

2019 ADVOCACY SUMMIT

Earned Media Guide

A critical component of being a voice for kids is educating voters about our key issues. One of the best ways to do this is through the news media. Each year, the Advocacy Summit provides an opportunity to highlight advocates' work on behalf of kids and encourage others to get involved.

The following is a media toolkit for the 2019 Advocacy Summit. It includes suggested media outreach ideas and tactics for before, during and after the event. These will help you gain the attention of media outlets in your area. (Don't worry, we're here to help, too!) [Please complete this form to let us know if you are interested in participating in media outreach.](#)

This year, in addition to interviews before and after your trip, we are more actively pitching satellite interviews – which are phone or on-camera interviews with your local media outlet while you are in Washington, D.C.

To assist with your outreach, we have included template media outreach materials at the end of this toolkit. If a reporter asks to schedule an interview with you, please let us know. Our communications team can help you practice your talking points prior to speaking with a reporter.

If you are attending the Summit along with other advocates from your state, we recommend dividing the outreach among all who are interested. But it is important to make sure only one person from your area is reaching out to each outlet.

Don't hesitate to reach out to Sara Neumann, Save the Children's Director of Media & Communications for U.S. Programs & Advocacy, with any questions or to discuss ideas. **Her email is sneumann@savechildren.org (Please put Advocacy Summit Media in the Subject Line). Sara's full contact information is included at the end of this toolkit.** Please let Sara know which outlets you reach out to so we don't duplicate your efforts!

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2019 “Asks”

This year, our advocates will ask their members of Congress to invest in kids by:

- Cosponsoring a bipartisan bill that helps families living in “child care deserts” by addressing child care shortages in many parts of the country – particularly rural areas. It provides grants to states to support increased access to child care. The bills are being led in the Senate by Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) and Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska) and in the House by Representatives Collin Peterson (D-Minn.) and Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-Wash.).
- Supporting a Congressional resolution led by Representative Nita Lowey (D-New York) for the U.S. to support access to education for children living in conflict-affected areas of the world. This includes making sure refugees have access to school, schools in conflict zones aren’t attacked and funding continues for education, health and psychosocial support.

Messaging and Talking Points

Below are some overarching themes and messaging that may help as you speak with members of the media. It’s critical for all advocates to communicate with a unified message about the event – while personalizing with your own story about why you advocate for kids! **You don’t need to be an expert, just be yourself.**

Overall Theme: Invest in Kids

Sub-themes:

1. Government plays a critical role in helping kids succeed.

- Federal programs help lift millions of children out of poverty by providing life-saving interventions and preparing them to succeed in school.
- Federal legislation can help address the needs of families who live in child care deserts – neighborhoods or communities where there are more than three children for every licensed childcare slot.
- In the U.S., proven early childhood education and home visiting programs, like Head Start and the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, help children perform better in school, get higher-paying jobs, rely less on social programs and contribute more to the economy.
- Today, nearly one in five children around the world are living in conflict zones. Protecting children affected by conflict is Save the Children’s founding mission, and 100 years later, it remains our top priority.
- We are urging Congress to protect and support children in current and future crises, by working to:
 - Uphold international laws to protect children in conflict;
 - Hold perpetrators accountable of violations against children; and
 - Take practical action to protect children in conflict and to help them recover.
- Non-profit organizations and public-private partnerships are critical to early childhood education in the U.S. and humanitarian support for the world’s children, but the federal government must continue to invest in children both at home and abroad.
- While there are many dedicated public officials and civil servants who continue to support and improve these programs throughout changes in political leadership, the government can do more.

2. Investing in kids is bipartisan.

- Despite our current political climate, in which it seems the two parties can't agree on much of anything, there is bipartisan agreement on investing in kids.
- Legislators from both parties have demonstrated a willingness to work together on smart policies that ensure children everywhere have the opportunity to thrive.
- In 2018, we saw bipartisan support for children's issues at all levels of government, including increased investments at the federal level for Head Start and child care.
- Republicans and Democrats agree that investing in early childhood education helps level the playing field for kids in the U.S., that we must protect children around the world who live in conflict zones and that supporting foreign aid helps to protect our national security.
- We can all agree that investing in kids is not only the right thing to do – it's the smart thing to do.

3. Every voice matters.

- In the past several years, many Americans have become inspired to become politically active and are looking for ways to create positive change.
- Advocating on behalf of kids is a powerful way to improve our shared future.
- Kids don't vote, and they don't donate to political candidates. That means elected officials aren't often reaching out to them, listening to their voices about the world they live in. We need to bring their voices to the discussion, and when they can't be there, we need to be their voice.
- Everyone has the power to make a difference, so it's critical to make calls, write letters, meet with elected officials and vote for the issues that matter most to you.

