



Publicity Handbook

MOPS International exists to encourage, equip and develop every mother of preschoolers to realize her potential as a woman, mother and leader in the name of Jesus Christ.

“The MOPS Experience”

Our vision is that every mother of preschoolers is so impacted by her MOPS experience that she carries it with her for life, making her a better mom who creates a better world.

As a leader of a local MOPS group, the MOPS experience begins with you. Therefore, we are asking you to be:

- **Relevant**, so that every mom will know that MOPS is for her
- **Relationally Inclusive**, so that every mom will feel welcome and accepted in community
- **Growth-oriented**, so that every mom will be challenged to grow as a woman, mother and leader
- **Passionately Christian**, so that every mom will be drawn one step closer to Jesus and one step further in her influence for God’s kingdom
- **Purposeful**, so that every mom will know she’s part of God’s bigger purpose, picture and plan to make a better world!

Ideas for Living out “The MOPS Experience”

Relevant

- Meet moms where they are. Your group should reflect your community.
- Consider how it would be to walk in someone else’s shoes.

Growth-oriented

- Commit to spiritual development and growth with your leadership team.
- Plan speakers to challenge moms to grow as women, mothers and leaders.

Purposeful

- Encourage moms to accept who God created them to be and to find their purpose.
- Intentionally connect the church with your MOPS group to help moms grow in faith.

Relationally Inclusive

- Help each mom build at least 3 strong relationships within the group.
- Get moms involved in serving and leading. Start with small bite-size commitments and give them opportunities to stretch and grow in those areas.

Passionately Christian

- Create a safe environment for every mom regardless of her faith background.
- Be committed to growing spiritually so that your love of Jesus shines through!
- Find ways to express Christian love in action.

The Purpose of Publicity

Publicity works with the other areas of MOPS to provide a warm, nurturing, open atmosphere to make a woman feel good about coming and bringing her friends to MOPS. Publicity brings people together. It can unite the women in the group, bring in new moms and establish a network of prayer and support within the Chartering Ministry.

Publicity is a powerful tool that God can use to help build your MOPS group. Newsletters and other forms of communication strengthen groups with information, announcements and encouragement. Serving on the Publicity Team also provides areas of creative expression for MOPS moms.

Publicity links the community to your MOPS group. Many women never would have found MOPS if it were not for the efforts of the Publicity Team. MOPS is an outreach ministry, and only reaches its true potential when women who are not in a relationship with Jesus are part of the group. The door to MOPS may be the only church or ministry door many women will consider entering. Publicity makes sure it is open wide.

Publicity becomes a vital link to your Chartering Ministry, which plays an important part in the success and growth of a MOPS group. Tell them about MOPS. Share your enthusiasm. Let them know what God is doing in the lives of moms through MOPS.

How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of the messenger who
announces peace, who brings good
news, who announces salvation, who
says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

Isaiah 52:7



Publicity Team Leader Job Description

Personal Characteristics:

- ☉ Demonstrates a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Because members of her team may not have committed their lives to Christ, she is in an excellent position to encourage each woman to make this decision.
- ☉ Displays openness to new ideas and projects.
- ☉ Exhibits writing skills and can organize information, meet deadlines, edit when necessary and put together material that reflects quality in both appearance and content.
- ☉ Delegates well and enjoys having many women involved in projects.
- ☉ Displays an enthusiasm about MOPS and a genuine desire to reach as many women as possible through the ministry.

Position Responsibilities:

- ☉ Creatively publicizes MOPS meetings and special events in the community through a variety of tools.
- ☉ Facilitates communication among MOPS moms through newsletters and other areas of communication.
- ☉ Communicates information about MOPS to the Chartering Ministry through written information and occasional presentations.
- ☉ Serves on the Steering Team and attends meetings.
- ☉ Reads the *MOPS Handbook* and the *Publicity Handbook* and understands the vision of MOPS and her relationship to the MOPS group.

The Publicity Team

Publicity is an important part of the MOPS ministry and is best carried out through a team of dedicated, caring women who can take responsibility or assist with the variety of activities and projects. Being part of this team provides women with an opportunity to reach out, get involved and develop their talents.

The organization and responsibilities of women on your team will vary according to your needs and group size, but here are some general suggestions:

🕒 **Divide responsibilities.** Create different teams who are responsible for specific tasks in Publicity. Recruit a newsletter team to collect, write, edit and design the publication. Put together a separate community publicity team, who will be responsible for sharing the mission and details about your MOPS group in your community. Designate a person to maintain the website if your group has published one, or individuals to communicate with the local press for special MOPS events.

