

Self-Advocacy

Self-advocacy is another key skill that helps your child to problem solve and become a more independent individual.

What is self-advocacy?

Self-advocacy is speaking up for yourself in order to make your needs known.

Why is self-advocacy important?

Self-advocacy skills have been linked to increased success in “postsecondary pursuits including opportunities for college completion, successful employment, and increased independence” (Collins & Wolter, 2018).

How can we promote self-advocacy?

Make a self-advocacy plan! There are several steps that need to be taken in order to self-advocate. Saying “you need to speak up for yourself” is vague, and may leave your child feeling confused about how to move forward. Making a plan that includes exact steps they can complete to self-advocate in a specific situation will give your child a plan that they can act on! Use the following template to have a discussion about self-advocacy.

My Self-Advocacy Plan:

Answer the following questions to figure out how to speak up for yourself and make your needs known!

1. What do I need?
2. Where should I go to get the help I need?
3. Who should I speak to?
4. When will I speak to them?
5. What will I say? Be specific!!

Self-Advocacy Plan Examples:

Example #1:

1. What do I need? *I need help finding a medium white shirt at Target.*
2. Where should I go to get the help I need? *The clothing section of the store.*
3. Who should I speak to? *I should speak to an employee.*
4. When will I speak to them? *After I see them and say "excuse me."*
5. What will I say? *"Excuse me. Can you help me find a medium white shirt please?"*

Example #2:

1. What do I need? *I need help with my math assignment.*
2. Where should I go to get the help I need? *My professor's office at Norwalk Community College.*
3. Who should I speak to? *I should speak to my professor.*
4. When will I speak to them? *Between 1:00-3:00 on Wednesday during her office hours.*
5. What will I say? *"Hi. Can you please help me with the math assignment you gave out for homework?"*