



WELCOME TO

The Youth Political Advocacy Framework

BY THE WORLD VISION CANADA YOUTH COUNCIL



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Message from World Vision Canada Youth Council

Dear Fellow Youth Advocates,

As young people, it is often challenging to determine if, how, and when we can start making the change in the world we aspire to accomplish. *Am I too young? How do I begin? Are there opportunities for me to have my voice heard?*

You are never too young, but answers to the other two questions are not as simple. When we began our advocacy work as a youth team, we noticed there was a lack of resources to guide youth in their advocacy journeys. Why wasn't there a comprehensive guide to help young people share their ideas for issues they care about? Hence, this framework was born.

We hope that this framework inspires you to reach out to decision-makers who can facilitate the changes you want to see. We invite you to share this document with other youth advocates and advocacy teams who could benefit from using this guide!



Sincerely,

Ashlyn Nguyen

Chairperson, On behalf of World Vision Canada Youth Council



From left to right, top to bottom: Ann Lee, Grace Zhou, Katherine Dibbon, Negin Amini, Vicky Ruan, Amy Spearman, Camille Zhou, Lauren Dibbon, Kristina Babiakova

Who are we?

Our mission as the World Vision Canada Youth Council is to mobilize Canadian youth to engage with decision-makers to amplify Canada's role in international development. Our vision is a future in which Canadian youth are active participants in politics and decision-making processes within international development. The council works to connect passionate youth to our federal government by means of: engaging with Members of Parliament, Senators and Cabinet Ministers, raising awareness for campaigns, and educating and empowering youth to make a difference.

Through the [#NoChildForSale Campaign](#), we advocate for the implementation of supply chain legislation in Canada to address the use of child/forced labour. Our advocacy work consists of creating digital engagement content, participating in campaigning efforts, and meeting with MPs and Senators.

With our mission in mind and our position as youth advocates, we recognize the need to create the Youth Political Advocacy Framework, a comprehensive resource necessary to support fellow changemakers and our goals for change.

Endorsement from World Vision Canada

The political participation and engagement of young people are at the core of global development work: from a group of students holding their local school board to account in El Salvador, a child parliament in Kenya, to a collective of committed Canadian students advocating for a Canadian law shining light on Canadian companies' supply chains. At World Vision, we consider youth's participation in political processes a key strategic priority for ensuring sustained child well-being and creating democratic societies with informed and engaged citizens.

Young Canadians have a passion for justice and truthfulness. They crave authentic and meaningful experiences and are careful about how they use their time and energy. This framework offers practical guidance on effectively conducting advocacy work at all levels of government. It draws on the learnings and experiences of World Vision Canada's Youth Council members and exemplifies all that is best in meaningful political advocacy.

In my own experience, I have seen members of the Youth Council apply many of the skills and tricks referenced in this framework while engaging with politicians. And, it worked! They have contributed to major political and financial commitments, including at the [2018 G7 summit in Charlevoix](#) and the [progress of Bill S-211](#) as part of our [No Child for Sale campaign](#) focused on addressing the risk of child labour in Canadian companies' global supply chains.

I am thrilled to see this framework come to life and trust it will provide young Canadians with accessible and useful tips and tricks.

Martin Fischer

Head of Policy, World Vision Canada



Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the land on which World Vision Canada’s head office is located, in the Region of Peel, is part of the Treaty Lands of the Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. For thousands of years, Indigenous people inhabited and cared for this land. In particular, we acknowledge the territory of the Anishinabek, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, and Ojibway/Chippewa peoples; the land that is home to the Metis; and most recently, the territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, who are direct descendants of the Mississaugas of the Credit. We are grateful for the opportunity to work on this land, and we give our respect to its first inhabitants.





Introduction

Youth are a highly diverse group of individuals with varying backgrounds, skills and ideas and can be a positive force driving development. Through advocacy, young Canadians can amplify individual perspectives, inform government bodies, and educate decision-makers about the most effective solutions to Canada's federal to municipal problems.

