



Provider Appreciation Day!

Provider Appreciation Day® Advocacy Toolkit: How to Include Policymakers in Your PAD Event

Building relationships with policymakers 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 policymakers in events held to celebrate PAD on Friday, May 8, 2026. For more information about hosting a PAD event, visit www.providerappreciation.org.

Things to Consider Before Inviting Policymakers

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

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 or county supervisors.

How To Invite Your Policymakers

Once you have determined who you would like to invite, the next step is to reach out. Asking your policymakers 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 policymakers have enough time to include your event in their calendars. You will want a confirmed event date before your initial outreach to your policymaker's office.

Reaching Out

Once you have solidified your date and venue, it's time to connect with your policymaker's office. If you are unsure who your policymakers are or the best way to contact them, you can find your policymakers' names and contact information [on this page](#) by clicking on Find My Officials at the top.

- Send an email/or make a phone call: Use one of the templates below to reach your policymaker'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 policymaker 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 policymaker's office and can lay a foundation for future events or meetings.

Other Considerations

Inviting Reporters

Inviting local press 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 policymaker's staff to ensure that all parties are comfortable with media being present, and stay in communication with your policymaker'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 Policymakers

In the days after your event, send a thank-you note to the policymakers 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 on reaching out to reporters.

Share On Social Media

Sharing photos of the event on social media afterward is another way to thank your policymakers. Include a photo from the event, tag your policymakers and @childcareawareusa, and use our campaign hashtags: #ProviderAppreciationDay #CelebrateChildCare #EarlyEducatorAppreciation. View our [Social Media Toolkit](#) for sample messages and downloadable graphics.

Follow Up with CCAoA

We would love to hear about your event, your experience connecting with your policymakers, 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](#).

Template Messages

Template Email – Invitation

Utilize the sample email invitation below to send to your policymakers.

Email Subject Line: Celebrate Provider Appreciation Day with us!

Dear [State Representative/State Senator/Mayor/Dr./Honorable/Councilmember Last Name]:

We are delighted to invite you to an event celebrating Provider Appreciation Day (PAD) on May 8, 2026, at TIME at LOCATION. PAD is a special day in the year to recognize the tireless efforts of providers who care for children.

This celebration will honor the work of early care educators from our community, and we would love it if you could join us in the festivities to commemorate them. We expect (fill in who is likely to attend here, e.g., “child care providers from across the county” or “our partners at ...”) to also join the celebration.

Please do let us know if you need any additional information about the event. If you are not able to attend, we would be happy to provide you with resources to learn more about PAD and the state of child care in our community. We would love to stay in touch with you and your office in the future.

We look forward to your attendance at our Provider Appreciation Day celebration and your engagement in our exciting work on behalf of our community's children, families and educators.

Sincerely,

Name

Title

Organization

Work Contact information

Template Phone Script – Invitation

Call your policymakers (State Representative/State Senator/Mayor/Dr./Honorable/Councilmember) using the script below to invite them to a Provider Appreciation Day event nearby. Reminder – You can find your policymakers' names and [contact information on this page](#).

- Hello, I'm (Your Name), a constituent of (Policymakers Name) from (Your City).
- I'm calling on behalf of (Name of Workplace) to formally invite (Policymaker's Name) to our 2026 Provider Appreciation Day event on (Date and Time of the Event) to recognize child care providers, teachers and educators of young children.
- We hope to have several members of the community present, including our organization's staff, families served by child care and the honored providers themselves.
- We would be honored to have (Policymakers Name) join us in celebrating these essential educators on Provider Appreciation Day.

Template Email – Post Event Thank-You

Utilize the template thank-you email invitation to send to policymakers that attended your event.

Email Subject Line: Thank you for attending our event!

Dear [State Representative/State Senator/Mayor/Dr./Honorable/Councilmember Last Name]:

On behalf of all of us at [Name of Workplace], thank you for attending our Provider Appreciation Day celebration on [Insert Date]. Your presence at our event made it even

more special, and we are grateful for your support. We look forward to staying in touch with you in the future.

In the meantime, check out [Input data about child care in your state, and you can find further details about your state with our [State Policy Dashboard](#)] We hope to be a resource for your office, and please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

Name

Title

Organization

Work Contact information