- ④ **Meet regularly.** Build relationships with one another to share ideas, plan and work on projects. This will provide you with an opportunity to reach out to non-Christian women on your team, to build friendships based on common interests and to challenge each team member.
- ④ **Plan ahead.** As soon as you know your MOPS group schedule and budget for the year, brainstorm together possible publicity opportunities, tools and angles, as well as newsletter themes. This will help you to prepare financially and will help you organize and delegate the necessary work.


“

I was attending MOPS to meet my own needs, but wasn't really contributing anything back to the group until the Publicity Team Leader asked me to write a newsletter column about activities for moms and kids in our community. I really enjoyed doing that, so when I was approached to edit the entire newsletter the next year, I accepted. I never knew that I had this talent!

”

General Publicity Guidelines

- ☉ All publicity for MOPS should strive for a standard of excellence, recognizing it represents the Chartering Ministry and the MOPS ministry. All MOPS Publicity should be in agreement with the MOPS International Faith Position Statement and the MOPS International Values (found on pages 14-16 of the *MOPS Handbook*).
- ☉ The Publicity Team is responsible for the promotion of the local MOPS group, not the overall ministry of MOPS International. If you wish to publicize the MOPS ministry beyond your group, MOPS International can provide accurate and appropriate information and assistance. Content must be in agreement with the MOPS International Communication Standards, as explained on page 26 of the *MOPS Handbook*.



Communicate that MOPS is for *every* mom with your choice of words, pictures and style. To test your design and choice of words, share your publicity tools with women of different backgrounds and ask for their reactions.



- ☉ Honor all copyrights and obtain necessary permission before using materials, including the MOPS logo. When quoting from another source, be sure to give the author's name, the book or article name and the publisher or periodical name. Permission should be obtained from a publisher when quoting more than 250 words from a book, 150 words from a short article or four lines from a poem or song. Permission is usually granted quickly for excerpts and articles appearing in newsletters, which are distributed for free and are not in competition with the original work.
- ☉ In all publicity, seek to create a look that is:
 - Clean
 - Contemporary
 - Soft
 - Bright
 - Friendly
 - Creative
 - Warm
 - Purposeful

More information on using the MOPS logo is available in the *MOPS Handbook* and on the MOPS Leaders' website.



Be aware of the diversity of women in your community as you design publicity materials.



Sharing MOPS With Your Community

You can spread the news about your MOPS group in many ways. A personal invitation is still the most effective way to recruit new moms. Encourage every MOPS mom, church member and friend of MOPS to invite their friends, neighbors, coworkers or the moms they meet.

MOPS is for every mom, though, not just your friends and church members. Publicizing MOPS to the entire community may require a more concentrated effort. Consider other, broader ways to invite women to MOPS.

What to use:

- ② **Brochures:** Create a small, colorful brochure to distribute in your community. Include the purpose of your MOPS group, meeting times and dates, a schedule of topics and activities and a brief overview of MOPPETS.
- ② **MOM-E-Invite:** Share these invitations with your moms so they can invite a friend via e-mail. More information is available on the MOPS Leaders' website.
- ② **Business cards:** Similar to brochures, but easier for MOPS moms to carry in a purse or diaper bag to share. Keep it simple: provide information about your group's location, meeting times and dates and contact information to find out more information.
- ② **Banners:** Get permission from your Chartering Ministry to put a MOPS banner or sign outside the building. Let moms new to the community know they have found a place that cares about them. Hang posters advertising MOPS in the community where moms will see them.

- 📍 **Websites:** Create a website for your MOPS group. Include the meeting schedule and location. Add pictures from your group and stories from MOPPETS. This can be as simple or complicated as your skills permit, and can also be a great communication tool for moms in your group. See the section called “Your MOPS Group and the Internet” for more information.
- 📍 **Welcome notes:** Write a note of congratulations and an invitation to MOPS for the new moms in your church or those listed in your local newspaper’s birth announcement section. This is a way to let a new mom know she isn’t alone.
- 📍 **Newspapers:** Research your local area to discover publications that might be interested in knowing about MOPS. Include your meetings in their calendar of events, and invite them to visit your group for a feature article.

