



Helping Parents Build Advocacy Skills

Early childhood and family support professionals can use capacity-building practices to help parents practice and develop strong advocacy skills to help their families now and in the future.

Presume all parents are capable of knowing what their children and families need and advocating for it.

- Build culturally responsive partnerships and use strengths-based practices to help families use their abilities to accomplish their priorities.

Support parents in learning their rights.

- Rather than just giving families information, help them know where to find it and how to interpret it when they have questions.

Help parents identify their dreams for their child.

- Helping the parent talk about their vision for their child in terms of short-term and long-term goals will help build their own clarity and confidence when talking to others.

Help parents identify their child's strengths and interests.

- Talking with caregivers about how their child learns best and what motivates them will help prepare the parent for future conversations with other providers.

Help caregivers plan for advocacy conversations.

- Talk with families before IFSP or IEP meetings and help them know what to expect, gather their thoughts, and build their confidence to express their own ideas.

Help families take agency over decisions and actions that need to occur.

- When families are the ones who access the resources, they associate their successes with their own actions creating a motivational loop that can easily be replicated.