Although youth under 18 are not directly involved in the election process, there are still countless issues that impact youth directly, and therefore there is a need for young people to engage with politicians. **Youth engagement in politics can improve transparency, accountability and integrity in government and allow youth to actively participate in policymaking.**

Many frameworks currently published are from the perspective of the government on how to engage youth. There are also guides to lobbying created for professionals and their organizations. But there is not a simple guide available discussing how youth can take the initiative and advocate for the causes they are passionate about, especially on global issues; this is what we seek to provide.

The Youth Political Advocacy Framework aims to cover the basics of political advocacy and provide youth with a step-by-step guide on how to use their advantages and influence legislation through communicating with government representatives. This guide walks through what advocacy looks like in Canada's parliamentary system and how youth can help create change. The sections in this framework outline the steps to a meeting with a Parliamentarian, including initial contact, how to plan the meeting, how to act during the meeting and how to follow up after the meeting. This framework also discusses general etiquette and provides a tool kit with email templates, checklists, and worksheets to start youth on their advocacy journey.

Whether that is climate change, universal education, or gender equality, as just a few examples, youth have the capacity to advocate for any issue. By providing clarity around the opportunities to advocate as young people, we hope to empower youth to speak out about the issues youth they are passionate about.



**WORLD VISION CANADA YOUTH COUNCIL
extends our gratitude to:**

**The young people who advocate
and contribute to issues they are
passionate about.**



Glossary

Advocacy • Speaking up for people facing a problem or challenge and making sure their voices are heard.

Constituents • A person living in an area represented by a Member of Parliament in the House of Commons who has voting power through Canadian residency or citizenship. You are a constituent and your voice matters to your MP!

Democracy • A country that is governed by people who are elected by its citizens to make decisions on their behalf.

House of Commons (website) • A democratically elected body of Members of Parliament (MP) who represent the people who have elected them to that office (constituents). It provides a link between Canadians and their Parliament.

Legislation • 1/ A collection of related laws. 2/ Process of making laws.

Lobbying • Attempt to influence government decisions.

Parliament • Group that makes federal laws composed of the Governor-General as the Queen’s representative, the Senate, and the House of Commons.

Senate • Composed of 105 Senators who are appointed by the Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister and represent regions of Canada. Senators are responsible for evaluating current legislation, suggesting improvements and fixing mistakes based on regional interests. Senators may also propose new bills.

See Levels of Government Glossary on Page 11 for definitions on the following: **Federal Level, Provincial/Territorial Level & Municipal Level**

See Policy Maker Glossary on Page 11 for definitions of the following: **Members of Parliament (MP), Cabinet Ministers, Senators, Member of the Legislative Assembly/Provincial Parliament (MLA/MPP), City Councilors & School Board Trustees**

For more youth-friendly definitions for parliamentary terms, visit the [Parliament of Canada Website](#).



Determining Your Advocacy Ask

From climate change to girls' empowerment to ending global hunger - there are countless global and local issues for our world to tackle. The most effective way to instigate change is to start with the ONE cause you feel most drawn to and dive deep into learning the issue and what solutions can impact change (checking out [World Vision's global work](#) as a starting point).

Once you've selected your cause, determine your advocacy ask. An advocacy ask describes proposed solutions that Canada or your locality can implement to address the issue you care about. Determining this enables you to identify the best representative to proceed with your ideas for solutions and start lobbying for your cause.

TO FORM YOUR ADVOCACY ASK

1. Develop a clear understanding of the current state of your issue;
2. Identify what specific change you would like to see regarding your issue of interest;
3. Find out what is already being done in Canada or your locality to address your cause;
4. Research relevant policy solutions implemented elsewhere;
5. Create a list of stakeholders who can make change happen;
6. Create a list of proposed solutions based on your research and objectives.

Once you have your advocacy ask, you can move on to contacting the best government representative to support your ask!



Check out World Vision's advocacy campaigns for inspiration and reference!

