

inspired

[to make healthy choices]

Volume 7 Issue 7 www.guideinc.org

Advocacy

An advocate is a person who speaks, writes or acts in support of a person or issue.

Practicing advocacy allows you to clarify your personal values and beliefs, use your voice for something important to you and help influence change.

It can also be a great way to raise awareness for various issues related to prevention, social justice and more!

1. Identify an issue.

Choose a problem in your community that you are passionate about and want to see addressed. Work toward determining the underlying root of the problem. Ask yourself "why is this happening?" five times to reduce the issue to what's causing it in the first place.

6. Express appreciation.

Remember that time is valuable! Always say "thank you" to those who gave a listening ear or helped your cause. This can go a long way in making stakeholders feel valued and building relationships for future projects.

2. Do your research.

Turn to reputable websites, books and experts to help you investigate the topic. Make sure to research the issue from all sides and to keep track of what you learn.

5. Follow up.

Circle back with all stakeholders to exchange information, refine the message and keep the ball rolling.

This might be through formal meetings or through emails, letters or phone calls. Following up is critical to make sure action is taken!

Six Keys to Effective Advocacy

3. Find your audience.

Determine who can help you make the change. Make sure your audience includes all stakeholders, as well as the people or organizations with the power to make or change policy. For example, if you identify a school-related issue, you might involve students, teachers, faculty and the parent-teacher organization to help influence the local school board to make a change.

4. Communicate strategically.

Reach out to your audience. Identify which modes of communication would be most effective with each group, and begin crafting your message. Great communication tools include social media campaigns, newspaper opinion columns, radio spots, television commercials, letter-writing campaigns, school announcements, petitions, in-person presentations, phone calls, flyers, town hall meetings and just about any other way you can think of to share your message with your audience!

Anyone can be an advocate!
How will YOU use your voice?

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