



PRIMER 5

SOCIAL MEDIA

SUMMARY:

Social media provides a powerful platform for advocacy—it's a quick and easy way to reach any member of Congress! Use this guide to learn why social media matters and how to effectively raise visibility for the issues you're passionate about.

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WHY SOCIAL MEDIA MATTERS



With 100% 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% of House and Senate offices considered one to 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 following 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% 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 drop-down 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!