



Resources within Reason

Supporting Advocacy for Children with Disabilities and their Families

Camille Catlett November 2021

As someone who supports children with or at risk for disabilities, and their families, you have resources, expertise, and stories of the importance and impact of early intervention/early childhood special education. The resources below may be helpful in gaining – or advancing – the skills to elevate your voice and advocacy efforts to new levels.

Advocacy Videos from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)

- In **Advocacy 101**, CEC's Senior Policy and Advocacy Advisor Kuna Tavalin will walk you through what advocacy really is, and how you're already prepared to become an advocate because of your expertise.
- **Advocacy During COVID** walks viewers through what's different and what's not for lawmakers and advocates during this time.

<https://exceptionalchildren.org/policy-and-advocacy/educate-motivate-advocate>

Effective Communication About the Early Years

This series of articles is intended to help support infant-toddler professionals in their communication efforts. Topics include How to Talk About Early Childhood Mental Health, Strategies for Becoming a Better Communicator and Advocate, How to Advocate Through Stories, and more.

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/series/effective-communication-about-the-early-years>

Advocacy Toolkit for Families with a New or Potential Diagnosis of Intellectual or Developmental Disability

This toolkit was designed for parents or guardians of a child who has been recently diagnosed with an intellectual or developmental disability, or caregivers who may be concerned about their child's development. It was designed to provide answers to frequently asked questions. While some of the content is specific to Tennessee where the *Toolkit* was developed, most answers relate to federal legislation and requirements.

<https://vkc.vumc.org/assets/files/resources/advocacy-toolkit.pdf>

Tips [for Families] for Being an Effective Advocate

This resource from the New Brunswick Association for Community Living offers practical advice on how to prepare, communicate, document, and follow-up as part of effective advocacy efforts.

<https://nbacl.nb.ca/module-pages/tips-for-being-an-effective-advocate/>

Framing Early Childhood Development: Recommendations for Professionals and Advocates

This article explores some specific ways to frame early childhood issues, the impact of those frames on how people reason about infant-toddler development, and the consequences of these messages for public policy.

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/485-framing-early-childhood-development-recommendations-for-professionals-and-advocates>

Building Bridges: How to Share Research About Children and Youth with Policymakers

The strategies offered in this compact article are based on research about the ways in which policymakers access and use evidence.

<https://www.childtrends.org/publications/building-bridges-share-research-children-youth-policymakers>

Build Your Advocacy Skills

This NAEYC website offers a suite of resources and tools to help gain the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively advocate for children, families, and early childhood priorities.

<https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/public-policy-advocacy/build-your-advocacy-skills-and-knowledge>

Resources within Reason is a free, one-way listserv provided by the Division for Early Childhood (DEC). All resources are evidence-based, readily available and free.

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