

Invite Your Members of Congress to Your Head Start Program

Hosting members of Congress at your program is one of the most powerful ways to illustrate the value of Head Start and provide lawmakers with memorable experiences that can shape their decision making.

These visits allow you to educate your members about Head Start's comprehensive, community-based model and wraparound services. A personal visit also provides an opportunity for photos and positive media coverage as well as social media—for both your center and your legislator.

Quick-Access Resource Bank

- [Invitation Template](#)
- [Sample Visit Plan](#)
- [Press Advisory Template](#)
- [Letter to the Editor Template](#)
- [Thank You Letter Template](#)

Quick & Easy Steps to Get Started

Step 1:

Find out who your members of Congress are here: nhsa.org/take-action

Step 2:

Find the contact information of your members' schedulers by calling your members' offices. Simply ask: "Can you please provide me with the name and email address of your scheduler?" *You will need to do this three times for your two senators and one representative.*

Step 3:

Download and personalize this [Invitation Template](#) with your program's specific details.

Step 4:

Send your invitation to all three schedulers (one by one!) via email.

What if they RSVP no?

If your member of Congress is unable to visit during the month asked, don't lose hope! We recommend you:

- A. Extend the invite to one of their senior staff, or
- B. Invite them to visit during a different month.

Step 5:

Plan the visit and activities that will leave a lasting, positive impression. Use our [Sample Visit Plan](#) to get started. For talking points and additional resources email advocacy@nhsa.org before your visit.

Step 6:

Use this [Press Advisory Template](#) to invite your local newspaper and media to cover this special occasion. Be sure to personalize the advisory.

Step 7:

Express your appreciation:

1. **Post** pictures from the visit on social media and [tag your members of Congress](#) to thank them.
2. **Personally** thank them by using this [Thank You Letter Template](#).
3. **Press** is always appreciated. Use this [Letter to the Editor toolkit](#) to share your thanks in the media

Step 8:

Tell us about your visit! Share pictures and key takeaways to advocacy@nhsa.org so we can highlight your visit as well!

Program Visit Timeline

Three to Four Weeks Prior to Preferred Visit Date:

- Contact** your member of Congress' office to schedule a visit.

When Your Visit is Scheduled:

- Alert** NHSA of the planned visit using advocacy@nhsa.org. NHSA will provide you with talking points for your visit.
- Invite** parents and community partners who will contribute to a successful visit.

One Week Before Visit:

- Make** your plan using the [Site Visit Plan](#) and share it with everyone you invited.
- Prepare** summary documents with information about your program/community for your member of Congress.
- Write** down and **rehearse** what points you would like to make. Refer to the [Talking Points](#) that NHSA will send to you.
- Invite** your local newspaper and media using the [Press Advisory Template](#).

Day of Visit:

- Photograph** your member of Congress at your Head Start center!
- Share photos** on social media and highlight the visit! Remember to thank your member of Congress for meeting with you by tagging them on Twitter.

After Visit:

- Thank** your member of Congress for coming to your Head Start center. Send them a thank you letter using NHSA's [Thank You Letter Template](#).
- Write** a [Letter to the Editor](#) and submit it to your local newspaper.
- Share** your visit with NHSA by emailing pictures and key takeaways from your meeting to advocacy@nhsa.org.