[Take Action Against Canada's Connection to Child Labour](#)

[Call on Canada to meet our vaccine commitments](#)

Identify, Research and Contacting the Decision Maker

The next step in the process of political advocacy is to reach out to government representatives with the power to bring your issue onto the policy-making stage. Good individuals to reach out to may include members of parliament (MP) from your riding, cabinet ministers, senators, members of the legislative assembly (MLA), city councilors, school board trustees, and more members within the governing system.

During this stage, focus on determining the right individuals to reach out to, learning more, and finding connections to why they should care about your issue. Finally, reach out with various methods. Remember to remain professional and passionate about your cause, but also do not be afraid to reach out more than once and follow up. They are your representatives and your voice matters!

DETERMINING THE BEST INDIVIDUALS TO REACH OUT TO

Each office and member within government plays a different role. It is important to familiarize yourself with Canada's system of parliamentary democracy and what powers and responsibilities each role has to determine the best individuals to reach out to.

Levels of Government Glossary

Federal Level • This level of government deals with areas of law listed in the [Constitution Act 1867](#) that generally affect the whole country. Areas include: foreign affairs, federal taxes, national defense, and Indigenous lands and rights.

Provincial/Territorial Level • The provincial/territorial government is responsible for other areas listed in the Constitution Act 1867, such as education and health care. Some responsibilities are shared with the federal government.

Municipal Level • This is the level of government that is usually based in a city, town or district (a municipality). Municipal governments are responsible for areas such as libraries, parks, community water systems, and local police.

For more details on levels of government, visit the [Parliament of Canada Website](#).

Policy Maker Glossary

Members of Parliament (MP) • Each federal electoral district, also known as riding, has its own MP. MPs make a difference by contributing to federal laws creation. They represent their constituents' interests and help address their problems in Parliament. They are supported by staff, who work on a variety of issues.

Cabinet Ministers • They are confidential advisers selected by the Prime Minister and sworn in as ministers to be part of the Privy Council. The cabinet plays a role as the key decision-making forum in the federal government. Cabinet ministers are responsible for the establishment and administration of government policies. They are supported by team of staff, covering the areas of communications, parliamentary affairs, and policy.

Senators • They make up the Senate, which acts as a reviewing chamber on proposed bills before they are passed. The Senate has become an important institution for the representation of minority interests and groups who may be underrepresented in the elected chamber (e.g. Indigenous peoples, women, minority language, and ethnic groups). They are supported by staff, who are often subject matter experts.

Member of the Legislative Assembly/Provincial Parliament (MLA/MPP) • They are elected by the public in their constituency or electoral division to serve as a representative in the Legislative Assembly in a province or territory. An MLA may voice concerns on behalf of constituents, represent viewpoints, or intercede and assist in problem-solving. They are supported by staff, who are often subject matter experts.

City Councilors • They work on city-wide, ward-based, and local neighboring issues. In their legislative role, they are responsible for considering and establishing policies and bylaws to implement the decisions of city councils. City councilors are responsible for consulting with the constituents of their ward and helping ensure that all sides of an issue are considered in the decision-making process. They are supported by staff, who are often subject matter experts.

School Board Trustees • They are part of a team (the board of trustees) who has the authority to make decisions or act on behalf of a school board. A school board must prioritize the needs of all students when making decisions. Trustees are required to uphold the implementation of resolutions after they are passed by the board.

Your goal is to learn about your representative and whether they are a good fit to advocate for your issue. A representative with experience on certain issues may be more willing to advocate for them. For example, an MP who has previously advocated for climate change policies will likely be more receptive to bringing up more concerns surrounding the environment. Much of the information about your representatives can be found online.

For the purpose of this framework, we will be focused on how to engage an MP for federal causes. The House of Commons website is a good place to start.

