



REAL LIFE TIPS



Advocacy in School

Advocacy is acting on behalf of a disadvantaged person to promote, protect and defend their welfare and justice. We are the best advocates for our children as we understand their needs and want the best for them. Advocacy involves speaking on behalf of your child to negotiate for services and supports that meet their needs and is especially important during their school years. Advocacy does not always come naturally, so here are some tips to help you effectively advocate for your child's educational needs.

Know what educational and long term goals you want your child to achieve and what services and supports are needed to meet these goals.

Know your child's needs and the accommodations required to meet those needs.

Find out who the school decision-makers are and get to know them. Volunteering at the school can help build these relationships.

Plan and prepare for meetings, gather facts and information about legal rights. Learn the right words to use, such as getting an "appropriate" education.

Communicate effectively and calmly. Learn to negotiate and provide solutions. Stay focused on the big picture.

Keep records of any discussions. Follow up with an email confirming any decisions made during discussions.

Involve your child in the decision-making process from an early age and teach them how to advocate for themselves.