

## **NFP NATIONAL SITE VISIT WEEK OVERVIEW**

**August 20-24, 2018**

### **Background**

Each August, federal legislators head home to their districts/states for a month long congressional recess, providing us with the perfect time to invite them on an NFP site visit. To take advantage of this opportunity, the NFP-NSO created NFP National Site Visit Week in 2016. This is a week dedicated to educating policy makers about the positive impact NFP is having on their community and provides the opportunity for NFP sites to be involved in gaining that much-deserved recognition. In the past two years, NFP Site Visit Week has grown into a successful nationwide effort and this year, we would like to see even more sites and states involved.

### **How it works**

NFP-NSO Policy and Government Affairs advocacy team sends out a robust packet of planning materials, including a toolkit, invitation templates, talking points and more to assist our sites in this effort and encourage sites to get involved in a variety of ways.

### **Site Visit Week Events/Ideas**

*Invite a legislator to:*

- A traditional site visit where they come to the site and meet with a group of clients, nurses and administrators
- A pre-planned special event such as a graduation
- A breakfast or luncheon
- A CAB/SLB meeting
- A home visit

There are plenty of ways and times to participate. So, while we try capitalizing on this one week, sites should not feel limited to those 5 days.

### **State and Regional Involvement**

Site Visit Week is not just limited to federal legislators. Sites are welcome to invite your whole regional delegation, local elected officials or other community leaders. These events can lead to positive conversations and relationships on the state and local level which go on to benefit the site throughout the year.

### **Community Advisory Boards and State Leadership Boards**

There are several ways for State Leadership Boards and Community Advisory Boards to get involved, such as:

- Encouraging sites to participate
- Offering planning assistance
- Reaching out to legislators on the sites behalf
- Attending the event
- Participating in social media
- Spreading the word to your local networks

The advocacy team, along with your Government Relations Manager and Nurse Consultant are here to provide support and ensure that you have everything you need to have a successful Site Visit Week. This opportunity is one that your site does not want to miss out on! Use this week to display your successes and let your representatives know that Nurse-Family Partnership works!

## National Site Visit Week Toolkit

### About this toolkit:

During the week of August 20-24<sup>th</sup>, Implementing Agencies across the country will be hosting their legislators on site visits as part of the 2018 NFP National Site Visit Week.

To get started, this toolkit and the [attached resources](#) provide samples of the tools you will need to plan your own National Site Visit Week event!

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Nurse-Family Partnership® (NFP) provides meaningful and measurable outcomes that benefit the entire community and simultaneously save scarce taxpayer resources. Federal, state and local policymakers want to hear about programs that are making a difference in the communities they represent. NFP National Site Visit Week is a perfect time to extend an invitation to federal policy makers while they are visiting their home districts during the August congressional recess.

This toolkit will guide you in raising awareness about Nurse-Family Partnership and effectively building relationships with policy makers through site visits.

### Getting Started

**Who to invite-** Start your National Site Week planning by mapping out which federal legislators represent your site. You can easily find this information by entering your address here: <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/members>. You can also reach out to NFP-NSO staff if you have questions about which legislators to invite. If you have recently met with a Member of Congress and/or their staff in their district or DC office, August congressional recess is a great time to follow up and invite them to visit your local NFP program and meet nurses, moms, and children.

**Notify your NFP-NSO Government Relations Manager (GRM)-** Your GRM is your direct contact for all things concerning government relations in your state. They are available to assist you throughout the planning process and will make sure that you get any support you may need in the form of materials and social media content. If you are unsure who your GRM is, please contact: [businessdevelopment@nursefamilypartnership.org](mailto:businessdevelopment@nursefamilypartnership.org)

**Invite your legislators** using the sample National Site Visit Week draft invite letter. August schedules for Members of Congress will fill up quickly, so it is best to send your invitations by **June 4<sup>th</sup>**. Once you email your invitations, you will likely need to follow-up with the legislator's office to finalize the visit arrangements. Don't be afraid to be persistent!

**Schedule the site visit** –There are many options for organizing a site visit, including convening a group of nurses and clients meeting with the legislator and their staff to share their experiences. If you receive interest from more than one Member of Congress, you can always plan multiple visits or convene one large event for all who are interested in attending.

## Preparing for Your Meeting

**Organize a group of nurses and clients** that are willing to speak to the legislator about their NFP experiences. Included in the attached materials, you will find a draft questionnaire for both nurses and clients that can help them organize what they would like to talk about, as well as a draft meeting agenda, and a Parent Advocacy Toolkit that will help the mom understand the importance of her involvement.

**Organize a packet of leave-behind materials:** Think carefully about what materials you would like to provide to the legislator. Don't let your message get lost in too much paper! Legislative staff usually prefer to receive documents electronically, but you should feel free to provide brief overviews of your program, the Nurse-Family Partnership model, and perhaps a media piece that highlights your program's impact on the community.

## Tips for a Successful Site Visit:

**Share Your Story:** The NSO Policy and Government Affairs team will provide talking points to help guide the conversation but your story is what will resonate with legislators the most. Explain your role with NFP, how long you have been doing it and what motivates you to do what you do. Legislators and community stakeholders will be interested to hear about the wide range of benefits your city, county, or state are experiencing through your work with NFP. By weaving together, the stories of clients with your professional perspectives on how and why this program works, NFP nurses and nurse home visitors play a unique role in building invaluable relationships with key public officials.

**Client and Graduate Presence:** Be sure to extend an invitation and encourage NFP moms to participate. To help her prepare to share her story, have the client/graduate review the draft questionnaire and review the Parent Advocacy Toolkit with her. Additionally, the NFP-NSO Parent Ambassador can help train and shape the mom's story by coordinating a one-on-one phone call with the client, upon client/graduate approval.

**Responding to unanswered questions:** If your legislator asks you a question that you do not have the answer to, don't panic! Respond by saying you need to confirm the information and offer to follow-up with his/her staff – then follow up with the appropriate information within a day or two. Make sure to check out additional resources from NFP-NSO about specific talking points and guidance answering frequently asked tough questions.

**Take Photos:** Make sure to have each client fill out an Image Release and Consent Agreement form so your photos can be shared! Snap a photo after the meeting of your legislator and team and be sure to send a copy with your thank you letter.

**Thank your legislator:** Send a thank you letter or a hand-written note to your legislator. Thank you letters serve as a reminder of your request for legislators, if you've made one, and also give you an opportunity to deliver any follow-up materials you may have promised. Be sure to CC the staff that attended your meeting or shoot them a quick thank you via e-mail.

**Long term follow-up:** National Site Visit Week can serve as the "first date" with a Member of Congress or could be the culmination of a series of past meetings. At whatever point you are in cultivating a relationship with your Member(s) of Congress, site visits play a vital role in engaging policymakers and setting the stage for future opportunities. Keep them engaged by sending updates to the program, media recognition you may receive and additional opportunities for their involvement.