Before the Summit

- **Make Your List of Local Media Targets:** We suggest reaching out to your local newspaper and/or magazine, local TV stations (NBC, CBS, FOX and ABC affiliates) and local radio stations (NPR, local talk radio).
- **Advisories or “Pitches”:** About 5-7 days before the Summit, you should send a media advisory to your list of local media contacts with details about your trip and the Advocacy Summit. This might yield interest in send-off or follow-up stories. We have provided you with a template you can work from. (See pages 4-7 for media outreach templates.)
- **Target Specific Reporters:** We can help you target reporters who cover politics, education or health, but it's a good idea to target any reporters you already have a relationship with. In your outreach, you could offer an in-person interview before you leave for Washington, a phone interview while you are at the Summit or an in-person interview when you return home – or all three! These are great “feel good” stories for local media outlets to feature.

During the Summit

- **Photos, Photos, Photos:** Make sure you take lots of pictures during your trip! This is key in post-event media outreach. **We have provided you with a draft caption that you can send along to local media outlets, as well as a list of suggested photos to capture (like a selfie with your senator!) at the end of this toolkit.** Be sure to take them horizontally.
- **On-Site Interview Requests:** Some media markets will have reporters here in Washington and after receiving your media advisory may request to interview you while you are in town. You can also offer a phone interview to a local newspaper, TV or radio station. If you receive any requests for interviews, please contact Sara Neumann (sneumann@savechildren.org).

After the Summit

- **Press Releases:** Send information about the event, along with photos and prepared captions, to local media outlets after the event to let them know what you learned and who you met with. **A template is included at the end of this toolkit.**
- **Follow-Up with Reporters:** Follow-up with reporters who expressed interest in speaking with you once you've returned home.
- **Letters to the Editor:** We have included a template for a letter to the editor to submit to your local newspaper about the Advocacy Summit at the end of this toolkit. As always, you are welcome and encouraged to personalize this letter based on your experience.
- **Please send us links to any articles or interviews about your trip so we can share them on SCAN's social media channels.**

Tips

- **Tell your story.** The most interesting thing to a reporter is WHY you chose to attend the Summit and be a voice for kids. You don't need to be an expert, just be yourself.
- **Be persistent!** Reporters receive a lot of pitches, so don't be discouraged if you don't hear back right away. Make sure to follow-up during and after your trip in order to gain their attention.
- **Quality, not quantity.** Make sure you send only high-quality photos to press. Newspapers and TV stations will not publish blurry photos. It's best to take horizontal photos and video.
- **Practice makes perfect!** Just like you'll practice telling your story and making asks before your meetings, practice your answers before any interviews with the media. Sara can help you with this.
- Sara can help you find contact information for your local media outlets if needed.

Questions?

Contact Sara Neumann with any questions or ideas before or after the Summit. During the Summit, feel free to call or text her cell.

- sneumann@savechildren.org | Office: (457) 999-3053, Cell: (203) 209-6545

Jeremy Soulliere, Deputy Director for Media & Communications for U.S. Programs & Advocacy will also be on-site at the Summit. To contact Jeremy about media requests, please email or call:

- jsoulliere@savechildren.org | Cell: (203) 295-5842

Suggested Photos

These are some suggested photos to capture while you are in Washington, D.C.

- Photo with your state delegation in front of the Capitol
- Photo with your member of Congress, including selfies!
- Photo with speakers from the Advocacy Summit
- Photo with your state delegation in front of Washington, D.C. landmarks you may visit

Media Outreach Materials

TEMPLATE PHOTO CAPTIONS

You can include this information with any photos you send to media contacts. Don't forget to give credit to whoever took the photo!

"[Name/s] traveled to Washington, D.C. from March 31 – April 2 to participate in Save the Children and Save the Children Action Network's Advocacy Summit, sponsored by Johnson & Johnson. [Name/s] met with their member of Congress to urge them to invest in early childhood education and provide humanitarian support for the world's children. More than 200 advocates from 35 states attended the event." Photo credit: [Insert name or Save the Children Action Network]

TEMPLATE MEDIA ADVISORY

You can send this to reporters a few days before you leave for Washington.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Jeremy Soulliere, jsoulliere@savechildren.org, (203) 295-5842

Media Advisory: [INSERT CITY] Advocates to Travel to Washington, D.C. to Urge Lawmakers to Invest In Kids

Washington, D.C. (March XX, 2019) – Local advocates from XXX will travel to Washington, D.C. from March 31 – April 2 to participate in Save the Children and Save the Children Action Network's annual Advocacy Summit, sponsored by Johnson & Johnson.

