



»» Why Social Media Matters

With 100 percent of Congress on social media, Twitter and Facebook are quickly becoming ways you can connect with your members of Congress *and* raise awareness within your network.

Just like sending an email or a handwritten letter, social media posts can reach your elected officials and are tracked by their staff. [One poll found](#) that 75 percent of House and Senate offices considered 1-30 comments on social media platforms enough to grab their attention on an issue!

While tweets and Facebook posts can't facilitate lengthy policy discussions, they communicate your message publicly and are gaining influence with members of Congress. Read on to learn how to leverage these tools to amplify your voice.



If you're completely new to social media... Know that it's just an option for engaging your members of Congress! Here's a [Social Media Guide](#) that walks through how to set up an account and privacy settings.

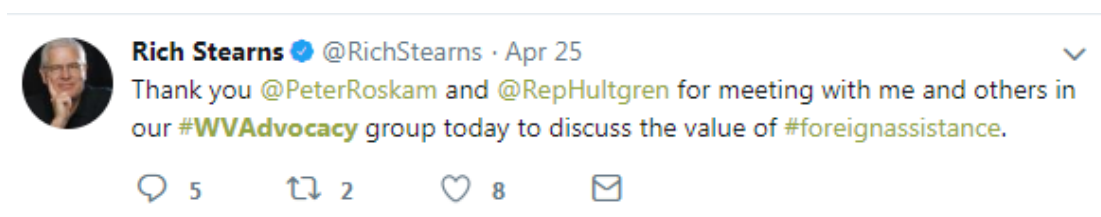
»» How to Leverage Twitter

Follow us at [@WorldVisionUSA!](#) Social media allows for real-time updates – and word can travel fast – so following people who care about the issues helps you stay connected.

Use hashtags. A hashtag begins with the number sign “#” (e.g. #WVAdvocacy). Hashtags are used to categorize posts, make them easily searchable for users, and create a movement. [If you search for #WVAdvocacy on Twitter](#), you'll see posts by advocates around the country advocating on behalf of World Vision.

When you use hashtags, advocates who are also interested in your issue can retweet or like your post, and even follow you! Here are a few that World Vision uses: [#WVAdvocacy](#) [#EndPoverty](#) [#ForeignAssistance](#) [#WorthThePenny](#) [#SaveMomsandKids](#) [#EndHunger](#) [#RefugeeCrisis](#)

Mention your members of Congress. Find your elected official's profile by searching for their name in the search bar and follow them so you can see what they post. The next time you tweet, include their handle (@username) in your tweet. Here's an example:




Engage with others and build a network. Using the hashtags we talked about earlier, search for what other advocates are saying about U.S. foreign assistance and global poverty. When you find something you agree with, you can:

- » Like their tweet by clicking the heart.
- » Retweet their message by clicking the circular arrows. This will share their post with your followers on your own page.
- » Follow them by clicking the “Follow” button near their profile. You'll see their updates on your newsfeed, and they may even follow you back. The more followers you have, the more people you can reach with your advocacy.

» How to Leverage Facebook

Engaging directly with your members of Congress on Facebook presents a few more challenges than engaging on Twitter. You're not able to post publicly on their “wall,” but you can like and comment on their posts. Here are some suggestions to help maximize your Facebook advocacy:

Follow your members of Congress. Search for their name in the Facebook search bar and then click the “Follow” button. You'll see their updates on your newsfeed and will be able to stay up-to-date on their local activities and interests.

Register for your constituent badge.  When you identify yourself as a constituent through Facebook's Town Hall function, a badge appears next to your name when you interact with your representatives on Facebook. This allows congressional offices to know you are a bonafide constituent and gives your comments more weight.

On the left side of the page under “Explore,” click “Town Hall.” It will prompt you to enter your address (Facebook does not share this publicly) and then you will be registered.

Share advocacy with your networks. Despite its limitations for direct engagement with members of Congress, Facebook is a great tool to engage others in the causes you care about! Share stories, statistics, and links to help others take action, and invite your friends and family to learn more about World Vision Advocacy.

»» What Should I Post?

Thank your member of Congress. Congress sees a lot of negative social media. Make sure you thank your members and encourage them to keep supporting these issues!

- » Example: Thank you @RepAnnWagner for cosponsoring H.Res. 230! Together, we can end child #trafficking, #childmarriage, and other forms of #violenceagainstchildren! #WVAdvocacy

Share a statistic or link to a story. Check out worldvisionadvocacy.org/blog and read up on the issues, then share what you learned! Don't forget to link to the story.

- » Example: Literacy rates are up 33 percent worldwide, in part due to U.S. #ForeignAssistance! Let's keep the momentum going and share with #Congress why this funding is #WorthThePenny #WVAdvocacy

Ask your network to act. Share the link to worldvisionadvocacy.org/issues or a specific action to invite more people to advocate on behalf of children around the world.

- » Example: I just called @SenThomTillis to ask him to cosponsor the #GlobalFragilityAct to protect children in vulnerable settings. Will you call too? #WVAdvocacy <https://bit.ly/2OWG52U>

Amplify your meetings or local media pieces. After you meet with your representative's office, share a photo and thank them for the meeting. If your local paper publishes your letter to the editor, share the link to your piece online.

- » Example: Thank you, @RepHultgren, for meeting with @WorldVisionUSA advocates about #ForeignAssistance. We're grateful for your partnership to #EndPoverty. #WVAdvocacy

Simply share your heart. You don't always need to use a statistic or someone else's story – offer why you are passionate about speaking up on behalf of those in poverty. Share an inspirational Bible verse and tag World Vision!

- » Example: This #MothersDay, I'm so thankful for my mom and the moms everywhere who love and love and love. My mom is one of the reasons why I advocate for @WorldVisionUSA! #WVAdvocacy

A quick note about privacy

Social media advocacy is most effective when it builds upon a larger movement and momentum. On Facebook, you can make individual posts “public” to people other than your friends, while still maintaining your privacy for the rest of your profile.

Before you submit your post, use the dropdown menu under your post to select between “Public,” “Friends,” and “Only Me.” On Twitter, you are unable to control individual posts. If your profile is set to private, only your accepted followers can see and retweet your tweets. If your profile is set to public, anyone can retweet your calls to action, amplifying your voice and showing members of Congress that more people care about this issue. It is up to you to decide how private you want your accounts to be!

» Nourish Your Soul

Our advocacy will bear greater fruit when God is actively guiding and going with us. Because of this, spiritual nourishment is vital to our success. Each month, we explore undergirding principles of advocacy and justice in Scripture to help you connect with God in this ministry. We invite you to return to these scriptures often so that God can speak to you and shape your advocacy through them.

Read Isaiah 1:10-17 and Matthew 23:23-24

Reflect:

1. How does God define true worship that pleases him? How does that affect other forms of worship we usually engage in?
2. What might it look like for churches today to put this instruction from God into practice (to learn to do right, seek justice, and defend the oppressed) as their ongoing worship? Do you have any examples from your own church or churches you know? What's one way you can spur others on this month to worship God in this way?
3. Notice the ways these two passages refer to "worship" as offering and sacrifice. Take a few quiet moments to ask God how your advocacy this month can be worship in this way, and then put some reminders on your calendar to help you follow through. Offer each tweet or Facebook post as a gift that honors God. Sacrifice five minutes each week to pray for your leaders. Practice bringing these meaningful offerings to God as a new way to worship Him!