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I was in the hospital after giving birth to my son when I first heard about MOPS through a brochure tucked in my “going home” bag. I was so nervous about having two children (now they outnumbered me) and about raising a boy by myself ... I called the day I got home from the hospital, and we went to MOPS two weeks later.

”

Where to publicize:

- ☉ Church bulletins
- ☉ Pregnancy resource centers
- ☉ Social services departments
- ☉ Parent or community newspapers
- ☉ Ob/Gyn offices
- ☉ Pediatricians' offices
- ☉ Psychologist/Counselors' offices
- ☉ Radio stations
- ☉ Beauty salons
- ☉ Health clubs
- ☉ Toy stores
- ☉ County health agencies
- ☉ Childrens' shoe/clothing stores
- ☉ Dentists' offices
- ☉ Real estate offices
- ☉ Moving companies
- ☉ Malls
- ☉ Post offices
- ☉ Restaurants
- ☉ Supermarkets
- ☉ Recreation/community centers
- ☉ Libraries
- ☉ Hospitals
- ☉ Preschools


Think back to the days before you were attending MOPS. What did you need? What kind of publicity or message would have encouraged you to change your schedule, get your kids out of the house and attend a MOPS group for the first time? How can you share that message with another mom?



How to publicize:

Don't just pass out brochures—get involved in the community! As a MOPS group, take part in what is happening around you:


- 🌀 Parades
- 🌀 Sports teams
- 🌀 Community fairs
- 🌀 Bazaars
- 🌀 Activities for preschoolers, like library story times
- 🌀 Great Moms Walk



Participate in the Great Moms Walk and generate funds and PR for your local group. Visit www.GreatMomsWalk.org for more information.



If you join a community event, wear a MOPS T-shirt to get conversations started and bring information about your group.



MOPS International has a variety of publicity tools, from brochures to postcards to posters, which your group can customize and use in your community. Contact MOPS International or visit the website for more information.



Sample MOPS Press Release

The following is a sample MOPS press release, describing the key elements of a MOPS group. You may copy this information and provide it to your local media or anyone who needs to know about MOPS. Consider adding this to an announcement about your specific MOPS group's meetings or special events.

For Immediate Release

MOPS stands for Mothers of Preschoolers, a program designed to encourage mothers with children under school age through relationships and resources. These women come from different backgrounds and lifestyles, yet have similar needs and a shared desire to be the best mothers they can be!

A MOPS group provides a caring, accepting atmosphere for today's mother of preschoolers. Here she has an opportunity to share concerns, explore areas of creativity and hear instruction that equips her for the responsibilities of family and community. The MOPS program typically includes MOPPETS, a loving, learning experience for children.

Approximately 4,000 groups meet in churches throughout the United States, Canada and 35 other countries, to meet the needs of more than 100,000 women. Many more mothers are encouraged by MOPS resources, including *MomSense* magazine, the MOPS International website and publications such as books.

Find out how MOPS International can help you become part of the MOPS International Membership.

MOPS International, Inc.
2370 S. Trenton Way
Denver, CO 80231-3822
Phone: 888-910-6677 or 303-733-5353
E-mail: Outreach@MOPS.org
Website: www.MOPS.org

To learn how to start a MOPS group, call 888-910-MOPS.
For MOPS products, contact the MOPShop at 888-545-4040.

Your MOPS Group and the Internet

Consider creating a website for your MOPS group. Include some basic information:


- 🕒 **The MOPS logo and your Chartering Ministry's name:** As a chartered MOPS group, you are authorized to use the MOPS logo in promoting your group, and that includes adding it to your website.
- 🕒 **Information about your group:** Visitors to your website may have never heard about MOPS; provide them with all the information they need about your local MOPS group. Include an explanation of what MOPS is, a schedule of meeting dates and times, registration procedures and fees and contact information.
- 🕒 **Link to your Chartering Ministry:** If your Chartering Ministry has a website of its own, ask if you can create a page that will fit into their “look” and link to the ministry home page. Ask them if they have any other suggestions or guidelines.
- 🕒 **Link to MOPS International:** Providing a link to the MOPS International website will offer visitors a “bigger picture” of the MOPS ministry, as well as information on MOPS groups in other areas of the country and the world, in case a visitor from outside your area finds your site.

Before adding anything to your site, ask yourself how it benefits you or the visitor. Each page should have a clear message and navigation route. Make sure the structure of your site is logical and that visitors can find the information that they need.



