

How can I get the publicist at my publishing house to do more?

Q: Is there a way that I can encourage the publicist at my publishing house to do more for my books?

The children's book publicist typically does many different jobs, has responsibility for many authors, and is given very little staff to help get the work done. Depending on the size of the publisher, responsibilities can include sending review copies to review journals (such as Booklist and School Library Journal); handling author appearances at schools, libraries and bookstores; organizing events at conventions; writing newsletters and other promotional material; updating mailing lists; fielding telephone inquiries from the industry and media about books and authors; as well as traditional media placements and author tours.

Given the scope of the job and the limited resources, it is hard to interest a publicist in taking on added responsibilities. However, if you contact the publicist 3-4 months in advance of your book's publication date and provide concrete suggestions for publicity that is easily executed, you are likely to get some cooperation.

Provide a sheet of bulleted copy explaining what you think is newsworthy or different about your book and how it could be promoted. Send a set of names on labels of any media, people at organizations, and other important contacts you have that you think should receive books. List any experience you have in giving speeches, conducting seminars and workshops, doing press and broadcast interviews, and writing press or promotional material. Explain that you'd like to be involved and ask what you can do to help them do more for your book. 11:12/92