Our mission is to coalesce, inspire and support the Head Start field as a leader in early childhood development and education.

Head Start Town Hall Toolkit

Town halls are a great opportunity to remind your members of Congress of the work you and your program are doing on behalf of the children and families in your community.

With the contentious political climate in our nation’s capital, town halls can often devolve into an outlet for constituents to engage in heated rhetoric toward members of Congress. Recent events have made these occurrences even more prevalent. However, no matter how justified frustrations may be, it is important to remember that you are not only representing the staff, parents, and children from your program, but Head Start communities across the nation.

Town halls should be treated as a forum to have a constructive, honest discussion about how to improve your community. As a Head Start leader, you can attest to the importance of investing in early childhood education and development, as well as the all-encompassing, lifelong impact it provides for our nation’s children, families, and communities as a whole!

Logistics and General Advice

- Arrive early to make sure you have the opportunity to speak up.
- Wear any Head Start apparel that you have, such as buttons, shirts, etc.
- Speak in a professional and direct tone. It is important that you exemplify why Head Start continues to have bipartisan support, even if there are intense disagreements between your member of Congress and other constituents.

- The main goal of your time speaking should be to invite your member of Congress to come visit your program, especially if they are home for a significant amount of time like during August recess.
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**Talking Points for Directors and Staff**

- My name is [your name] and I am a [director/teacher/staff member] of Head Start in [your town/city, state].

- In [your town] we serve [number] children and their families every year. This includes home visiting, in class programs and even pregnant women.

- Not only are we meeting the high bar of Head Start quality requirements, but we are involving parents in the program and are working with our community partners to locally design our program so it has the best possible outcomes for the most vulnerable children in our community.

- Question: What conversations are you hearing about Head Start in DC?

- Our children are leaving the program ready to be successful in school and throughout their lives.

- Question: What are you doing in Washington to support our children, our families, our community, and Head Start around the country?

- I truly hope you, [name of member of Congress], will come visit our program and see the impact for yourself.

**Talking Points for Parents**

- My name is [your name] and I am a proud Head Start parent. We live in [your town/city, state].

- I came to speak to you today because I want Congress to know that Head Start makes a big impact in the lives of families across the nation and right here in [your town].

- My child receives a high quality education along with health screenings, testing and social and emotional support that without Head Start, [he/she] most likely would not have had access to until kindergarten.
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- As a parent, I gain so much from the program too! I have benefitted from professional development and learned how to play an even more meaningful role in my child’s development. Head Start has become like a family to me.

- [Share a story about how your child or you have advanced or been impacted positively by Head Start] ex. When we found Head Start my son/daughter was... (where your child was educationally or socially/emotionally) and now he/she is exceeding our wildest dreams by...(explain where they are today).

- Question: What are you doing in Washington to support our children, our community, and Head Start around the country?

- Please come visit our program!

  Also, feel free to mention that you voted for them, if you indeed did.