

How to Keep Our Groups Going



Green Mountain Self-Advocates www.gmsavt.org

Who Is Missing?

- Look at who is in your group now. Think about people who are not included.
- Does your group include people that are different ages, backgrounds, or ways to communicate?
- Make a list of people who left your group (try to find out why they left?)



Ways to Reach More People

- Contact provider and case management agencies. Offer to present to staff to explain the value of having a group.
- Work with groups like Special Olympics.
- Invite people who used to come but stopped.
- Visit schools and talk to students.
- Go to community events like health fairs.
- Talk to parent organizations and other disability rights group.



How Can Service Agencies Help?

- Other strong groups can meet with you to share ideas.
- Are there events at your agency where people already gather?
- Ask to speak at those events and share about the group.
- Make a flyer that says what the group is, when it meets, and how to join.
- Ask the agency to give the flyer to everyone who gets services.

Use the Internet and Word of Mouth

- Make sure your website has a section for new members. Use social media to recruit.
- Share videos that explain self-advocacy.
- Ask friends to tell others about your group.
- Talk to staff from local service agencies.



Have a clear answer to the question

What Is a Self-Advocacy Group?

- People with disabilities who meet and talk about our lives.
- The group is run by us. This is awesome because most of what we do is run by people without disabilities.
- We learn to be leaders by running our group.
- We have fun together. And Practice speaking up
- We decide what the group will do.
- We go to events and speak up about what matters.

Why It Helps

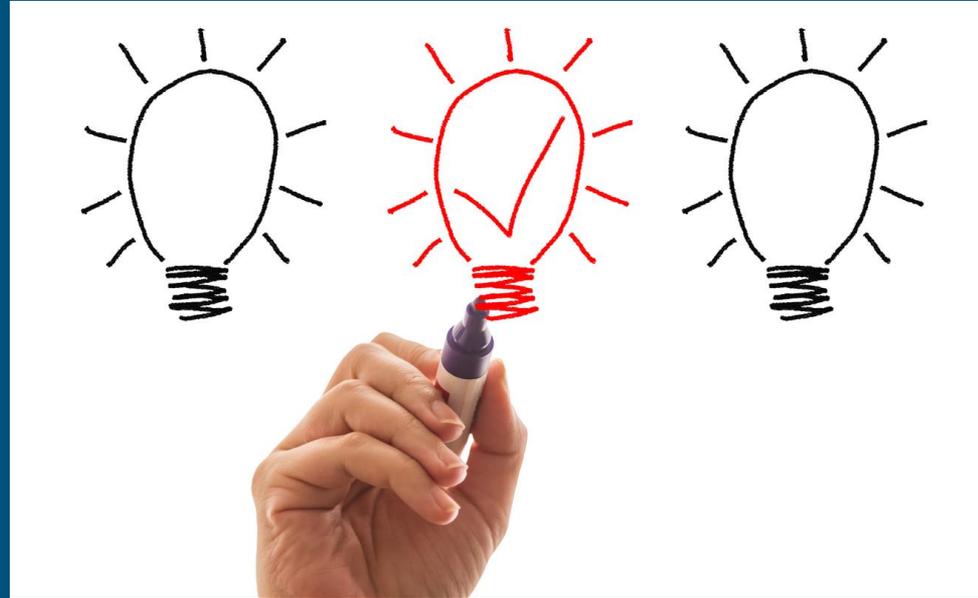
- I learned to speak up by watching others.
- I know I'm not alone in tough times.
- The group makes me feel proud and included.

What else?



Tips for Talking with Young People

- Ask what self-advocacy means to them.
- Talk about life after high school.
- Make it safe to ask questions and share ideas.



Tips to Make Everyone Feel Welcome

- Let everyone make their own choices.
- Listen and don't judge their ideas.
- Play games or do hands-on activities.
Don't always be so focus on doing business.
- Ask long-time members to give others time to talk.



Helping New People Join



Ask if they need any help or support or accommodations

Explain how the group works and what we do.

Send the meeting agenda ahead of time

Check-in - Starting meetings with a check-in is a good way to find out what issues are on people's minds to discuss at meetings.

Group agreements: Having group agreements helps groups with the flow and structure of meetings.

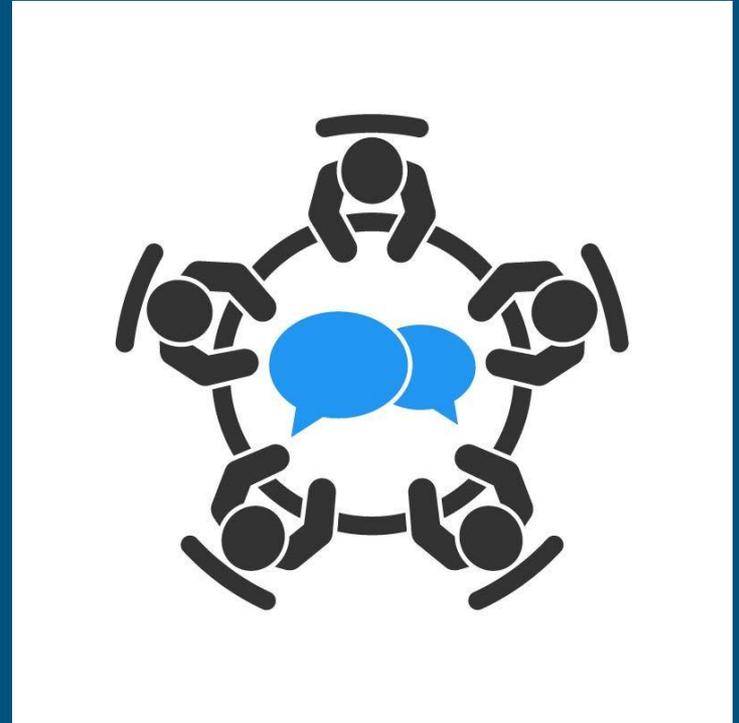
Run a Meeting Everyone Understands

- Check if people understand before moving on.
- Say what acronyms mean.
- Do fun stuff too—not just business.



After the Meeting

- Ask what people liked or didn't like.
- Ask what could be better next time.
- Check if anyone needs different kinds of support to speak up more in the meeting. To understand what is going on.



What's Else?

- Share good videos about self-advocacy.
- Give info about local groups.
- Invite people to come back again!

