

ADVOCACY IN ACTION

Save Your Skin Foundation

saveyourskin.ca

ADVOCACY

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Advocacy is a political process by an individual or group which aims to influence decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions. Advocacy can include many activities including media campaigns, public speaking, commissioning and publishing research or government relations and meetings. Lobbying (often by lobby groups) is a form of advocacy where a direct approach is made to legislators on an issue which plays a significant role in modern politics.

Definition of Advocacy:

“The act of pleading for, supporting or recommending a cause or course of action.”

Principals of Advocacy

Whatever issue it is that you are advocating for, the following principles of advocacy will greatly enhance your chances for a successful resolution.

Number One

Advocates do not make decisions for the person(s)/ group for whom they are advocating. Advocates are merely giving voice to the person (s)/ group needs.

Number Two

Advocates empower or enable the person(s)/ group. Transfer skills, encourage self-sufficiency and define individual roles within the group.

Number Three

Help determine the options. Make sure all information and research have been completed and then reviewed to allow the person(s)/ group to make an informed choice.

Number Four

Remember confidentiality. Disclose only what you have been given permission to disclose.

Number Five

Use the style with which you are most comfortable and which is most appropriate to the situation e.g. activism, negotiation, and mediation.

Key Components of Successful Advocacy Campaigns

Really good campaigns have a way of positioning the issue so that people who might normally look at things from one perspective are drawn instead to consider your point of view because of how you've communicated it.

1. Understand the issue and get all the facts.
2. Find out for whom you are advocating and for what you are advocating e.g. client, patient, and consumer group.
3. Identify the decision maker(s) and their motives.
4. Identify your allies and their motives.
5. Identify the detractors / opponents and their motives.
6. Identify the influencers and their motives.
7. Identify undecided but important people / groups from 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 and what would affect their decisions.
8. Identify interested media and what would motivate their interest.
9. Develop strategies; both public and private e.g. letter writing, postcards campaigns, protests, meetings, and demonstrations.
10. Implement strategies approved by those for whom you are advocating appropriate to the situation.
11. Evaluate the strategies e.g. did you achieve your goals, partially or totally; were those for whom you were advocated satisfied with the results and / or process; were you satisfied with the strategies chosen; would you have chosen other approaches; has the implementation been consistent with the principles of advocacy?
12. If you need to continue, return to 2 above and work through the process as many times as necessary.

Contact

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