

How can social media be used to advocate successfully for real change to societal problems?

- ❖ Look for an existing community around an issue or cause. Like, retweet or use a popular hashtag in your own tweet.
- ❖ Take your message further by directing a tweet or a Facebook post at your congressional representatives asking them to take specific action about a legal issue. Always be polite and thank them!

TO GET STARTED If you don't already have a Facebook or Twitter, sign up for an account, and ask a friend to show you some of the basics. You can also check out many "how to" videos online.

IF YOU'RE ALREADY ON SOCIAL MEDIA Follow some new accounts- especially those of your congressional representatives and news sources publishing information about issues you care about. Check out our list of social media resources to follow.

On **TWITTER**, follow the accounts of journalists, news sources, advocacy organizations, celebrities or community leaders who are involved in an issue.

Through these accounts, or by exploring the trending hashtags page, you can find ongoing advocacy movements connected. From there, you can retweet other people's messages or use the hashtag/phrase in your own tweet. Tweet often, and at different times of the day!

FACEBOOK is useful for longer posts, which you should limit to once or twice a day. Raise online awareness by liking or sharing someone else's relevant post. Sharing a news article is a great way to catch people's attention, especially if you personalize your post to highlight how the issue is relevant to your friends. Always use pictures in your post!

While Twitter and Facebook are most commonly used for advocacy because of the ability to re-post other people's messages and send many messages out, there are many other platforms. Consider whether a Tumblr blog, post on Instagram, video on YouTube, or another platform would be effective, too.

Always make your messages personal, and let people know why YOU are so passionate. Be direct and to the point. Put your passion into practice! Find an ongoing campaign advocating for an issue. Consider which platform is most appropriate and like, share or tweet!

Sample Tweet about Syrian Crisis:

Tragic milestone: there are now 2 million Syrian refugees. Half are children. Hurry. #SurroundSyriansWithSupport @CatholicRelief @USCCB

CONGRESSIONAL SENIOR MANAGERS AND SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGERS SAY...

"FACEBOOK IS SOMEWHAT OR VERY IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTANDING CONSTITUENTS' OPINIONS" 64%

"TWITTER IS SOMEWHAT OR VERY IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTANDING CONSTITUENTS' OPINIONS" 42%