1. Visit www.ourcommons.ca/members, and find the MP of your riding or the MP you are looking for.
2. Read up on who they are, their stories and experiences, and the work they've done through the House of Commons website or their individual websites.
 - In the MP's profile on www.ourcommons.ca under the >Work section you can find:
 - Chamber interventions
 - Committee interventions
 - Bills
 - Motions
 - Chamber Votes
 - Google their personal website and visit the "about" section:
 - You will often find a summary of past achievements and some possible insight into their personal life
 - Other resources:
 - www.openparliament.ca - This website allows you to subscribe to receive an email whenever your MP speaks in House debates; consult a word cloud of their most-used words, and receive an overview of their latest activities including voting records.
 - At www.resultscanada.ca/your-tools/, Results Canada offers support for planning an MP meeting and researching your MP.
3. Consider these questions to determine how you can position your advocacy ask with your MP's experiences and current roles:
 - Are they cabinet ministers?
 - > NOTE / DID YOU KNOW: Mandate letters are written by the Prime Minister to their Cabinet Member to let them know key areas to focus on during their mandate - what an excellent resource to tap into!
Reference <https://pm.gc.ca/en/mandate-letters>
 - Does your MP hold a special position in government or opposition? (e.g. Parliamentary Secretary, Shadow Critic...)
 - What political party (Liberal, Conservative, NDP, Green, Bloc) does your MP represent? What is their party's latest platform and their principles, goals, and strategies for the current term of office?
 - Do they sit on any committees?

There are other ways to learn about your representative. Feel free to search through their office’s websites, social media, and past media appearances. Use the research template in our tool kit to help you work through this process!

REACHING OUT

1. Under the >Contact section on the House of Commons website, you will find the constituency office contact information.
 - It is better to call and then follow up with an email to share more details of your ask.
 - If placed on voicemail, leave a short, detailed message on the purpose of your call, who you are, and your phone number/email.
 - See the email and voicemail templates in our tool kit!
2. Schedule a meeting to discuss your advocacy and ask and address any prepared questions.
3. If your MP doesn’t get back to you, send them a follow-up email, stressing that you are a constituent. Try to find and copy their assistant as well.

Once you have successfully confirmed a meeting, congrats! That is a huge step towards successfully advocating for what you are passionate about. You’re free to move on to preparing for the meeting!



**HOT TIP:
Email Address Codes
for MP Staff**

If you are emailing the MP regarding a local concern, add this email to the CC [MPfirstname.lastname.C1@parl.gc.ca] to also notify the MP’s office staffers. For national issues, add this email to the CC [MPfirstname.lastname.A1@parl.gc.ca].

Note:

This is only for federal MPs and does not work for Ministers. Ministerial emails are most easily found through Google or via the Government Electronic Directory Services online.



Planning the Meeting

Awesome! Now that your meeting is set up, it's time to prepare. This section will cover specific areas including what materials to prepare and some tips for presentation - which will directly impact the success of your meeting.

Setting Goals

In preparation for the meeting, determine your meeting objectives and create a brief agenda to achieve those objectives. A sample agenda could be:

- Develop a clear understanding of the current state of your issue
- Educate: your MP on the issue and how it affects you and your community
- Propose solutions and tangible action items for the MP
- Q&A for the MP to ask questions
- Ask for a promise from the MP to take action and reach an agreement on next-steps
- Conclude by driving the issue home on why it's important and how you will follow up
- Don't forget to ask for a picture and tag the MP in any social media post

Prepare Your Case

PITCH AND PRESENTATION

Consolidate all your research around the issue, solution proposal, and tangible action items in relation to the MP's role into a precise speech. Be prepared to talk in detail about the issue including how it impacts constituents directly, as well as members of the community, province, and country.

Your presentations could range from 3 to 10 minutes, or even longer! Be sure to clarify the time you have available with the office staff and prepare your presentation accordingly. According to the time allowance, selectively choose the most salient or impactful parts of your presentation. It's better to budget extra time to avoid going overtime or missing out on key points.

A simple framework you can use is the **6W's**:

WHAT are some key facts about the issue? What are some statistics that show the scope of the problem?

WHEN/WHERE is the context of this issue? What time did it begin and which areas and locations does it impact?

WHO is the group of individuals and communities that the issue affect? What are their concerns and perspectives on this?

