



Some Do's and Don'ts of Advocacy

- Form relationships. Don't wait until you need something to contact policy makers.
- Be open to talking with staff.
- Have fun!
- Be informed. Know the issue and the system.
- Give personal examples, they are powerful.
- Be honest. Do not exaggerate.
- Use your strengths. Advocacy welcomes all kinds of skills and approaches.
- Be courteous, firm and confident.
- Remember to express your appreciation for people's (legislators and staff members) time and effort – both in person and through thank you notes.
- Be concise. Keep visits, phone calls and testimonies brief.
- Practice by explaining your opinion to friends and family.
- Be specific. Know what you want your legislator to do (e.g. draft legislation or vote a certain way on a bill).
- Don't make threats. Don't argue. If it is clear that the policy maker will not support your position, just give the facts and ask him or her to consider your viewpoint. This will keep the lines of communication open for discussing future issues.
- STAY ACTIVE! Maintain communication with policy makers. Continue to seek out people who share your views.
- Be patient, persistent and positive. Change takes time.
- DON'T GIVE UP!