

Top 10 Tips for Talking with Lawmakers



Talking with lawmakers may seem intimidating, but legislators work for their community and want to hear about challenges, triumphs, and needs facing their constituents!

1

Introduce Yourself & Smile

Share your name and the afterschool and/or summer program you work with.

"My name is Polly and I work for the Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network."

2

Have a Clear & Concise Ask

Legislators are busy, so be clear and quick with your ask.

"I would love for you to come visit my afterschool program."

3

Prioritize Your Talking Points

Legislators talk with many people each day. Think of the top 3 things you want them to take away from their conversation from you, and focus on those.

"Supporting afterschool helps keep youth safe during out of school hours, supports healthy lifestyles, and improves literacy skills for children."

4

Be Polite and Respectful

Address them as "Senator X" or "Representative Y," keep eye contact, and recognize the fact they work very hard for their constituents.

5

Don't Make Assumptions

Don't assume a legislator will think or vote a certain way because of their political party affiliation, gender, race, etc.

6

Be Honest

If you don't know the answer to a question, that's okay! Honesty is the best policy.

"That's a great question. I don't know the answer, but I will find out and get back to you." (and then actually do follow up!)

7

Be a Good Listener

The first step in making advocacy headway is listening to other points of view. You can't address concerns until you understand them, then find some common ground.

8

Don't Get Frustrated

Making laws and policies takes a lot of time and patience. Don't get frustrated and don't give up when things take longer than you expect.

9

Offer to Follow Up Later

Make sure your legislator knows you available as a resource.

"Here is my contact info. I would love to continue this conversation."

10

Say Thank You

Showing gratitude for a legislator's hard work can go a long way!

"Thank you so much for all you do for kids in the state of Georgia."



**Watch the Top
10 Tips Video**