

CONTACT MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

You can take action!

AGE: Middle school or high school.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: Varies, 1–3 for actual meetings.

TIME: 1 month.

RESOURCES: Paper, pens, phone.

COST: \$0–\$20.

Organize a Letter Writing Campaign

Get together a large group of people to write letters to their U.S. Senators and Representatives to tell them how you feel about Big Tobacco targeting youth. In the letters urge them to do something about it and protect America's youth. Ask your school to set aside time one day for the whole school to write letters to their members of Congress or have a letter writing campaign as part of another event.

Or, rather than having everyone write their own letters, create a form letter or petition that people can quickly sign. Collect signatures at one of your events, or enlist volunteers to go door to door in your community and around schools to collect signatures from as many people as possible. Be sure to clearly explain what you are trying to accomplish and why it is important for them to participate.



Set up a Meeting with Your Members of Congress

An even better way to reach your members of Congress is in a face-to-face meeting. This shows even greater concern and dedication.

To begin setting up a meeting, contact your member's office and ask the staff about the procedure for requesting a meeting. If you fail to set up a meeting on your first try, be persistent. If your member sees how dedicated you are to your cause, he or she may decide to have a meeting with you after all.

When you get a meeting, prepare what you want to say and practice in advance. Be prepared to answer questions and respond to any objections that may be made. Don't allow your member of Congress to side-track you and be sure to stick to your message. It may be helpful to bring with you props, such as graphs, statistics and samples of marketing you feel is aimed towards youth. Also, bring along a print copy of what you are asking your member of Congress to do to leave with him or her to look over after your meeting.

Follow up on your meeting with a thank you note. Thank your Congress member for taking the time to meet with you and repeat your message again.

HERE'S HOW TO REACH YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS:

Office of Representative (Name)
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Don't know who your Representative is?
Go to www.house.gov.

Office of Senator (Name)
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

You can find your Senators listed
at www.senate.gov.

