

Advocacy?

What is advocacy?

- Advocacy in all its forms seeks to ensure that people, particularly those who are most vulnerable in society, are able to:
- Have their voice heard on issues that are important to them.
- Defend and safeguard their rights.
- Have their views and wishes genuinely considered when decisions are being made about their lives.

- Advocacy is taking action to help people say what they want, secure their rights, represent their interests and obtain the services they need.
- “Advocates and advocacy schemes work in partnership with the people they support and take their side.
- “Advocacy promotes social inclusion, equality and social justice.” Advocacy Charter, Action for Advocacy (2002) 4

Why Advocacy is Necessary?

- Rights – concerned with law & social structures
- Participation – concerned with move to inclusion, citizenship, & involvement in recovery (e.g. Individualized funding)
- Power – concerned with shifting power to families & individuals & distributing valued resources more equitably

Purpose of Advocacy

- Empowering Speaking
- Safe guarding
- Enabling Supporting

Types of Advocacy

- Individual Advocacy
- Citizen Advocacy
- Systems Advocacy
- Parent Advocacy
- Self Advocacy

Advocacy is a process of supporting and enabling people to:

- Express their views and concerns.
- Access information and services.
- Defend and promote their rights and responsibilities.
- Explore choices and options

An advocate

- An advocate is someone who provides advocacy support when you need it. An advocate might help you access information you need or go with you to meetings or interviews, in a supportive role. You may want your advocate to write letters on your behalf, or speak for you in situations where you don't feel able to speak for yourself.

Advocacy can be helpful in all kinds of situations where you:

- Find it difficult to make your views known.
- Need other people listen to you and take your views into account

Social Advocacy

- Social Advocacy is the representation done by anyone committed to the concerns of any particular group in society.
- Such concerns may be rights based or needs based.
- SA differs from the advocacy done by lawyers or barristers as the latter normally argue from the basis of the law.
- SA scrutinises even the codified law that might at times perpetuate wrong behaviour(s) to the disadvantage of the voiceless and weaker members of community or society. Usually social advocates have good analytical skills and are fearless individuals who will stand for what they believe in for the benefit of the underprivileged, oppressed or disadvantaged.
- They question and query the status quo.
- The list of social advocates include revolutionary leaders, environmentalists, human rights activists, lobbyists, outstanding community workers who are founder members of charity organisations. It should be noted however that SA has got nothing to do with one's academic achievements or profession although education is also a factor when it comes to social advocates' skills