

family

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Abstract

This brief sheet summarises self advocacy and why it is important. **Keyword:**
Advocacy

SELF ADVOCACY

WHAT IS SELF ADVOCACY?

Self advocacy is about people (with intellectual disabilities) empowering themselves. There are self advocacy organisations all over Australia and in other parts of the world where people come together and become involved in self advocacy on different levels. Generally these organisations are self-run with co-ordinators and management committees and may be funded by government initiatives. Confidence is built up in a person by him/her recognising the innate ability to do things for oneself.

Part of the role of the Self Advocacy office may be the education of service worker's (e.g. nurses, Departmental Officers) and other people whose employment brings them into contact with people with Intellectual disabilities. This sort of education results in the following:

- People rethinking their own attitudes towards what people with intellectual disabilities can and can't do;
- People who may have previously seen people with intellectual disabilities as eternal children may realise that this is NOT so, and that people with Intellectual disabilities take their rights seriously;
- People may consider rights more seriously, and recognise that people who have intellectual disabilities have the same rights as everyone else.

SELF ADVOCACY - WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

1. Being Involved In Self Advocacy demonstrates to all concerned that people with intellectual disabilities can do things for themselves;
2. Self Advocacy encourages people with intellectual disabilities to recognise that people with intellectual disabilities have the same rights as everyone else;
3. Self Advocacy encourages people with intellectual disabilities to take their own rights seriously;
4. Self Advocacy allows people with Intellectual disabilities to identify their own limitations;
5. Self Advocacy encourages the community to recognise the abilities of and reconsider their own attitudes towards people with intellectual disabilities.

For more information about Self Advocacy in NSW, contact:

Self Advocacy Sydney Inc. Suite 4/ 2a Newtown Rd, Blacktown 2148 ph. (02) 9622 3005

They will be able to give people information about Self Advocacy in other States.

Sources: D.Gant & J.Strike "Past, Present & Future (Edition No.2)" Self Advocacy NSW. Sydney.1987

M.Duggan & J.Ward "Queensland Advocacy Incorporated: A Consumer-Based Statewide Advocacy Organisation" Paper given to Spastics Society of Victoria Conference. Melbourne-1988