WHY does this issue matter to you and those affected? (Good spot for storytelling!) Why should the MP take action on this?

HOW does the issue impact constituents and how can the MP take action to mitigate and resolve it?

Another framework you can reference is the [EPIC Storytelling Model](#) by Results Canada to help craft a memorable narrative.

ENGAGE	Start with an intriguing hook to grab your MP’s attention and focus.
PROBLEM	Outline the problem in detail with facts and statistics. Connect the problem to a topic or cause that the MP is responsible for in his role or personally related to. As social issues are often complex and intersectional, focus on the part of the problem that directly relates to the solution you’re about to present.
INFORM	Provide your solution and illustrate a vision of the impact it will drive. Offer success examples and impact stories of what this solution has resulted elsewhere.
CALL TO ACTION	Make your action SMART - specific, measurable, attainable, relatable, and time-bound. This makes it easy for you to follow up and determine whether the action has been taken. Present the action in the form of a yes-or-no question (e.g. Can you commit...?) State the call to action in one concise sentence.

As you follow these models in creating your speech, consider these **keys to success to level-up your presentation from good to great:**

- **Be prepared with strong research (including the MP’s work and background).** Having a strong understanding of your topic of discussion and your MP’s position and related experience will help you deliver an action-driven conversation.
- **Establish connections.** Introduce yourself, your background, and your organization briefly. Make a point of learning the names and roles of key staff with whom you are meeting.
- **Lead with stories and personal connections.** Powerful stories will compel and grasp the heart much better than statistics. Share success stories of change and stories of opportunities for betterment in MP advocacy meetings. Showcase your passion and speak from the heart.
- **Be inquiring.** Ask your MP if they are familiar with your issue. If the answer is no, this is your opportunity to inform them. If the answer is yes, ask them to share their position. If they are unable to do so, then say you will check back later.
- **Be unique and memorable.** MPs meet with constituents and groups all day, so it is crucial to bring a unique presence to your meeting to make your message memorable.
- **Be flexible and open-minded.** Your MP may have entirely different plans in mind for your meeting and the conversation might not happen as planned. Prepare for this possibility and actively listen to what your MP has to say.
- **Be direct.** Make sure your advocacy ask is clear and precise. Know your goal for the meeting, and ask for it to be met.
- **End with specific and attainable asks for action.** To ensure your meeting provokes action, be direct in expressing what your MP can do moving forward to address your cause. Measure the attainability of your asks by understanding your MP’s position.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT!

Once you've come up with your pitch - PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE! The only way to deliver your ask in a professional, natural, and genuine way is to know the issue in your heart and speak from it. Highlight keywords and key facts on your notes and keep them brief for quick glances during the meeting. This will help you avoid reading off the notes or forgetting important points! Practice aloud in front of a mirror/camera or with a friend to help fight off those nerves! Have someone provide feedback and point out areas of improvement you might not have noticed on your own.

Remember, your meeting is a genuine conversation. The goal isn't to convince your MP of a particular standpoint, but to let them understand your perspective and ask.

TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK!

Don't forget that you do not have to present alone! Group meetings with your MP can strengthen your case by demonstrating that the issue you are advocating for is a shared concern among other youth and Canadians. Invite like-minded individuals who share your passion for your cause to attend and present with you.

If you are presenting with others, agree on roles and who will be saying what. Practice together to deliver good transitions, build positive team dynamics, and ensure everyone is on the same page.

MATERIALS

Visual materials are always helpful. The MP office staff are available to help you determine and understand what might be beneficial to bring to the office. A one-pager of background material can be sent to the office in preparation for the meeting. After the meeting, you can leave a summary and action items sheet with the office staff outlining your key points, a reminder of your request, and your contact information.

DRESS CODE

While there is no official dress code, it is crucial to dress in a respectful manner. Keep your outfits clean and non-distracting. Business casual attire is a safe choice.

Throughout the preparations for this meeting, remember your reasons for setting the meeting up. That will help you keep focused and confident. You have something you are passionate about, but you need your MPs' help to see action.

