

USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN YOUR ADVOCACY FOR CHILDREN



Social media is a powerful tool to amplify and compliment your direct advocacy for children. The most impactful advocacy actions you take will likely be face-to-face with your elected officials, but around those foundational efforts, it is also important to incorporate social media into your advocacy toolbox. Social Media can help our message reach a wider audience, garner public support, and maintain the relevance that is needed in movement building. Remember to always be respectful and constructive in your comments to elected officials and others you engage with on the internet. Consider including “**First Focus Ambassador for Children**” in your social media “bio” to increase awareness of the Ambassadors program and to add additional credibility to your account.

Using Social Media with Congress

Begin by following First Focus on Children and our advocacy arm, First Focus Campaign for Children. Notice which issues these accounts are discussing and which hashtags they are using.

On Twitter and Instagram

[@First_Focus](#) and [@Campaign4Kids](#)

On Facebook

Your interaction with First Focus’ posts is especially helpful, as the more engagement (likes, comments, shares) a post receives, the more a social media platform will promote it to a wider audience.

Next follow your member of Congress on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. Notice what issues they are highlighting and the organizations and individuals with which they interact. Think about how you might be able to “hook” children’s issues into what they are already discussing. To stay current on children’s issues facing Congress, Ambassadors are invited to subscribe to our weekly news-driven insider tipsheet for reporters and influencers who are concerned with the issues affecting America’s 74 million children, [The Kid Angle](#).

Many elected members will have an official account, as well as a public personal account. It is good to follow both, so that you can see what messages they are elevating from their office and in their own day-to-day activity.

If you are new to social media, an easy first step is to thank your member of Congress. For example, if your member of Congress has said or done something you support, thank them on their social media feed. After doing that a few times, thank them and then encourage them to consider taking a related step in support of children, such as sponsoring or co-sponsoring legislation.

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Another idea is to post a thank you on your feed for something they have done and to tag them. For example, after you meet with your member of Congress or their staff, you could post a picture of the meeting on your social media accounts with the hashtags **#InvestinKids**, **#Commit2kids** and **#VoteKids**. If your member of Congress is a [Champion for Children](#) you can add the **#Champion4Children** hashtag. Draw their attention to your post by tagging them using the "@" function followed by their social media handle. [A member of Congress' official Twitter, Instagram and Facebook handles can usually be found on their websites or via a simple Google search.]

If you are working on a particular children's issue as part of a First Focus action alert, and your member of Congress has taken a positive action, you could thank them via social media and ask your followers to thank the member of Congress as well.

To have the greatest impact with a Congressional office, it is important to convey that you are their constituent by mentioning your hometown in your post.

Twitter and Facebook are currently the most popular social media platforms for members of Congress, but new sites continue to be created and gain popularity. Make sure to periodically check whether your member is still active on the platform you are using.

Using Social Media to Highlight Advocacy Actions

You can and should use social media to highlight your successes in generating "print" media as well – for example if you are successful in getting an Op Ed or Letter to the Editor published in your local newspaper, be sure to post a link to your piece on all your feeds. Tag your members of Congress so that they will be sure to see it. Also be sure to add relevant hashtags [see above].

Do not forget to let your friends and followers know about your success and of course let First Focus know about your social media efforts by logging them in here. We want to celebrate your achievements with you!