What is Advocacy

ad·vo·ca·cy

advəkəsē/

noun

public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy.

American Heritage® Dictionary

Advocacy is a process performed by an individual or a group, with the goal of influencing public policy and resource allocation decisions, within political, economic, institutions and social system.

Often, advocacy groups participate in various activities, including media campaigns, public speaking, commissioning, publishing research and opinion polls.

Common Goals of Advocacy:

- Improve quality of life

- Empower disadvantaged individuals and groups

- Challenge stereotypes and stigma

- Increase control and reduce restrictions over goods & services

- Protect human rights

- Respond to individual needs

- Propose policy solutions

- Strive for positive outcomes

- Create space for public argumentation

- Ensure appropriate societal and service delivery responses

- Overcome barriers that restrict or limit opportunities

- Target political systems that are unresponsive to people's needs

Advocacy Best Practices:

BEST PRACTICES: participatory development
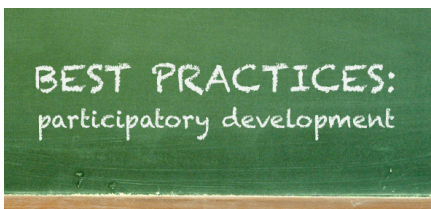
- Identify stakeholders using multiple touch points

- Build coalitions

- Choose unifying issues

- Focus on a single message

- Acknowledge & respect the diversity of each group member

- Evaluate policy administration process

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Advocacy Best practices cont:

- Participate in the agenda setting, as significant issues are raised

- Allow everyone to communicate openly and freely
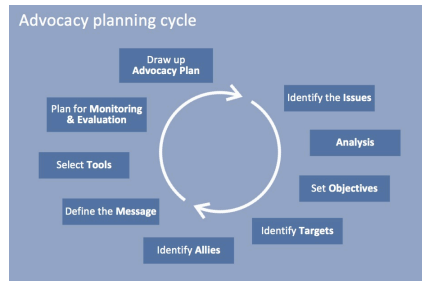
- Create an ongoing program, not a campaign

- Structure decision-making carefully

- Distribute credit fairly

- Formalize your partnership

- Determine expectations

- Be available when your partners need you

- Allow for various way to make recommendations

Positive Outcomes – Benefits

- Develops awareness

- Creates a unified voice

- More efficient allocation of resources

- Avoids duplication of services to reduce costs

- Wider geographic coverage

- Addresses an urgent situation with a powerful voice

- Increases focus on the issue

- Influences change in beliefs to effect change

- Builds healthier communities

- Enhances research efforts

- Supports low-resource communities

- Increases communication among groups

- Debunks stereotypes

- Increases individual, organizational and community development

- Develops new relationships and connections

- Creates long-term, permanent social change

- Develops and uses political clout to gain services or other benefits for the community

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