

Advocacy 101: Talking to Legislators and other Decision-makers

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What are the most important things for self-advocates to know about when talking with legislators (the people who make laws) and other decision makers, like the people who in charge of your disability services?



- ✓ **Know who your legislators are.** You can look up your legislators at: www.usa.gov/elected-officials
- ✓ **Know what you want to say.** You should know the bill number, lead sponsor, and give your legislator a flyer about the issue.
- ✓ **It's easier to get an appointment with your legislator at their district office** rather than going to the state capitol or DC.

- ✓ **Go with other people** so that you can support each other.
- ✓ **Tell your story.** Tell them your name, where you're from, and what you are asking for.
- ✓ **Talking with your legislators is like building a relationship:** a combination of friendship and a business relationship.
- ✓ **You do not have to be afraid of talking with your legislators,** because they are people just like anyone else.
- ✓ **You should talk to legislators respectfully and calmly** and tell them what you want to change.
- ✓ **If you don't vote, you don't have a voice in what happens.** If you don't go talk to legislators, they won't know what change you want.