Whatever information you include on your website, the following technical advice should apply:

- 🌀 **Keep it simple.** Some people believe a successful website needs lots of pictures, sound and animation. Such sites are fun to create, but may be slow to load and frustrate the visitor. A few pictures and other extras can be useful, but small images load faster and still provide variety.
- 🌀 **Make it clear.** Every page should have a title that will show up on a visitor's history and bookmark list. Add contact information on every page of your site. Even if you include a "mail to" link, some of your users may wish to contact you by phone. Consider using your Chartering Ministry contact number and address since the Internet is public and personal information should be protected.



Your website can be as simple or as fancy as you want it to be. You could have chat rooms or forums for MOPS moms to discuss a topic after a MOPS meeting. You could provide links to other community pages that might be of interest to your audience. Or you could take pictures at a MOPS meeting and post them online.



- 🕒 **Design your site for low-tech users.** Many of your visitors may be working with smaller monitors or resolution, so try to design an attractive site with only the basic colors. Also, test your site on different browsers. Not all browsers have the same features, so be sure to check your pages in different versions of each browser.
- 🕒 **Spell check and edit.** Nothing is more unprofessional than spelling errors on your site. Check your spelling and have someone else read through the content of your pages each time you edit or add pages.

If your group is Internet savvy, consider utilizing these communication tools:

- 🕒 **Blog**
- 🕒 **Group space in an online community**
- 🕒 **Chat rooms**



The MOPS website offers moms an opportunity to connect and discuss a variety of topics. Encourage your moms to visit the forums at www.MOPS.org



Producing an Effective Newsletter

Communication is essential to any program, and MOPS is no exception. Newsletters are one of the most popular and cost effective ways to communicate with the women in your MOPS group and the friends of MOPS in your Chartering Ministry and community. A newsletter for your group informs, entertains and encourages MOPS women. Ask them what they would like to see in their newsletter, build a newsletter team and pass out assignments, and begin producing issues that will help MOPS moms.

Guidelines:

- 🕒 **Target your reader.** Review “Meeting the Needs of Mothers of Preschoolers” on page 17 of the *MOPS Handbook*. Remember the six needs as you design the newsletter and be sure to use seeker-sensitive language.
- 🕒 **Specify your goal.** What purpose do you want the newsletter to achieve? Do you want it to be informational, inspirational, both? Determine your purpose before you begin to write or assign articles.
- 🕒 **Set deadlines.** Be realistic about this task. How many issues will you produce each year? When will they come out? How many pages? When do you need the copy in order to finish on time?
- 🕒 **Create a budget.** Work with the Finance Team Leader to determine how much money is available for newsletter costs. Set a budget with her guidance, then work to stay within the boundaries you set.

A Christian Writer's Manual of Style
by Bob Hudson and Shelley
Townsend, Zondervan Publishing



- ☉ **Recruit help.** Enlist writers and artists from your MOPS group. Assisting with a newsletter is the outlet many women need to get involved and be creative.
- ☉ **Add art.** Recruit artists in MOPS to provide illustrations or cartoons. Use clip art, or create your own pictures by using your computer's drawing tools. If you have access to a scanner, scan photos of MOPS moms or meetings.
- ☉ **Proofread carefully.** Nothing interferes with the message more than mistakes! Read everything over and over. Use the spell check on your computer. Enlist a backup proofreader to catch the mistakes you might miss by becoming familiar with the material.

Format:

- ☉ **Choose your paper.** The easiest and most cost-effective newsletter paper is 8 1/2" by 11" (or standard size) paper, full-size or folded in half. Colored paper can give your newsletter some excitement, but be careful when choosing which colors to use. It is hard to read text on colors that are too dark (like red or green) or too bright (anything neon).
- ☉ **Give your newsletter a title.** Be creative. Have a "Name the Newsletter" contest among Steering or in the MOPS group.
- ☉ **Include important information on the cover,** including the name of your MOPS group and Chartering Ministry; city and state; and publication date (month and year).

