

## **Are children's radio shows willing to promote children's books?**

Q: I would like to approach a children's radio show in my area about using my books on air. Do you think this is a good idea?

Providing books to be read aloud on-air should not be done without checking your publisher's contract regarding broadcast rights. Many publishers are retaining these as part of electronic rights and permission would have to be obtained from the publisher before a book could be read in full on-air. Keep in mind that most children's radio shows will not pay a fee for the right to read children's books on-air, so publishers often will not allow this type of use.

There are, however, other ways of working with children's radio programs. Some will consider reviewing children's books, mentioning them in topical roundups, or using books as give-away prizes for on-air contests they run. If you would like to contact one or more children's radio stations, talk first with your publisher to be sure they aren't already making these contacts and to ask if they have any concerns about you pursuing this area. If not, call the station to find out whether they are interested in interviewing authors or in showcasing children's books. Another option, according to P.J. Gudmundson, director of news, information and education for Radio-AAHS, is to encourage your publisher to send a catalog and checklist so the station can choose titles from the list.

There are an increasing number of children's radio programs on stations throughout the country. Some of these radio programs are independently produced and segments are done locally. One excellent locally-produced show is "Kids Corner" on WXPB-FM in Philadelphia. Others are part of national networks that provide programming from a main studio. Two of the largest are Radio-AAHS in Minneapolis and Kidstar in Seattle. Affiliates carrying these shows can choose to confine their programming to material provided by the syndicate, or they can produce additional material to add local interest to segments the syndicate provides.

When contacting children's radio shows or networks, make sure that your books are appropriate for the target audience's age range. According to Robert Drake, producer of WXPB-FM's "Kids Corner" show for ages 7-14, authors sometimes try to convince him that their book will fit the show's target age range when it doesn't. Check first to find out the core age of the listener the show is trying to reach, and what kinds of books the show uses, then be realistic in deciding whether your book might be a good fit. 12/96:1/97