nemours Foundation, offers extensive articles on childhood illness and health issues, and provides information to parents, children and even professionals. The articles are well written and annotated.

National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds

www.ctfalliance.org

This web site provides linkages to state Children's Trust and Prevention Funds that engage in statewide efforts to strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect.

National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse & Neglect

<http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov>

The Clearinghouse is a national resource which provides information on the prevention, identification, and treatment of child abuse and neglect and related child welfare issues. This site contains up-to-date legal information including reporting laws by state.

National Head Start Association

www.nhsa.org

This web site provides information and resources about the National Head Start school readiness program and describes its comprehensive education, health, nutrition and parent involvement services for low-income children and families.

National Parent Information Network

www.npin.org

This site has many articles on child development and related issues, plus an excellent Internet resource page.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)

<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/site.html>

The OJJDP Web site provides information and resources on juvenile justice and delinquency, including publications and their comprehensive strategy to prevent and respond to juvenile delinquency.

Prevent Child Abuse America

www.preventchildabuse.org

This Web site provides information about Prevent Child Abuse America's activities to promote and implement prevention efforts.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children & Families

www.acf.dhhs.gov

This site provides many useful resources including links to related government Web sites and fact sheets on many topics including domestic violence, community services, child welfare and others.

Zero to Three

www.zerotothree.org

This site is dedicated to the healthy development of infants and toddlers, including a section for parents that provides information on parenting, including childcare and developmental issues.



Parents Anonymous® Inc.

Founder and National Sponsor of National Parent Leadership Month

Background Information

Founded in 1969, Parents Anonymous® Inc. is the nation's oldest child abuse prevention organization dedicated to strengthening families through mutual support and Parent Leadership. Parents Anonymous® Inc. was established through the extraordinary efforts of Jolly K., a courageous parent who sought help to create a safe and caring home for her family. Working in partnership with her social worker, they launched a unique solution for parents who wanted to strengthen their families — the Parents Anonymous® Group. These weekly groups are co-led by parents and professionally trained Group Facilitators and are free of charge to participants.

Today Parents Anonymous® Inc. leads a dynamic international Network of accredited organizations that implement quality Parents Anonymous® Groups and Children's Programs. Parents Anonymous® Inc. provides training and technical assistance, develops publications and conducts research on Parent Leadership, systems reform and effective community-based strategies to strengthen families.

- ◆ Integral to our mission and operations is the unique partnership established with Parents Anonymous® Parent Leaders.
- ◆ Parents Anonymous® Inc. has a long impressive history of effectively advocating for the creation and support of meaningful leadership roles for parents to ensure better outcomes for families.
- ◆ Parents Anonymous® Inc. took Parent Leadership to a new level when it created the first ever National Parent Leadership Team® (NPLT), an organizational unit composed of a diverse group of mothers, fathers, and grandparents. These individuals were identified as strong Parent Leaders in their local Parents Anonymous® Programs and now serve to help families on a national level.
- ◆ Based on the success of the NPLT, many state and local Parents Anonymous® organizations have developed Parent Leadership Teams to accomplish similar goals in their own communities.
- ◆ In an effort to educate and engage parents and all others interested in Parent Leadership, Parents Anonymous® Inc. has developed and operates the *Parent Leadership Network*. This is a unique online community for parents and other parties such as staff, community members, professionals, and policymakers from across the country to talk about Parent Leadership development and opportunities. Membership is free. To join, members complete an online registration form at www.parentleadershipnetwork.org.

Parents Anonymous® Research

- ◆ Parents Anonymous® Inc. has created a groundbreaking Parent Leadership Behavior Scale to develop a valid and reliable measure of Parent Leadership behaviors (based on Leadership Practices Inventory, Kouzes and Posner's, 1995).
- ◆ Parent Leaders achieve better outcomes for families when they have opportunities to use their expertise through meaningful and active roles in the planning, implementation, oversight and evaluation of programs, as well as in the development of public policies that affect families and children.
- ◆ Parents Anonymous® Inc. conducted several evaluation studies on the effectiveness of Parents Anonymous® Inc.'s national trainings on Parent Leadership and concluded that there was enhancement of knowledge, skills and abilities of Parent Leaders and an increase in their leadership activities:
 - ❖ Thirty-eight percent (38%) of parents who participated in Parents Anonymous® Inc.'s 1998 National Parent Leadership Institute became members of boards of directors, advisory councils, or other policymaking groups.
 - ❖ Thirty percent (30%) of parents who participated in Parents Anonymous® Inc.'s 1998 National Parent Leadership Institute participated in advocacy activities.
 - ❖ Forty-eight percent (48%) of parents who participated in Parents Anonymous® Inc.'s 1998 National Parent Leadership Institute wrote newspaper or newsletter articles, and 13% had television, radio or newspaper interviews.