{ Advocate names & hometowns } will join hundreds of advocates from across the country to attend in-depth advocacy trainings and urge lawmakers from both parties to make key investments in early childhood education in the U.S. and provide humanitarian support for the world's children.

"[I/We] can't wait to go to Washington and be a voice for kids and advocate for programs that help children in the United States and around the world," said XX, a [student/adult/community advocate] from [town/school]. "In recent months, we have seen a surge in political activism across the country and it's clear that when passionate, committed people come together, we can create positive change. That's why [I'm/we are] thrilled to do our part and explain to our members of Congress why all kids deserve a strong start in life, no matter who they are or where they were born."

During the 2019 Advocacy Summit, more than 200 advocates – including 65 high school and college students – from 35 states are expected to meet with more than 150 lawmakers on Capitol Hill.

Editor's note: Advocates will be available for interviews before, during and after the Advocacy Summit in-person and via phone or on-camera satellite interviews. Photos from the Advocacy Summit will be made available after the event concludes.

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[Save the Children](#) believes every child deserves a future. Since our founding 100 years ago, we've changed the lives of more than 1 billion children. In the United States and around the world, we give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. We do whatever it takes for children – every day and in times of crisis – transforming their lives and the future we share. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

[Save the Children Action Network](#) is the political voice for kids. We believe that every child deserves the best start in life. That's why we're building bipartisan will and voter support to make sure every child in the U.S. has access to high-quality early learning and that we protect children living in conflict zones around the world. By investing in kids and holding leaders accountable, we are helping kids from birth to age five survive and thrive. Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

TEMPLATE PRESS RELEASE

You can send this to your media contacts after the event to let them know what you accomplished at the Summit.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Jeremy Soulliere, jsoulliere@savechildren.org, (203) 295-5842

Local Advocates Travel to Washington, D.C. to Urge Lawmakers to Invest In Kids

Washington, D.C. (April XX, 2019) – Local advocates from XXX traveled to Washington, D.C. from March 31 – April 2 to participate in Save the Children and Save the Children Action Network's annual Advocacy Summit, sponsored by Johnson & Johnson.

{[Advocate names & hometowns](#)} joined hundreds of advocates from across the country to attend in-depth advocacy trainings and urge lawmakers from both parties to make key investments in early childhood education in the U.S. and provide humanitarian support for the world's children.

"I am so thankful for the opportunity to go to Washington and advocate for kids," said XX, a Save the Children Action Network community advocate/Student Ambassador from XX. "Using my voice in support of children here at home and around the world makes a tremendous difference, and I learned how to become a more effective advocate. All kids, regardless of who they are or where they were born, deserve a strong start in life and I look forward to continue being their voice and advocate for greater investment."

During the 2019 Advocacy Summit, more than 200 advocates – including 65 high school and college students – from 35 states met with more than 150 lawmakers on Capitol Hill.

Editors' note: Please use the caption below if any contributed photos are published.

“*[Name/s]* traveled to Washington, D.C. from March 31 – April 2 to participate Save the Children and Save the Children Action Network’s Advocacy Summit, sponsored by Johnson & Johnson. *[Name/s]* met with their member of Congress to urge them to invest in early childhood education and provide humanitarian support for the world’s children. More than 200 advocates from 35 states attended the event.” Photo credit: *[Insert name or Save the Children Action Network]*

###

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TEMPLATE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Another great media outreach tool is a letter to the editor. Feel free to personalize the copy below and submit it to your local newspaper after you return home from the Advocacy Summit.

To the editor:

In the past year, many Americans have become inspired to become politically active and are looking for a way to create positive change. Advocating on behalf of kids is a powerful way to improve our shared future. Kids don’t vote, and they don’t donate to political candidates. That means they don’t have a voice with elected officials.

That’s why I was honored to attend Save the Children and Save the Children Action Network’s Advocacy Summit in Washington, D.C. this month and be a voice for kids.

During the event, I urged my elected officials, *[insert names]*, to co-sponsor bipartisan legislation that helps families living in “child care deserts” by addressing child care shortages in many parts of the country – particularly rural areas. I also asked them to support a Congressional resolution for the U.S. to support access to education for children living in conflict-affected areas of the world.

Republicans and Democrats agree that investing in early childhood education helps level the playing field for kids in the U.S., that we must protect children around the world who live in conflict zones and that supporting foreign aid helps to protect our national security.

Author name

Home town