

USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO DEVELOP YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR MEMBER OF CONGRESS

This month we will focus on developing our social media advocacy muscle. To do this we will begin to “follow” our members of Congress on Twitter(X) and Facebook and to “like” the posts with which we agree. We will also post positive acknowledgments “tagging” our members when appropriate to reinforce positions they take benefiting children. Our goal is that over time, and with regular positive messages flagging that you are a constituent, a digital relationship with your congressional offices will evolve.

Background:

While the most impactful way to influence our members of Congress is to meet with them personally, there are important communications that you can have with them around that foundational face-to-face encounter. Writing email letters to Congress of course is one way, but another important avenue for connection is social media. All members of Congress have some sort of social media presence, and many of them are prolific posters on Twitter — now known as X — and Facebook. By keeping tabs on your Member of Congress' social media posts, you can get a sense of issues that are top of mind for them and policies and legislation that they deem important.

In general, members of Congress use Twitter to get their policy messages out to the media, build their brand, and entice bookers and they use Facebook for constituent communications, such as announcing a local town hall meeting. Some members post on other social media platforms as well, but Twitter and Facebook tend to be the most commonly used. According to [Statista](#), amongst members of Congress, nearly 500,000 posts were made to Twitter throughout 2021 and nearly 300,000 to Facebook. The types of posts on these platforms vary from member to member with some using it as a digital press release of sorts and others using it as a way to fill out and amplify their personal profile. Part of a successful strategy to ensure your member of Congress prioritizes children should include consistent interactions with them via social media, either by following their feeds and responding positively when they do or say something that you like or by tagging them in your own posts with a positive, encouraging message.

Becoming comfortable and adept at using social media to interact with Congress, in addition to highlighting and reinforcing an issue related to children, will have the added benefit of educating and raising awareness about children's issues with a broad digital audience.

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Take Action Now!

This month, join First Focus on Children, policy experts, and other ambassadors in beginning to develop a relationship via social media with our Representative and both of our Senators. The end goal is for their offices to know us, over a period of time, as a positive and supportive advocate for children based in their home district or state.

Steps for Developing a Social Media Relationship with your Member of Congress:

1. Follow First Focus on Children and the Campaign for Children on social media ([@First_Focus](#) and [@Campaign4Kids](#) on Twitter and [@firstfocus.children](#) and [@ffcampaign4kids](#) on Facebook).
2. Find your [Representative](#) here and your [Senators](#) here.
3. Explore their websites and find their social media accounts.
4. Follow your Representative and Senators on Twitter(X) and Facebook.
5. “Like” any posts of theirs with which you agree.
6. “Tag” them to thank them for a policy or action that benefits children.
7. Think about how you can “hook” children’s issues into what they are already posting.
8. In order to stay current on children’s issues, you are invited to subscribe to [The Kid Angle](#), our First Focus weekly insider tip sheet for reporters and to check out our staff [Blog page](#) for the latest policy developments.
9. If you cannot find anything for which to thank your member, simply thank them for their public service and encourage them to prioritize children in their policy and funding decisions.
10. Let them know you are their constituent.

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11. Keep up these types of positive interactions, connecting with them once a week for the duration of this month.
12. After a month of building your social media advocacy muscle, you can drop your “likes” and posts down to once or twice a month, but please continue to interact with them.
13. Don't forget to use the hashtags #Commit2Kids, #InvestInKids, and #VoteKids and to tag @Campaign4Kids or @ffcampaign4kids and your members of Congress.
14. Consider identifying yourself as a First Focus Ambassador for Children in your bio.
15. Check out [the social media “how to” document](#) for additional advice.
16. Remember to always keep your communications positive and gracious, even if you do not like what your elected official is doing. Our goal is to develop a constructive and long-term relationship with them and to use it to encourage them to do more for kids.