

What is Advocacy?

There are two parts to advocacy:

Caring about something, an issue, a problem, a condition, that is important to you, and arguing, talking and **convincing** others to care about it too.

There are many ways to advocate, or to be an advocate.

You can talk to your **friends, family and neighbors** about it.

You probably do this already. You can talk to other people you know who can help you do something about it.

You can **get people together** at home or anywhere people gather: the beauty shop, the barber, the neighborhood center, your church, to talk about it.

Working together and separately you can talk to **teachers, principals and school board members** if they can help you,

Or to **community leaders, city council members and the mayor** if they can help.

Almost always they want to hear from you. And if they hear about the same thing from many people, they may want to do something about it too.

Sometimes what you care about goes beyond your community and it is good to talk to your **representative and senator** in the State legislature (sometimes called the Connecticut General Assembly).

They always want to hear from the people in the area they cover (called their district) because that's who elects them.

That's why it is **important to register to vote** and to vote in each election.

So you see, advocacy is not that hard, and it is something you probably do now.

And because you **care** about something, you should **convince** others that together you can make a difference. It's the right thing to do.