



## Ask SCORE for Business Advice

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### Column Title: Marketing with Community Involvement by Tina Dettman-Bielefeldt

Leesha Rieder, owner of *Kids on the Move*, decided early on that community involvement would be a vital part of her marketing. Performing at various locales would serve a number of purposes. It would allow her students to show off what they've learned, entertain audiences, and get her business solidly established in the area. On all accounts, she has been successful.

The business started in 2005 after she and her husband attended a Dance and Theater Seminar in North Carolina and learned about the concept. Her husband wrote the business plan, and they met with SCORE counselors who were very impressed. Rather than operating out of a studio, they planned a program that goes to the preschools and after school programs. In total, 25 different classes are offered in 20 locations.

“Offering the programming where the children are versus the parents bringing the child to the programming has been extremely well received by our families. It is one less thing for them to do after work, etc.” Rieder stated.

The classes focus on a healthy lifestyle and having fun and are not intended to be competitive. With 15 years as a dance instructor, including 11 years as the director of the dance program at the YWCA, Rieder initially focused on dance. As demand increased, she expanded programming to include theatre, special needs, and children's choir. Her goal remains the same – quality programming at a reasonable price and providing a high level of value.

Her website, [www.kidsonthemovewi.com](http://www.kidsonthemovewi.com), features testimonials from parents who applaud Rieder for building character, social skills, and confidence in their children. One parent notes that performing is a special aspect of the program. It is also one that Rieder truly enjoys. She contacts nursing homes, local children's events, and libraries to set up performances. She noted, “Most places are really excited to have us. We also conduct performances at the end of each session of classes. Some of our recitals have been held for up to 500 parents and family.”

People enjoy the kids, and Rieder says that it is mutually beneficial. “It gets our name out in the community, and the children love the opportunity to perform. It is a great way for our children to learn how to present themselves in front of an audience. One thing we

love the most is performing for nursing homes. The residents adore the kids and the kids love the residents.”

After performances, Rieder might not get any new students but she does get great exposure and the word spreads. In addition to the shows, she gets business through referrals and ads in local children’s magazines. All in all, growth has exceeded expectations and she looks forward to future success.

She says, “I feel that we could realistically grow another 50-75% based on demand. We will continue to put heavy emphasis on value, and pride ourselves on making the programming high quality, yet affordable to everyone.”

If you have business questions, contact the Green Bay Chapter of SCORE. Visit [www.greenbayscore.org](http://www.greenbayscore.org) or call Cindy Gokey at 920-496-8930 for information.

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