



## **Educating the New Congress:** Step-by-Step Advocacy Training Series for Homeless Educators and Service Providers

6-PART SERIES



**Part V - How To Engage Parents and  
Youth with Lived Experience in  
Advocacy**

MARCH 16, 2021; 3:30PM EASTERN

# About SchoolHouse Connection



SchoolHouse Connection works to overcome homelessness through education. We provide strategic advocacy and technical assistance in partnership with schools, early childhood programs, institutions of higher education, service providers, families, and youth.

- Website:  
<http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org>
- Newsletter:  
<https://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/sign-up/>
- Federal and state policy advocacy
- Q&A from our inbox
- Webinars and implementation tools
- Youth leadership and scholarships



# SHC's Advocacy Training Series

1. Getting Grounded: Advocacy in the New Congress
2. How to Effectively Communicate with Congress
3. What Does Successful Advocacy Look Like? Learning from Peers
4. Shining a Light: Using Media (and Social Media) to Boost Legislative Advocacy
5. **How To Engage Parents and Youth with Lived Experience in Advocacy**
6. How to Apply These Lessons Closer to Home: State Policy Advocacy

# Recap --

Part I-[Getting Grounded](#), we covered:

- The imperative of constituent engagement
- The dynamics of the 117th Congress
- The difference between advocacy & lobbying

Part II-[How to Effectively Communicate with Congress](#), we covered:

- Best strategies for communicating with Congress
- Effective Meetings: Preparing, During, Following Up, Do's and Don'ts
- Online and Other Forms of Advocacy

Part III-[What Does Successful Advocacy Look Like? Learning from Peers](#), our peers covered:

- Entering the advocacy space and the impact that it can have
- Why they make time for advocacy
- Significant lessons learned while engaging in advocacy

Part IV-[Shining a Light: Using Media \(and Social Media\) to Boost Legislative Advocacy](#), we covered:

- Why media is important for advocacy
- What makes a compelling story to legislators
- How to effectively incorporate social media into advocacy



# Why Engage Youth and Parents In Advocacy?

- Youth and parents are the experts of their experience
- They provide invaluable perspectives, innovative ideas, and critical feedback
- They can best speak to the policies and strategies that are most needed and would be most effective in supporting them

# What Does Engaging Youth and Parents Look Like?

Involving youth and parents in advocacy can take place in several forms:

- Cultivate relationships and build rapport
- Provide education on advocacy priorities
- Provide ongoing and event-specific training
- Create space for young people and parents to contribute and collaborate (mailing lists, website and social media engagement)



# What Does Engaging Youth and Parents Look Like?

Involving youth and parents in advocacy can take place in several forms:

- Testifying in legislative hearings/providing written testimony
- Soliciting input during policy conversations
- Participating in Congressional briefings
- Attending visits with legislators
- Public speaking engagements
- Follow-up



# Examples of Youth and Parent Engagement

**Briefing #1: Youth Voices**  
**Family and Youth Homelessness in the Wake of COVID-19: A Virtual Congressional Briefing Series #1**  
In Collaboration with the Congressional Caucus  
Tuesday, July 14, 2PM Eastern

Participants: Yesenia, Christine, Anthony, Han, Christian

Logos: Schoolhouse Connection, NNY, First Focus, Family Promise

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## Congressional Briefings:

Family and Youth Homelessness in the Wake of COVID-19: A Virtual Congressional Briefing Series In Collaboration with the Congressional Caucus

**Moderator**

**Panelists**

**Yorri Berry**  
Director of Youth Partnerships  
[yorri\\_berry@nn4youth.org](mailto:yorri_berry@nn4youth.org)

- April [redacted] Chatham, New Jersey
- Freda [redacted] Cincinnati, OH
- Julie [redacted] Chicago, IL
- Destiny [redacted] New Orleans, LA

- [Youth Voices](#)
  - Repurposed as a [blog post](#)
- [Parent Voices](#)
  - Repurposed as a [blog post](#)

# Key Considerations In Identifying and Supporting Youth and Parents

- Draft a partnership description
- Build community partnerships to identify and engage youth participants
- Build/strengthen relationships and rapport
- Make an effort to understand and value youth and parents as individuals
- Regularly communicate and provide ample information
- Provide support during in-person events/engagements
- Moderate panels intentionally
- Audience boundaries and Q&A time
- Engage multiple youth and parents, over time, to provide diverse perspectives
- Gather feedback from youth to inform partnerships

**Questions?**

**Next Week:**

## **Part V: How to Apply These Lessons Closer to Home**

In the next session, we'll connect lessons we've learned thus far in federal advocacy to the state and local level.



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**Part VI - How to Apply These Lessons  
Closer to Home**

TBA