



Talking Business in Your Community

Business leaders can be important partners for children. But to many of us, they seem unapproachable. Business leaders seem to live and work in a world that is hard to understand.

As in any partnership, the key to developing a relationship is to find common ground. This can be achieved by using effective communication techniques to understand and connect with business leaders. Here are some ideas:

- Connect with the right people. Make sure you are talking with the people in the company who are empowered to make commitments to your partnership.
- Be direct and specific. In business, time is truly money. Be ready to succinctly explain your goals, what you need from the partnership and how both parties will benefit.
- Join the club. Become a member of your local Chamber of Commerce and attend regular business networking functions. You will learn more about how to communicate business issues and develop important connections in the business community. And your presence alone will demonstrate that children's issues belong in the business world.

An effective business partnership will be a win-win situation for everyone. It will change attitudes in the business community about supporting children. Before long, business partners will be approaching your program for support!