



Self Advocacy

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speak up!



ICE BREAKER ACTIVITY

Would You Rather?

Game

1. **Skip breakfast or skip dessert?**
 2. **Have a long winter or a long summer?**
 3. **Do you prefer going to a loud concert or a quiet museum?**
 4. **Would you rather live in the city or in the country?**
 5. **Would you rather complete tasks alone or with a group?**
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What is self advocacy?

Definitions of self-advocacy:

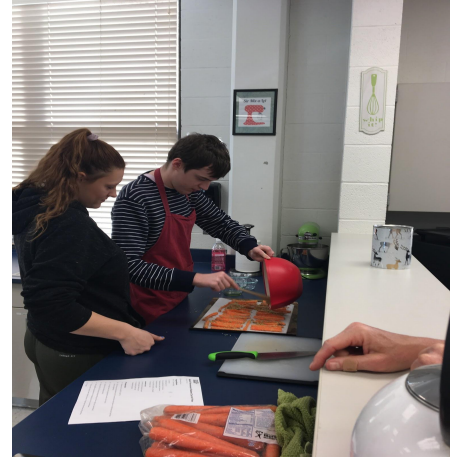
- The act of representing one's views or interests (Merriam Webster)
- The process we use to make our own choices and exercise our own rights (Psychology Dictionary)
- A student understanding their rights and responsibilities (PaTTAN)
- Making informed decisions
- A student speaking up for themselves and making choices

SUMMARY: A student being able to understand their rights and being able to make choices as well as being able to tell others about what they need to participate in their education and be successful in life.

Why is self advocacy important for your child?

The Importance of Self Advocacy

- Ability to make decisions that affect your life
- Using effective communication skills to get what you need
- Accessing available supports when needed



Why advocate for myself?

Video: Teen With Dyscalculia Shares Why She Tells Friends About Her Learning Issues

Video: Teen who is Blind Shares Her Story about Self Advocacy

Determining Areas of Need for Self Advocacy:

Self Determination checklist helps students to:

- Identify their areas of strength
- Identify their own goals
- Identify supports needed to reach goals
- Identify changes they want to make

Example:

<https://www.imdetermined.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/selfdeterminationcheckliststudentself-assessment.pdf>



Self-Advocacy Checklist Examples:

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Self-Advocacy Checklist:

_____ I looked up my grades in each subject.

_____ I looked up my missing assignments in each subject.

_____ Social Studies Assignments I own are: _____

_____ Math Assignments I own are: _____











_____ Language Arts Assignments I own are: _____

_____ Science Assignments I own are: _____

_____ I worked on assignments during period 9

_____ I had my homework with me

_____ I recorded assignments to a planner/agenda book

☀ Do	❌ Don't Do
 ask a question if I don't understand	 give up
 "Could you say that again please?"	 put head down
 "Could you say that a different way?"	 be negative
 "Can you show me please?"	 let frustration take over
 secret help signal	 Use negative self-talk

MY PERSONAL INVENTORY

My Name: _____

Updated: _____

My Skills I Know: _____

Reading Skills I Need to Know: _____

My Goals: _____

Skills I Know: _____

Math Skills I Need to Know: _____

Goals: _____

What can self advocacy look like for students?

Elementary Students	Middle School Students	High School Students
<ul style="list-style-type: none">-asking for help with something-teach children about their assets and differences-encourage independence-use role play to teach problem solving-stating strengths-build self esteem	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-knowing the names and descriptions of their diagnosis-actively using problem solving skills-learning what accommodations they need to be successful-informing teachers of needs-sharing positive and negative experiences-praise independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-comprehensive description of their assets and disability-participating in the IEP process-learning about the laws that protect rights-evaluation of which accommodations are helpful and which are not-knowing their rights as a person with a disability-implementing self care

Things Your Child Can Say to Self Advocate:

- **“When my teacher does _____ this strategy really works for me”**
- **“Can you help me figure out how to fix this problem?”**
- **“I am having a hard time doing my work with this group working next to me, is there a quiet space for me to finish my work?”**
- **“Is there a strategy that will help me remember the directions?”**
- **“Can we come up with a plan to help me manage my stress when I am dealing with a problem?”**
- **“I have trouble doing _____. Can you help me explain that to the teacher?”**
- **“This strategy really worked for me when I was doing _____. Could we try that again tomorrow?”**

Things Your Child Can Do to Self Advocate:

- Email their teachers with questions about assignments
- Use positive statements when talking about themselves and their needs
- Reminding teacher and staff what accommodations and strategies work best for them
- Speaking up and approaching the teacher in a 1:1 conversation when something is not working out for them (ie: group work, projects, technology, etc.)
- Being aware of daily schedule and routines
- Keeping track of belongings and assignments

Self Advocacy at Work

Pros and Cons of Disclosing a Disability to Employers:

PROS

- **ADA requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations**
- **May be financial incentive for employer**
- **May provide job coaching for employee**
- **Higher retention rate is an incentive for employer**

CONS

- **Misunderstanding of abilities, underestimated skills**
- **May be restricted from promotions**
- **Risk to confidentiality**

How can you encourage self advocacy at home?



- Encourage your child to ask you for help when they need it
- Encourage your child to be independent and to make choices
- Have your child inform family, friends, and caregivers about their assets and differences
- Use role play to work through challenging situations with your child so they know what to say and how to manage in the moment
- Respect your child and be an active listener when they are sharing their experiences
- Using natural consequences so students learn how to problem solve and cope

References:

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