During the Meeting

You've practiced your pitch and a good handshake. Now, let's get into the meeting process! This is this place where you will gain hands-on experience in engaging and communicating with MPs as an advocate! Whether it be attending in-person meetings, virtual ones, or even phone calls, here are some tips for "*How best to communicate with MPs*":

- **Be punctual.** But don't be surprised if you have to wait. Parliamentary schedules are hectic and attending meetings with MPs requires patience and flexibility.
- **Don't waste time.** Get right to the issue you wish to discuss, and keep track of time. Be purposeful in the stories you share and be mindful of their length. You may have only a few minutes with the MP, and you want to ensure your key points are conveyed.
- **Be respectful.** Be tolerant of differing views and keep the dialogue open. Do not argue. Never speak poorly of other MPs, parliament staff, or other organizations. Be courteous but don't let that stand too much in the way of advocating passionately for what you care about. It is all about balance.
- **Anticipate questions.** Anticipate questions and be prepared to answer. Reserve some of your arguments for questions later to strengthen your point. Ensure your argument aligns with the MP ideologically.
- **Be curious.** Dare yourself to ask courageous, out-of-the-box questions that will prompt innovation and creativity.
- **Be responsive.** Try to answer questions. When you can't, don't stress! Thank the MP for the question and tell them you will get back to them with the information. It is more important for you to provide accurate information than to give an answer which may be incorrect or biased.
- **Be appreciative.** In the end, be sure to extend your thanks for the meeting, and follow up with a thank-you letter. Thank you notes are a great way to restate your key points.

In addition, wrapping up your meeting with the MP with an ask for photos is a great idea to mark this important memory for yourself and send it to the MP in your follow-up!

After the Meeting

After completing your MP meeting, give yourself a pat on the back! Meeting with an MP, especially as you begin your advocacy journey, takes a ton of courage and diligence.

Here are some things to consider doing after your meeting:

1. REWARD YOURSELF.

Congratulations! You have taken a big step to advocate for what you believe in. Whether the idea was accepted by your local member of parliament or not, you have taken an important step to address the issue and advocate for a great cause. This opportunity will boost your confidence, help you practice your public speaking skills, and also open the door for future negotiations with your member of parliament about other potential concerns or suggestions you might have.

2. REFLECT ON YOUR MEETING.

Taking the time to reflect on your meeting is an important process in improving your skills as a youth advocate! Identify what went well, what felt challenging, and what you can improve on next time. Consider any gaps you may have left in the meeting. If there is information you were not able to convey in the meeting, make sure you include it in your summary and action items sheet and send it to your MP after the meeting.

3. SHARE ABOUT YOUR MEETING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Politicians and policy-makers engage actively on social media and always love positive publicity! Share the photo you took with the MP on your social media platforms with a brief caption on what you spoke about and achieved in the meeting. Tag the MP's handle so they can engage with your post!

4. SEND A THANK YOU LETTER.

This is both a genuine and very important step in the process. Thanking MPs for the time they spent listening to your concerns or suggestions is not only a genuine way to appreciate their efforts, but also a way to maintain contact with them. If your MP was interested in the proposed solution or idea, be sure

to reiterate the purpose and mission of your request in a short paragraph along with your thank you. If you have promised to get back to your MP with additional information about the matter, a thank you letter can be a great opportunity to provide the additional information in clear and organized thoughts. Include your photo here to show further appreciation for the time they allocated to listen to your concerns.

5. SEND FOLLOW-UP LETTERS/EMAILS.

Without a follow-up, all the efforts that you have placed to achieve a certain goal might be lost. At an appropriate time, send a letter or an email to your MP to check on their progress in completing the call to action. Don't be discouraged if they don't get back to you soon, since they usually have such a busy schedule. Remember, polite persistence is key. You might have to do multiple follow-ups with your MP and provide supplementary information.

6. LET THE WORLD VISION CANADA YOUTH COUNCIL / WORLD VISION CANADA KNOW ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES AND HOW THIS GUIDE HELPED YOU.

