

Invite your member
of Congress to visit
your program



Ohio
HEAD START
Association, Inc.

Quick & Easy 6 Steps to Get Started

1

Find out who your members of Congress are here
[Find Your Member of Congress](#)

2

Once on legislator's website, scroll down to the bottom, you will find the Washington and their local office contact information. Call the local office and simply ask: "Can you please provide me with the name and email address of your scheduler?" Calendar link **HERE** to know when they will be in district

3

Download & personalize email template linked **Here** with your program's specific details, send and confirm details.

4

Plan the visit and activities that will leave a lasting, positive impression. Use our Visit Plan linked **Here**. For talking points and additional resources email yancey@ohsai.org before your visit.

5

Express your appreciation:

1. Post pictures from the visit on social media & tag your member of Congress to thank them
2. Personally thank them by using the Follow Up Thank You template, linked **Here**

6

Tell us about your visit! Share pictures and key takeaways to yancey@ohsai.org so we can highlight your visit.



Congressman Greg Landsman,
visiting with Warren County
Community Services

Congressman Max Miller,
visiting with Cleveland
Catholic Charities



Plan for Your Site Visit



1

Welcome by the Director and/or Board Chair outside of the facility or inside the entrance.

2

Orientation: Director describes what the visit will entail and leads visitor(s) inside.

- Director gives a short overview of the program to include the number of centers, staff, children, history, partners, funding sources, etc.
- Introduce the staff, parents, and community partners that are present. It is always ideal to invite a parent or two and those you partner with, such as pediatricians, dentists, or local fire chiefs, as they are great advocates. Along with the children, they are your stars!

3

Tour the facility and program. Bring along your “all-stars” to help answer questions and drive conversation. Some ideas for discussion:

- **Staff** – Explain how the Head Start enrollment process works—your partners, your process for finding families and prioritizing, and how your waiting list works.
- **Family Engagement Coordinator** – Explain how Head Start so much more than childcare or pre-k because of its comprehensive, two-generational model is that can focus on children’s health and wellness needs.
- **Director** – Explain how you are different from other early childhood education programs, because you can adapt the federal standards to local needs.
- **Partners** – Explain how state or local funding is important to your program to be able to provide comprehensive services and quality early education to all those who qualify.
- **Parents** – Explain how Head Start has impacted your family and the ways you have grown since your initial participation with the Head Start program and how it supports your ability to work. Tell your Head Start story.
- **Others** – Anyone who can talk about their unique role in Head Start as a community supporter, volunteer, service delivery partner, school district employee, etc.

4

Have the lawmaker participate in a **group activity** with the children.

- We suggest having them read a book. It is a great image to promote after the visit.
- Take photos with the lawmaker and the children (with proper releases) as well as group photos & action photos. These are perfect for social media! Make sure to tag the lawmaker too!

5

Move to the conference room (or private meeting room) for an **in-depth discussion** with the adults (- volunteers, parents, staff, community business leaders, school officials, etc.)

- Have an information packet ready for each person. Include information about your agency, the center, how many children you serve, and how you are playing a positive impact on your local community. Allow the lawmaker or staff to ask questions and others to share their stories.

6

Post to social media and tag your Congress members.

7

Extend a big thank you. Don’t forget to take pictures to share with OHSAI and your community!

When Your Visit is Scheduled:

1

- Alert OHSAI** of the planned visit using yancey@ohsai.org. OHSAI will provide you with talking points for your visit, if requested.
- Invite** parents and community partners who will contribute to a successful visit.

One Week Before Visit:

2

- Make** your plan using the “Plan for Your Site Visit” document 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 your talking points.

Day of Visit:

3

- Photograph** your member of Congress at your Head Start center!
- A small piece of **children’s artwork & an inexpensive frame** makes a great piece of office décor.
- Share photos** on social media and highlight the visit! Remember to thank your member of Congress for meeting with you and tag them.

After Visit:

4

- Thank** your member of Congress for coming to your Head Start center. Send them a thank-you letter using OHSAI’s Thank You Letter Template, linked **Here**.
- Post** on social media, don’t forget to tag your Congress member(s).
- Share** your visit with OHSAI by emailing pictures and key takeaways from your meeting to yancey@ohsai.org.

Congressional Email Invitation



Body of Email:

Dear [**Scheduler Name**],

On behalf of all of us at the [**Your Center**] Head Start Center, I am writing to invite you to visit our Head Start program in [**City/Town**] this [**Month/Week**]. During your visit to our center, you will have the chance to read to children in the classroom, talk with staff, and learn more about how Head Start in [**City/Town**] serves our community's most vulnerable children and families.

Research has shown that because of the services and resources we provide, parents of Head Start students are more likely to read with their children, increase their own education, and offer more stimulating home environments than non-Head Start parents. Children who participate in Head Start are less likely to need special education classes or repeat grades when they are older; they are more likely to graduate high school, attend college, and help their families escape the cycle of poverty.

We hope you can join us for a visit soon and look forward to hearing from you about next steps. Thank you in advance for considering our invitation and for all that you do on behalf of children and families in [**City/Town**].

In our community, [**Your Center**] is designed to meet the needs of our children and families, and families share in the decision making and governance to ensure its success.

We are eager to share more with [**Member of Congress**] on [**Proposed Month/Week**]* if they are available.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
[Name]
[Center]
[Phone Number]

*Please refer to the 2025 United States Congress & Senate session and district calendars to schedule your visit appropriately.



Congressional Thank You Email

Body of Email:

[Date]

The Honorable [First and Last Name]
[United States House of Representatives or United States Senate]
[Office Address]

Dear [Senator/Representative Last Name]:

or if a legislative director or staffer attending visit, in lieu of member of Congress

Dear [name of legislative director or staffer]

Thank you for taking the time to visit with the parents and staff from the **[name of your Head Start program]** during your visit last week. We hope that your time with us helped illuminate how Head Start provides high quality early learning experiences for vulnerable children and families in our community.

[More details on the visit, or more details that you promised to provide them]

We are thankful for your support of our Head Start program and are excited to work with you to help ensure we continue serving all the children who need the Head Start advantage. In the future, we sincerely hope that we can serve as a resource for you.

Please let us know if you have any questions and thank you again for visiting our program.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
[Name of Your Program]
[City, State]



2025 United States Senate

Yellow – in session
White – in district

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2025 United States House of Representative Calendar



2025 United States Congress

Yellow – in session
White – in district

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