Distribution:

- ☉ MOPS moms
- ☉ MOPPETS teachers/workers
- ☉ Women on your waiting list
- ☉ Other women's ministries in your Chartering Ministry
- ☉ Leave copies in church nurseries for moms who may not know about MOPS
- ☉ Chartering Ministry staff
- ☉ Community areas for publicity

Content Ideas:

- ☉ Welcome—What is MOPS?
- ☉ Calendar of events—topics, speakers, special events, etc.
- ☉ News from MOPS International
- ☉ New members, babies, adoptions, anniversaries, birthdays
- ☉ Book or movie reviews
- ☉ Profiles/interviews with MOPS women, Steering, MOPPETS Workers, guest speakers
- ☉ Personal interest stories: “How so-and-so adopted a baby”
- ☉ Questions and Answers
- ☉ Community events
- ☉ Recipes
- ☉ Poems
- ☉ Quotes
- ☉ Advisories on unsafe products
- ☉ Guest articles from reputable sources in your group or from within the community

Share your newsletters and ideas with other MOPS groups! Contact MOPS groups in your Council, area or state and request a copy of their current newsletter. You will often find general content that you can offer the women in your group, as well.



If the women in your MOPS group are all online, consider creating an e-newsletter that can be sent free of charge.



Designing a Newsletter

The look of your newsletter will be your reader's first impression. Although the content of the newsletter is the most important element, the look will determine whether some people take the time to read it.

Decide how many columns you will use on a page


- ☉ One column is the easiest to produce, but the hardest to read. If you use one column, be sure it is no wider than six inches.
- ☉ Two columns provide more design flexibility and interest than a one-column layout, and shorter line length makes for better speed-reading.
- ☉ Three columns provides the most design flexibility, especially if one column is left mostly empty and used for art or quotes.

Choose fonts

Be consistent, using the same fonts for body text throughout. Don't use more than three different fonts on a single page.

Get rid of the grey

White space is the part of the page not filled with words or graphics. Elements with white space around them get more attention. Avoid the tendency to add too much information on a page, making it look grey with copy.



Don't let fonts distract from your writing - many fonts (like this one) are attractive and fun but should be used in small doses. An entire article in a fancy script is difficult to read.



Visually create a hierarchy of importance

Grouping, along with white space, provides organization of material, making it easier to understand and quicker to scan for topics of interest. Put together pieces of information that readers should link together, like headings and text. Use white space to distinctly separate elements that are not part of the grouping. Keep headings spaced nearer to their related paragraphs than to any copy preceding them.

Avoid too many separate elements on a page

It becomes hard to tell where the eye should go next. Squinting at your page should reveal no more than two to three major elements.

Use Bullets

These organize information and make it quick to skim.

Use “pull quotes”

These contain interesting information taken from the texts and featured in large, distinct type with special placement. Keep them short.

Use headlines and subheads

Readers skim them for specific topics. Use liberally, especially to break up lots of text.

Use boxes sparingly

Information enclosed in a box attracts attention, as long as you do not have a page full of boxes. Use this technique to emphasize a point, to introduce a new idea or to add more information.

Take advantage of the front and back pages

These are the two pages most often read, so place reminders or important information. Use a Table of Contents on the cover as a teaser to invite readers inside your newsletter.


Producing Great Content

Writing interesting copy

- ☉ Present your information in a way that says, “This is the benefit you will get if you read this.” Meet human needs and interests.
- ☉ Create mental pictures—when you read it, you see it.
- ☉ Use facts and statistics.
- ☉ Be specific. Don’t use vague adjectives.
- ☉ Use action verbs in the present tense whenever possible.
- ☉ Be aware of jargon. The way we speak isn’t always appropriate for writing.
- ☉ Keep paragraphs short.
- ☉ Include one topic per paragraph.

Editing your copy

- ☉ Cut every word that adds nothing to the meaning. Use concise, short words and sentences. Using big words doesn’t make you a good writer. A good writer is one who communicates well and holds the reader’s interest.
- ☉ Look at your sentence structure. Avoid starting each sentence with the same part of speech, such as a noun or pronoun. Writing has better rhythm when sentence structure varies.




Spend time evaluating other publications—magazines, advertisements, newspapers, church newsletters, etc. What catches your eye? Why? What do you like? How can you incorporate your observations in your MOPS newsletter?



Grabbing attention with headlines

- ☉ Readers scan headlines to get a quick idea of what the page is all about.
- ☉ Condense your most important point into a one-line phrase.
- ☉ Explain your purpose.
- ☉ Use a complete sentence.
- ☉ Break long headlines logically.
- ☉ Allow more space above headlines than below, but always use consistent spacing treatment with all headings.
- ☉ When text is more than one column, span headline across the columns.



Your newsletter will provide you with a tangible way to meet the needs of moms in between MOPS meetings. How can you select content that will encourage, equip and develop every mother of preschoolers to realize her potential?



Better Moms Make A Better World



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