

Bridging to Adulthood Tips: Advocacy and Social Action for Youth with Disabilities

Youth with disabilities and their families often engage in self-advocacy when marshalling resources and navigating accessibility accommodations. Self-advocacy skills are often used when completing applications, making calls, writing letters or attending meetings about current or future services or supports. As well, some people find it meaningful to engage in community, social action, or policy initiatives that help to preserve and promote the rights of people with disabilities in society.

Self-Advocacy Resources

- [Speak Up](#) is a handbook on self-advocacy with lots of pictures from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- [4 Steps for Self Advocacy](#) is a 1-page guide from the Partners Resource Network.
- [Tips for Successful Advocacy](#) from [Connectability.ca](#) has tips and links to other resources.
- The [Advocacy Toolkit](#) from Holland Bloorview is a detailed guide to self-advocacy.
- Learn about accessibility laws in Ontario and options if your needs are not being met in this [online video](#) from Communication Disabilities Access Canada (CDAC)

Self-Advocacy Templates

- Check out this [self-advocacy letter template](#) from the Centre for Independent Living Toronto
- Learn sample [assertive communication phrases](#) and [picture vocabulary displays](#) from CDAC
- See [sample vocabulary](#) (with printable picture displays) for self-advocacy in various [community settings and activities](#) from CDAC
- If you prefer a detailed template, try this [self-advocacy worksheet](#) from the National MS Society

Self-Advocacy Training

- **Centre for Independent Living Toronto** offers free [Individual Advocacy Training](#) for adults with physical disabilities
- **Community Living** associations often have self-advocacy training or advocacy groups for adults with intellectual disabilities. Contact your local [Community Living Office](#) to learn more.
- **Kerry's Place** offers a session called **Navigating Neurodiversity: A Path To Self-Discovery** that has a self-advocacy component for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- **Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario** offers a self-paced workshop called [Self-Advocacy for Youth](#) for a small fee.
- [The Self-Advocacy Academy](#) offers weekly sessions about empowerment and self-advocacy.

Community Advocacy and Social Action

Please note that the authors of this handout do not endorse specific community advocacy or social action initiatives. The following examples and resources are provided as reference only.

- **March of Dimes Canada** has a list of [Advocacy and Awareness Resources](#)
- [TheHealthline.ca](#) lists resources for **Advocacy and Social Action for People with Disabilities**. (First, choose your location using the map. Under 'Health Topics' select 'People with Disabilities' and then 'Advocacy and Social Action').

The information provided in this handout is for reference only. It is not intended as a recommendation or endorsement of specific programs, or as a comprehensive resource list.

This handout is brought to you by Holland Bloorview's Transitions Team
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