The Parents Anonymous® Inc. legacy continues because of the millions of courageous parents and children who have successfully changed their lives forever through the Parents Anonymous® principle of Parent Leadership.

Parent Leader
Certificate of Recognition

Awarded to

For Demonstrating Strong Parent Leadership
and Making a Positive Difference in
the Lives of Children and Families.



Certificate of Recognition

Awarded to

For Expanding Opportunities for Parents to
Participate in Meaningful Leadership Roles
and Activities.



National Parent Leadership Month Evaluation Survey

Please tell us what happened during February as a result of your National Parent Leadership Month Celebration and Activities

The information you provide will help us improve National Parent Leadership Month during the years to come. Thank You!

ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENTS

1. Did you create any National Parent Leadership Month materials? YES NO

IF YES: Please Send Copies To Parents Anonymous® Inc.

1a. What types of materials were they?

Written Promotional items Other (please describe):

2. Please check all National Parent Leadership Month partners with whom you collaborated.

- American Association of University Women
- Businesses (such as McDonalds, Burger King, Toys R Us, etc.)
- CASA (Court Appointed Special. Advocate) Programs
- Chambers of Commerce
- Child Abuse Prevention Councils
- Child Care Settings
- Children's Toy and Clothing Stores
- Children's Trust or Prevention Funds
- Civic Clubs (such as the Kiwanis, Rotary, Civitan, etc.)
- Community Groups (such as Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, Parents Without Partners, etc.)
- Head Start Programs
- Juvenile Justice Organizations
- Mental Health and Counseling Centers
- Parent Teacher Associations
- Public and Private School
- Public Health Organizations
- Social Service Organizations
- State Public Agencies (such as Children and Family Services, Maternal and Child Health, Mental Health, Education, etc.)
- The Mayor and/or Governor and His or Her Staff
- United Way
- Women's Organizations (such as Junior League, Soroptomists, etc.)
- Youth Organizations (such as Boys and Girls Clubs, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, YMCAs, YWCAs, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, etc.)
- Other (Please specify) _____

PLEASE CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE.

3. Did you give out any Certificates of Recognition to organizations? YES NO

IF YES:

3a. How many Certificates? _____

3b. For each Certificate, please provide:

- Name of organization
- City and State where organization is located

4. Did you give out any Certificates of Recognition to Parent Leaders? YES NO

IF YES:

4a. How many Certificates? _____

5. Please describe the funding used for your National Parent Leadership Month celebration.

Source	Amount	Purpose

PARENT LEADER INVOLVEMENT

6. Were any Parent Leaders involved as spokespersons? YES NO

IF YES:

6a. How many? _____

6b. At what types of activities/events did they speak?

- Large event
- Local community event
- Television show
- Radio show
- Other – please describe: _____

7. Did any of the Parent Leader spokespersons tell their story? YES NO

8. Please list below all the roles that Parent Leaders held related to your National Parent Leadership Month activities.

MEDIA EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

9. Did any radio stations run PSAs (Public Service Announcements)? YES NO

IF YES:

9a. How many radio stations ran PSAs? _____

9b. How many PSAs were run? _____

10. Did any local newspapers publish Letters to the Editor? YES NO

IF YES: Please Send Copies To Parents Anonymous® Inc.

10a. How many local newspapers published Letters to the Editor? _____

11. Did any local newspapers publish stories about National Parent Leadership Month?

YES NO

IF YES: Please Send Copies To Parents Anonymous® Inc.

11a. How many local newspapers published stories about National Parent Leadership Month? _____

12. Were there any television appearances? YES NO

IF YES:

12a. How many television appearances were there? _____

12b. For each television appearance, please describe:

- The type of program: _____
- Who was involved: _____

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

13. Did you hold any events? YES NO

IF YES:

13a. How many? _____

13b. For each Event, please provide:

- Description, Date: _____

- Number of people involved in the planning: _____
- Number of Parent Leaders who attended (approximately): _____
- Number of others who attended: _____

14. Were any proclamations made? YES NO

IF YES:

14a. How many? _____

14b. For each Proclamation, please provide:

- Name of Dignitary who made the proclamation _____

GENERAL INFORMATION

15. How useful was this Tool Kit in supporting your National Parent Leadership Month activities?
[check one]

Not Very Useful A Little Useful Somewhat Useful Very Useful Extremely Useful

16. Does your organization provide Parents Anonymous® Programs? YES NO

17. What suggestions do you have for improvements in the materials, preparations or other areas
 for celebrating National Parent Leadership Month in the future? _____

18. Is there anything else important that you would like to share? _____

Your Organization: _____

Your Name: _____

Address: _____ State/Province: _____

Telephone Number: _____ E-Mail: _____

YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE SURVEY! THANK YOU!

Please send all materials and return this form to:

Parents Anonymous® Inc.

675 West Foothill Blvd., Suite 220, Claremont, CA 91101

Telephone: 909-621-6184, Ext. 220

FAX: 909-625-6304