

Provider Appreciation Day® Advocacy Toolkit:

How to Include Elected Officials in Your PAD Event

Building relationships with elected officials is one of the most effective ways to engage in child care advocacy and Provider Appreciation Day® (PAD) offers a perfect opportunity. Child Care Aware of America encourages advocates to use this toolkit to guide them in including elected officials in events held to celebrate PAD on Friday, May 10, 2024. For more information about hosting a PAD event, visit providerappreciation.org/provider-appreciation-day-webinars/, to watch the PAD information session webinar.

Things to Consider Before Inviting Elected Officials

In addition to celebrating the incredible work of providers, hosting a PAD event is also a great way for advocates to spread the word about the importance of child care in their community. This includes inviting your local elected officials to build relationships to remind them about the essential work child care providers do in your community.

There are many choices of elected officials your organization can invite. When thinking about which to invite, consider different leaders at your local and state levels:

1. *State:* If there has been a lot of child care activity at your state level, consider inviting your state officials including your Governor, state representatives and state senators.
2. *Local:* If there has been a lot of child care activity at your local level, consider inviting your local officials including your mayor, city council members and county supervisors.

How To Invite Your Elected Officials

Once you have determined who you would like to invite, the next step is to reach out. Asking your elected officials to attend your event may sound daunting at first, but remember, legislators meet with constituents often, and they rely on your expertise and experience to craft policies that meet the needs of your community. Use the steps below as a guide as you plan your event and make the ask.

Plan Ahead

Finalizing your event date in the early planning stages is crucial in ensuring that your elected officials have enough time to include your event in their calendars. You will want a confirmed event date before your initial outreach to your elected official's office.

Reaching Out

Once you have solidified your date and venue, it's time to connect with your elected official's office. If you are unsure who your elected officials are or the best way to contact them, go to [Find Your Legislator - Child Care Aware® of America](#), and input your address to view contact information for your elected officials.

- **Send an email/or make a phone call:** Use one of the [on this page](#) to reach your elected official's office. Make sure to include all the key details of the event, such as date, time, location and purpose.
- **What If They Are Unavailable:** If the office tells you that your elected official isn't available on your designated day, thank them for their time, offer to keep in touch, and follow up with resources where they can learn more about child care. This interaction is still a good step to building a relationship with your elected official's office and can lay a foundation for future events or meetings.

Other Considerations

Inviting Reporters

Inviting media is a great way to spread the word about your PAD event both before and after it occurs. Before reaching out to the media, connect with your elected official's staff to ensure that all parties are comfortable with media being present, and stay in communication with your elected official's staff regarding media invites. Refer to our [Media Outreach toolkit](#) for in-depth information on reaching out to reporters.

After The Event

Follow Up with Your Elected Officials

In the days after your event, send a thank-you note to the elected officials who attended. This is an opportunity to further your relationship with them and provide resources for them to learn more about child care policies impacting your community.

Share On Social Media

Conversations around child care investments are happening daily on social media platforms, especially Twitter. Sharing photos of the event on social media afterward is another way to thank your elected officials. Include a photo from the event, tag your elected officials and [@childcareaware](#), and use the [#ThankYouChildCare](#) at the end.

Follow Up with CCAoA

We would love to hear about your event, your experience connecting with your elected officials, and if there are ways we can improve our resources for you in the future. Let us know how it went using this brief [form](#).

Next Steps – Visit our [PAD resources page](#) to view our sample templates to invite and call your elected officials about your event and share about your event on social media using our sample copy.

For any questions, please contact takeaction@usa.childcareaware.org.