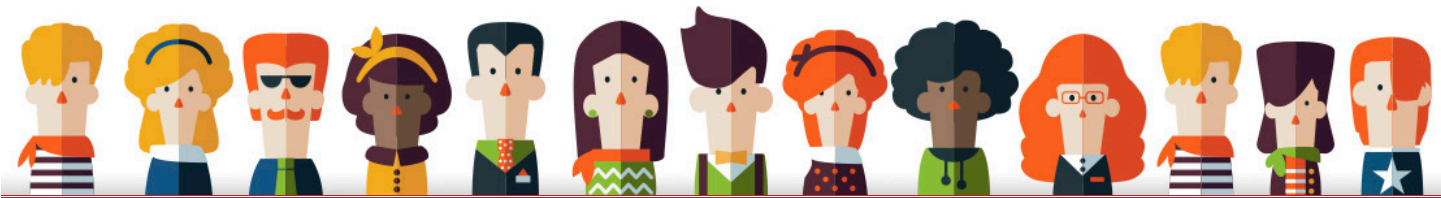




USER REVIEW TOOLKIT



Strategies to build high-quality reviews for your school

This toolkit was prepared to help you obtain plenty of high-quality reviews from your students, parents, and alumni. These reviews are important for showcasing family’s experiences, creating trust in your brand, and crafting your school’s story. Inside this toolkit you’ll find tips for getting both quantity and quality out of your reviews as well as content you can use in emails, social media, and other promotional materials.

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Who to ask for reviews



Asking families for reviews of your school isn't always easy. But families who have had a great experience with you should be more than happy to share their thoughts to help other families decide whether you're the right fit.

Students provide authentic, honest, and realistic accounts of their daily experiences at your school that paint a vivid picture for the reader.

Parents provide reviews that are less about the day-to-day experience and more about top-level issues, like finances, admissions, and school leadership.

Alumni often reflect on how their time at your school prepared them for their current successes. The best alumni to ask for reviews are early in their careers, so they can accurately reflect on their experiences and share their accomplishments. Older alumni, however, can also provide useful analysis since they've had more time to reflect on their experience at your school.

How to ask for reviews



A tactful and friendly approach is best when asking for reviews. Leverage your existing networks and connections when looking for reviewers.

Reach out directly: Those who have taken an active volunteering role, participated in many clubs or sports, or who have won awards or distinctions are usually happy to share their experiences and achievements. As well, those who have been assisted financially or have been supported in some other way by the school are often happy to write reviews.

Involve your team: Have teachers, staff, and administrators ask those they think might be interested to write a review. Create a small campaign asking your team to be on the lookout for potential reviewers and share the link to this toolkit with them.

Use your marketing resources: Email and social media blurbs asking for reviews are a gentle way to let your families know you'd like to be reviewed without directly asking them.

Offer incentives: Families might be more likely to review your school if there's an extra incentive. Hold a contest or offer an honorarium for completing a review. Mention that Our Kids offers an honorarium to the first five reviewers of your school.

When to ask for reviews



The best time to ask for a review is when families are feeling good and are in a charitable mood.

Beginning or end of a school year: This is typically when families are most excited about their experiences.

During events: Families are most charitable during events.

All year long: Provide gentle nudges throughout the year through your social media and newsletters.

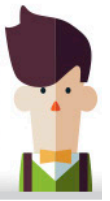
Sample user review topics



By having a repository of school reviews on a trusted platform like Our Kids, you'll bolster your credibility and influence. Also, since our reviews are long and comprehensive, they provide families with an in-depth picture of your school from those who know it best.

These are some of the questions we'll ask reviewers to answer:

- **Overall experience:** What do you love and what would you change?
- **School leadership:** What do they do well and what could they do better?
- **Teachers and faculty:** How are they successful at what they do?
- **Students:** Who does best at the school?
- **Academics:** How challenging and useful are they?
- **Extracurriculars:** What do they offer and what would you like to see?
- **School life:** What's it like and what makes it unique?
- **Community:** What are its distinguishing features?
- **School location:** What's campus like and what's available off-campus?
- **Admissions:** What was the process like?