Let us know about any difficulties you faced during the interaction with your MP and how we can help you further. If you feel the meeting was successful, we'd love to hear about that as well.

Please contact us by email (wvcanyouthcouncil@gmail.com and cherie_wai@worldvision.ca) and tell us about the most useful strategies you used to lead an effective meeting with your MP.

With your feedback, we can better help other youths to stand up for what they truly believe in and stand for change. You can know that not only did you address your own concerns, but you helped other youth to stand next to you and also become advocates for change.

Conclusion

We hope that this comprehensive walk-through guide on youth participation in politics improves your confidence in your advocacy efforts. It is critical that the gap between youth and politics narrows, to empower young advocates like you to speak up for change.

In this framework, we outlined the steps to prepare, hold, and follow up with a member of parliament who can help you facilitate your desired change. These steps could easily be used by other politicians and decision-makers. We recommend using this guide along with the resources provided in the toolkit in your advocacy efforts.

Stay connected to us and follow our work by email (wvcanyouthcouncil@gmail.com and cherie_wai@worldvision.ca), Instagram ([@wvcancouncil](https://www.instagram.com/wvcancouncil)), Twitter ([@WVCanCouncil](https://twitter.com/WVCanCouncil)), and Tiktok ([@WVCanCouncil](https://www.tiktok.com/@WVCanCouncil)). We would love to hear your feedback, stories, and ideas as fellow youth advocates looking to push the boundaries on change by young people!

LET'S CREATE CHANGE TOGETHER!





The **TOOL KIT**

Steps for Youth Advocacy

1

DETERMINE WHAT YOU'RE PASSIONATE ABOUT!

- A. What's the issue that you want to help solve?
- B. What is your "WHY"?

2

DO YOUR HOMEWORK AND RESEARCH THE TOPIC!

- A. What's being done now?
- B. What work needs to be done?

3

SET YOUR GOALS!

- A. What do you want to achieve?
- B. What is your timeline to achieve it?

4

FIND/CONTACT YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

- A. Who can help you advance your proposed solution?
- B. What can they do specifically to help solve the problem? Is this a federal, municipal, or provincial issue?
- C. Research what work they've done and try to understand their background
- D. Research out through email or a phone call!

5

PLAN THE MEETING

- A. Create the meeting agenda
- B. Prepare your pitch and presentation
- C. Prepare materials / one-pagers
- D. Practice practice practice!

6

MEET WITH YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

- A. Have your notes ready for your presentation
- B. Ask and answer questions, prepare for counter-arguments
- C. Determine next steps and verbal commitments with the MP
- D. Leave the one-pager behind
- E. Take a photo!

7

FOLLOW UP WITH YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

- A. Send a thank-you email and reminders on the next steps
- B. (Optional) Share the photo and about your meeting on your social media!

8

REFLECT ON YOUR EXPERIENCES

- A. What did you learn?
- B. What worked well and what can be improved on?

9

CONTINUE YOUR AMAZING ADVOCACY WORK!

- A. Advocate to your friends and family members
- B. Post on social media to raise awareness
- C. Host events or fundraisers for the issue you care about
- D. Never give up!

Creating an Action Plan

Determine what you're passionate about.

What is the main issue you want to address?

What do I/we want to achieve? Set a goal.

What action(s) do I/we want to take?

Examples:

- Engaging with my political representatives (starting/promoting a petition, raising an issue by meeting with them, writing letters)
- Using social media influence (tweeting at politicians, raising awareness)
- Hosting events in your local communities or school to raise awareness
- Fundraising events (bake sales, conferences, tournaments)

Who are my/our allies/Who can help?

Examples:

- Other students, friends, family, mentors, university clubs, organizations that specialize in your cause (ex. World Health Organization for health care, etc.), politicians

What supplies/resources do I/we need?

Examples:

- Solid background research, social media, internet access, sponsorship for events

Researching Your MP

Fill in the following questions when researching your MP. Thorough research on your MP will allow you to trigger better discussion during a meeting and understand what they can do to help your cause.

