

# Setting up an Advocacy Group



# What is advocacy all about?

**Advocacy” means ‘speaking up for someone else’**



**Self-advocacy is speaking up for yourself.**



**Self-advocacy is a way of doing something so people are empowered and have more control.**

# Why is advocacy important?

It can be hard for people with disabilities have real control in their lives.

You can have more control if you

**Speak up for yourself !  
Say what you want !**

Speaking up in an advocacy group can be easier and safer for people.



# Definition of self-advocacy



## Self-advocacy is :

Saying what you want and need  
And saying what concerns you so  
things get better for you.

Standing up for their civil and human  
rights.

Learning how to speak for yourself so  
you are heard and responded to.

# Self-advocacy is:



Being proud of who you are.  
Respecting yourself and others.

Understanding your rights within the law.

Speaking up about important things.



Learning to make your own decisions.

# A good Self-advocacy group:



**Easy to read**

Uses Information all members can understand.



Agrees and makes a work plan.

Works as a Team.



Respects and treats everyone equally. Writes a code of conduct for members and support staff.

# A good Self-advocacy group :



Connects and works with groups and services that will make them more powerful.



Meet people and stay in touch.



Get funding and resources, like computers internet and good support.



# A good Self-advocacy group:



Finds out who has the power.  
Finds out who makes the decisions on the issue you are fighting.

A Government Department?  
The HSE?  
The County Council?  
The CEO of your service?



Agrees and plans an action plan.



# Running good advocacy group meetings



If members of the group agree and understand their role's meetings can run better.

Name the support people need to different jobs.

Talk about and agree the different jobs done for the group.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Make a list of the jobs.

Make a list of the skills needed to do each job.

# Jobs an advocacy group will do:



- Make an agenda and plan for meetings.
- Work through the points on the agenda.
- Stick to the points on the agenda.
- Bring information to meetings on law and policy connected to the groups work.
- Agree an action plan.
- Agree who will do the work for each action.
- Start and finish meetings on time.



# Jobs an advocacy group will do:



- Take minutes.
- Send minutes out to group members.
- Remind members of the date, time and place of meetings.



- Go to meetings and conferences and represent the group.
- Be a contact person for the group.



- Manage and report to the group on it's finances.

# Who in the advocacy group will do each job?



Most self-advocacy groups have clear roles and jobs for group members.

If everyone agrees and understands their role and job it can help the group run well.

Roles within a group:

- Chair person
- Vice Chairperson
- Secretary
- Treasure

# A chairperson will:



- Welcome everyone.
- Lead and take charge of the meeting.
- Make sure each meeting runs smoothly and works well.
- Will make an agenda and a plan for each meeting.
- The support staff will help the chairperson with this.





# A chairperson will:



Involve the members of the group when making the agenda.

The agenda can be agreed at the end of each meeting.



- Go through the points on the agenda.
- Stick to the points on the agenda.
- Will help the group stick to the points on the agenda.

# A chairperson will:



- Say what decision is made at the end of each point on the agenda.
- Check members agree.



- Understands they do not have more power than other members of the group.
- Everyone in the group is equal.



# A chairperson will:



Encourage all members to take on work so everyone works not just the chairperson.  
Included members in decisions.



Will make sure everyone is listened to and heard.

Will ensure members feel safe, respected and at ease in meetings.

# The Secretary

The secretary writes the minutes of the meetings.

It is important everyone can understand the minutes.



**Easy to read**

Minutes will be sent to members 2 weeks before a meeting to give people time to go over them

# The Treasure

Manages the money for group.



Sets up a bank account for the group.

Lodges money in the bank.

Reports on money matters to the group.

# Having Good support

Will your group run better if you build on members skills and strengths ?



Talk about extra training and supports you may need.  
Then ask for it.