

Tips & Strategies:

Advocating for Your Autistic Family Member

To be an effective advocate, prepare thoroughly, communicate clearly and persuasively, be assertive but not aggressive, and remember your wins.

Here's a more detailed breakdown of advocacy tips:

1. Preparation is Key:

- Know your rights and the relevant laws, policies, and processes
- Gather evidence and data: Support your arguments with facts and figures.
- Practice your message: Rehearse your key points to ensure you can deliver them confidently and concisely.
- Anticipate potential questions and counterarguments: Be prepared to address any concerns or objections.



2. Communication Skills:

- Be clear and concise: Get straight to the point and avoid jargon or overly complex language.
- Use persuasive language: Frame your arguments in a way that resonates with your audience and highlights the benefits of your position.
- Listen actively: Pay attention to what others are saying and respond thoughtfully.
- Ask questions: Engage in a dialogue and seek clarification to ensure understanding.
- Be respectful and professional: Maintain a calm and courteous demeanor, even when faced with opposition.



3. Assertiveness and Persistence:

- Be confident in your beliefs: Believe in the cause you are advocating for and project that confidence in your actions and words.
- Don't be afraid to speak up: Take the initiative and advocate for your position, even when it's unpopular.
- Follow up after meetings: Send thank-you notes or follow-up emails to reinforce your message and maintain relationships.
- Keep records of your advocacy efforts: Document your actions and track your progress to demonstrate your commitment.



4. Adaptability and Flexibility:

- Be open to different perspectives: Listen to opposing viewpoints and be willing to compromise when necessary.
- Adapt your approach to different audiences: Tailor your message and delivery style to the specific people you are trying to persuade.
- Embrace the unexpected: Be prepared to adjust your plans and strategies as needed.



5. Self-Care and Perseverance:

- Remember your wins: Acknowledge your successes and celebrate your achievements to stay motivated.
- Take care of yourself: Advocacy can be emotionally demanding, so make sure to prioritize your well-being.
- Keep moving forward: Advocacy is a long-term process, so be persistent and keep working towards your goals.



6. Tips for an Advocacy Meeting – Consider the Following Steps:

- Consider who you would like at the meeting to discuss advocacy outcomes: Team members, support person or organization, etc. If consent is needed for all parties to discuss freely, obtain and sign the necessary forms in advance. Have another person take notes at the meeting if need be so you stay focused on the advocacy needs.
- Have questions prepared ahead of time: Be ready to answer any questions the team may have for you. Review any policies and provide specific examples of your concerns.
- If you have any supporting documentation, it would be great to share with the team at the meeting.
- Focus on the goal/need for successful advocacy for the individual: Identify short term and long-term outcomes and consider all options for solution with the team. Whenever possible and appropriate, including the individual in these conversations is an important step in empowering them on their own self-advocacy journey.
- Understand the process and be open to ideas: Effective communication and collaboration is key with the focus on the individual you are advocating for. Ask for a timeline and ensure accountability with an action follow up.



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advocacy [here](#) :

