



Photo Savvy—Dos and Don'ts

FYI: A newspaper article about the local chapter's National FCCLA Week celebration describes community service projects, leadership experiences, as well as state and national recognition.

But an accompanying photograph showing teens in aprons baking cookies tells a different story. Don't let this happen to you!

A photo is truly worth a thousand words. Its image attracts attention quicker and lingers in the public's mind longer than any written material. As National FCCLA Week approaches, consider these tips for arranging for the most effective photographs of your chapter's action:

- Do focus public relations efforts on community service projects.
- Do make sure that your National FCCLA Week publicity gives your community a better idea of what your chapter does throughout the year.
- Do let papers know about your events well in advance, including photo possibilities, time, and place.
- Do invite photographers to actual events so they can photograph members in action.
- Do think ahead about photos. Try to show students in action applying the skills they learn in chapter and classroom activities.
- Do suggest caption content to the reporter.
- Don't plan activities that reinforce an out-of-date image or seem frivolous. Many taxpaying citizens will wonder why school time and money is spent on teaching students skills they don't really need. Instead, emphasize the skills students gain, such as leadership, communication, school-to-career preparation, building strong families, and increasing community service efforts. These can be discussed in connection with photos of students leading meetings, working with others in the community, or celebrating a recognition or accomplishment.
- Don't let your photo end up as a stiff "mug shot." With the addition of props, it becomes much more interesting.
- Don't use shoulder-to-shoulder, posed photos. These may appeal to members' families, but they're unlikely to get anyone else's attention.
- Don't let photographers take in-the-kitchen shots. Aprons and cookies reinforce an out-of-date stereotype of your chapter. Even if your project involves food preparation, ask photographers to focus on students in their chef uniforms, speaking at an employer banquet, shaking hands with teachers as they say thanks (no need to show a food gift!), or interacting with parents and siblings at a family fun night.
- Don't single out a boy as "Mr. FCCLA" or "Mr. Irresistible." This suggests your chapter is a "female only" organization and will stay that way. Instead, publicize members' leadership and community service accomplishments.