



Wondering if you can participate?

**YES  
YOU CAN!**

*In a recent survey, MCADSV members told us the top reasons that have prevented participation in Capitol Advocacy Days. We listened, and here we offer a few solutions to overcome those barriers. We encourage all programs to meet with their legislators, share their powerful stories and advocate for statewide change.*

**TIME: “My staff and I are too busy. We’re a small, overworked staff, and we just can’t get away from the office and the phone lines.”**

Missouri Capitol Advocacy Days is a great activity for your board members and volunteers. Board members are champions of your program within the community, and many would be happy to meet with legislators if asked. Volunteers or interns also are able to represent your program and share its story.

**FUNDING: “My funding sources won’t allow me. I need to spend my time on direct services only.”**

If you don’t have unrestricted funds that can be used to pay for your time, you might be able to use funds allocated for advocacy or education, provided you engage in advocacy work (talking about your program) and avoid lobbying (talking about a particular bill or budget item). And remember, this is also why having board members and volunteers go can really help. Another option is to use a personal day off work.

**TRAVEL: “We don’t have the money for travel expenses.”**

Maybe a near-by program is also participating, and you both can carpool and save on gas. Another option is to approach a community service group and ask for help sponsoring your trip. Then, afterward, you could even talk about your program and experience in Jefferson City with that local group and let people in your community know what you are doing for them.

**NERVES: “I’d be too nervous to talk to a Senator or Representative. I don’t know what I’d even say.”**

In a meeting between you and a legislator, you are the expert. No one knows your program, your clients and your community services like you do. You are the one with valuable information to be shared, and as soon as you register for Missouri Capitol Advocacy Days, MCADSV staff will email you some tools designed to help you prepare a few talking points. If you’d like additional support, MCADSV staff is also available to accompany you to your appointments.

**DOUBTS: “It’s probably a waste of time. I doubt those people in Jefferson City would really listen to what I have to say anyway.”**

Your legislators want to hear from you. They genuinely want to serve their districts well, and they do their best work when they are informed about the needs of their constituents. Ending violence and supporting survivors are values that all can agree on, regardless of political affiliation. Your legislators need to hear about your program, and if you don’t tell them, who will?