

**WHSA - Tips for Talking with Your Legislator**

* Know who your legislator is before making initial contact.
* Find out what legislative committees your legislator serves on.
* Develop an agenda. Think if it as a business meeting; go into it with a plan and try to stick to it.
* Rehearse your key points in advance.
* Arrive on time or early for your appointment, but be prepared to wait.
* Do not be disappointed if your legislator sends an aide. Aides are critical to the process.
* Relax. Do not be intimidated. Legislators will view you as the expert on the issue.
* Introduce yourself to you legislator and his / her staff.
* Be brief, prepared, clear, honest, accurate, persuasive, timely, persistent, and grateful.
* Do not assume that your legislator understands the Head Start Program. (Share the WHSA Head Start Fact Sheet)
* Personalize the issue. Share your Head Start story.
* Stay on topic. Be careful not to stray off course.
* Put the legislator at ease by convincing him/her that you are there to serve as an educational resource. Act like a partner, not an adversary.
* Be a good listener and hear out what your legislator has to say on the issue.
* Leave materials. (WHSA Fact Sheet, Annual Report, Child Outcomes Data, etc.)
* Be sure to thank the legislator for taking the time to meet with you.
* Always follow up with a thank you note.