12 tips for review success

1. Create opportunities with everyday conversations—if you see a happy student or parent, ask them to write about it.
2. Don't force it and be genuine.
3. Show appreciation for what they do outside of writing the review.
4. Be honest about the time commitment. Our Kids reviews are long and detailed and it's a time investment. Being upfront improves the chances the review will be completed.
5. Share examples of your Our Kids reviews in your emails and social media to show prospective reviewers what their peers are saying and what the reviews look like.
6. Personalize your ask. For example, if you're asking a student who is the head of a club or other extracurricular, ask them specifically if they'd like to recount their experience (rather than asking directly for a review).
7. Let them know the value of the review and how it helps not just your school but potential families who are going through what they also went through during the decision-making process.
8. Be clear on the directions for submitting a review—share the link and show examples.
9. Show your appreciation to them after they've submitted the review and ask them to share it with their peers.
10. Let them know they can be honest about their experiences.
11. The review should be written by the individual who is credited with the review.
12. The reviews should not be generated by AI writing tools, because AI tools tend to produce very generic text, the use of which can hurt the review's credibility and, consequently, the school's brand.

APPENDIX 1:

Reviews vs. testimonials



Why testimonials on your website aren't enough

Testimonials are a great way to show your prospects how happy families have been with you. Placed on your website, they're almost always glowing accounts of the important features of your school. Reviews, on the other hand, are more objective, often hosted on a third-party platform, and much more impactful on the reader. When it comes to building trust in your brand, **testimonials just aren't enough.**

A recent [study by Wyzowl.com](#) found that 90% of people say they trust what a customer says about a business more than what a business says about itself. This is especially true when the customer's comments are not on your website. **That's why reviews are so effective.**

Reviews complement testimonials

Online reviews are [trusted by 90% of people](#), and most people read multiple reviews before making a decision. The more reviews you have, [the more the audience trusts](#) what is being said. So it's best to have as many reviews as possible.

But not all reviews are created equal: content and context are pivotal.

Almost everyone (97%) [seeks out longer and more detailed reviews](#). In-depth reviews explore your school intensively, addressing key questions and providing vital information. That's the content piece.

Building a repository of school reviews on a **trusted platform like Our Kids**, one dedicated to independent education, bolsters your credibility and influence. This enables families to find out important, objective information about your school—information they don't want to hear from you. That's the context piece.

APPENDIX 2:

Templates for asking for reviews



You can use the following templates when asking your families for reviews. Tweak them as you see necessary.

Dedicated email to families



Sample email header. Download from www.ourkidsmedia.com/pdf/user-review-banner.jpg

Subject: *What do you love about [school]?*

We love our school community! Our students, parents, alumni, and faculty are what make [school] great. We could shout it from the rooftops!

Could you do us a favour and do the same?

Your perspective about our school is valuable to families considering enrolling. They want to know what you love about our school, and even what you don't.

Could you submit a review for us? The first five to submit will receive a \$50 honorarium.

Submit your review here: <http://www.ourkids.net/school/school-review.php>

Dedicated social media post

We love our school community and we know you do too. Submit a review and show other families who are considering [school] why we're great! Your perspective is very valuable.

<http://www.ourkids.net/school/school-review.php>

Newsletter blurb

We love our school community and we know you do too. Show other families who are considering enrolling at [school] why we're great! Your perspective is valuable. You could earn an honorarium.

Submit a review here: <http://www.ourkids.net/school/school-review.php>

Asking in person

We at [school] appreciate the time you've spent here. I can tell you enjoy [sample activity], and I'm wondering if you could help us. We want to help families like yours, who are considering our school, in their decision process. We want to show them what's great about [school] and how it can be a fit for their family. Would you be interested in writing a review for us?

Custom school flyer

Get a flyer tailored to your school's branding, crafted by our team to encourage your community to share reviews. Display it proudly at your school. Contact your account manager to begin.