What bills have they voted on in the past?

What organizations and projects are they currently involved in?

Are they in government or in opposition? What is their political party/affiliation?

What organizations, projects, or line of work were they involved in before they became a MP?

What are the current ongoing issues in your riding?

NOTE: If you are not reaching out to the MP that represents your riding, determine what are the ongoing issues in their riding.

What are their political or personal connections with my issue of interest?

Are they a cabinet minister? What ministry are they responsible for?

Email Template

Use this email template when contacting your representative to schedule a meeting and introduce the issue you are advocating for.

[Date]

Attn: [MP's name] (Include "Honourable" if they are a Minister of State),

Dear [MP's name] (Include "Honourable" if they are a Minister of State),

My name is [insert name here]. (IF APPLICABLE: I am a constituent in your district at [insert postal code]). [Add a small paragraph (2–3) sentence introducing yourself and who you represent].

I am writing this letter to express my concern about [the issue you are advocating for with preferably a personal story or a story that you saw in newspaper, Television, etc]

[Write a paragraph about WHY this issue is important and give some basic background information about this issue in case your MP is new to it]

[Write a paragraph about HOW the MP office can help you]

I would love to know your availability to schedule a meeting to dive into this issue further.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my concerns, and I look forward to receiving a response from you on this matter.

Warm Regards,

[Name and Family Name]

[Title (e.g. Student from xxx school)]

[Riding, Postal Code]

[Your return email]

Follow-Up Email Template

Use this follow-up email template if you do not receive a reply to your email in over 1 week.

Dear [MP's name] and [name of office assistant, if applicable],

My name is [insert name here]. [Reintroduce yourself briefly]

I reached out to you on [date of initial email] regarding [your issue of interest] and did not receive a response.

*[Write briefly regarding why you care about the issue and why you need your MP's interest].
I would greatly appreciate your input and support in addressing this issue.*

Please take the time to review my previous email. I am still interested in setting up a meeting with you to discuss my concerns and possible solutions. I am flexible to meet based on your availability.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Warm Regards,

[Name and Family Name]

[Title (e.g. Student from xxx school)]

[Riding, Postal Code]

[Your return email]

Voicemail Template

Use this voicemail template when contacting your representative to schedule a meeting.

Hi! This is [name] calling on behalf of [your advocacy team]. We are currently working on [topic], and would love to schedule a meeting to get your insights on the matter. If you could call me back at [phone number], that would be greatly appreciated. I look forward to hearing back from you.

Checklist of things to do before the meeting

Use this checklist to ensure you are well-prepared for your MP meeting.

- Research your topic and know what's being done currently
- Research and understand your MP's background
- Set your goals and agenda for the meeting
- Determine specific asks/action items that are within your MP's capabilities
- Contact the MP to request a meeting and ask for the meeting's time allowance
- Send 1 page of background material to your MP's staff ahead of time
- Prepare a summary of key points and action items to give after the meeting
- If you're working with multiple people, determine roles and the flow of the meeting
- Practice, practice, practice!

EPIC Storytelling Model

Use this worksheet to prepare an effective story prior to your MP meeting. This will ensure your MP is engaged and your message is delivered with impact!

ENGAGE:

Write an engaging hook to start your discussion. Consider introducing a personal story, highlighting a key statistic.

PROBLEM:

What is the problem?

What are some statistics/key points your MP should know about the problem?

Why do you care about this issue? Insert a personal story here!

Why should your MP care? How does this problem relate to the MP's work?

INFORM:

What solution do you propose to this issue?

What are the action steps to accomplishing the solution for your MP and other stakeholders? Consider timelines, measurability of your action steps.

CALL TO ACTION:

Address this to your MP: Can you commit to... *[insert what you would like the MP to do to address your issue]*.



World Vision is a Christian relief, development and advocacy organization working to create lasting change in the lives of children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice. Inspired by our Christian values, World Vision is dedicated to working with the world's most vulnerable people regardless of religion, race, ethnicity or gender.