

# TEN SELF-ADVOCACY STEPS

## 1. DEFINE THE PROBLEM

- What is the issue?
- If there are many problems, which one is the most important?
- Who do you have the problem with?

## 2. SPELL OUT YOUR GOALS

- What do you want?
- What does "victory" look like?

## 3. DETERMINE YOUR RIGHTS

- Which government agency is in charge of what's going on?
- Find and review their regulations and procedures about what is going on.
- If you need help understanding this material, get help from someone who can explain it to you.
- Ask for your rights, even if you can't find out which regulations back you up.

## 4. WHO DECIDES WHAT WILL HAPPEN

- Who makes the decisions?
- Which government agency investigates complaints of discrimination?

## 5. PREPARE YOUR CASE

- Get all of your paperwork in order.
- Keep a notebook for your phone conversations
- Plan a strategy. How will you get what you want?
- Try to separate your feelings from the facts.

## **TEN SELF-ADVOCACY STEPS (continued)**

### **6. REHEARSE YOUR CASE**

- **Write an agenda with all of your main points.**
- **Practice telling your case to a friend or advocate.**

### **7. PRESENT YOUR CASE**

- **Bring a friend or advocate for support.**
- **Have them take notes.**
- **Cover as many of the points on your agenda as you can.**
- **Be assertive, but not aggressive.**
- **Take a break if you need it.**
- **Ask for another meeting, if you think you will need one.**

### **8. EVALUATE THE RESULTS**

- **Check your notes.**
- **What happened? What were the results?**
- **How do you feel about what happened?**
- **Talk about how you felt and the results with a friend or advocate.**

### **9. WHERE DO YOU GO FROM HERE?**

- **Take necessary follow-up steps.**
- **Decide what to do next.**
- **Keep you spirits up for the next fight.**

### **10. CELEBRATE WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

- **Even small victories should be celebrated.**
- **Congratulate yourself for a job well done!**