

Sample Communications

Sample Fundraising Letters

Existing donors have already shown that they care about children's issues. How can you use your appeals to inspire them to spread the word? The tested frame elements can help. They have been designed to be "sticky"—meaning easy to understand but hard to forget. Sticky frames travel as people repeat them.

Dear [Name]:

It's clear to all of us at [name of organization] that Jacksonville is getting better every day, and just on the cusp of becoming the city it's meant to be.

There's one thing we can do to help make sure our city realizes its promise. And that is to make sure that Jacksonville's children realize their potential. When you give to [name of program], you're helping to make that happen.

Opening with the value of *Civic Potential* establishes a positive, forward-looking frame. Donors want to be part of a solution, so it's important to remind them that solutions are indeed possible.

The environments where children live, learn, play, and grow make a big difference in their health and wellbeing. Think of how the resources in a community work like a grid, powering up healthy child development.

Reliable transit and community-based health services connect a community to wellbeing. High-quality child care options help to build both economic activity and the architecture of children's developing brains. Safe, well-lit parks and public spaces encourage physical activity and create places where neighborhood relationships are built.

The metaphor *Resource Grid* worked well in Jacksonville, helping people better appreciate how social contexts and community resources influence outcomes. Note how the metaphor is extended across the rest of the letter, using words related to the idea of a power grid: connected, draining, patchy, power, etc.

[Name of organization] is an important link in this resource grid, and we are also working to improve it. In Jacksonville, this grid is solid in some communities but patchy in others, draining the potential of our city's future. We are working hard to repair and expand the connections between every community and the opportunities children need—but we need your support.

Your gift of [suggested amount] will help ensure that children across Jacksonville, regardless of where they live, can access the kinds of resources needed to grow, learn, and thrive. When all of our children can reach their full potential, our city will reach its full potential.

Sincerely, [Name]

Sample Letter: *Solid Tracks for Development*

Dear [Name],

While our city is headed toward great things, we won't get there without some changes. Right now, children in Jacksonville have the worst health outcomes of any large city in Florida, and we need to work together to change direction.

How can we move ahead? At [name of organization], we think that supporting children has a lot in common with running a railroad system—and we're working on the tracks.

A safe and reliable railway system depends on having sturdy, well-planned tracks that allow all trains to reach their destinations. The system that supports Jacksonville's children is similar in that it involves a network of interconnected routes—things like early childhood learning centers, parks and recreation, health services, schools, and learning opportunities in the summers and afternoons.

Jacksonville has many of these routes in good shape, but they don't always connect or coordinate. And in other areas, the tracks need to be extended to meet new needs.

Through the [name of program], we are working to coordinate and organize the resources already available to children and families, and we need your help. Your contribution will support our efforts to boost cooperation and communication across the tangle of agencies and organizations that do good work for kids but don't always have effective ways to plan together.

When our children have a clear route to health and wellbeing, it keeps our entire city moving ahead on the fast track.

Welcome aboard!

FrameWorks researchers found that this message surprised and concerned Jacksonville residents—most didn't realize that children's issues were a problem. The most effective use of this statistic will pair the sense of "problem" with the possibility of "solution." This letter has plenty of possibility packed in.

By using the metaphor to point out a problem, this letter makes the case for its work but avoids evoking anti-government sentiment that holds that public agencies are ineffective.