



# Participation



6

**Purpose:** To develop knowledge and skills to influence others, advocate on behalf of others or take on a representative role


**Participant learning objectives:**

1. Understand what is meant by the term advocacy
2. Increase knowledge and awareness of influential people who have an advocacy role
3. Increase own confidence and ability to advocate

CONTENT	METHODS/ RESOURCES <i>Slides 62-79 can assist with this session.</i>	APPROX. TIME
<p><b>What is Advocacy?</b></p>	<p>Brainstorm as a group what we mean by the term 'advocacy'. Have participants heard this term before? If so, what does it make them think of?</p> <p>Explain to participants that simply put, advocacy is arguing or supporting an idea or a plan. This can be self-advocacy (arguing or supporting an idea/ plan on our own behalf) or it can be peer-advocacy (arguing or supporting an idea/ plan on behalf of others). Use and explore examples to help participants understand e.g., Britney Spears campaigning for freedom, Greta Thunberg campaigning on environmental issues, health care workers striking to get better pay, pride marches etc.</p> <p>Advocacy is an important skill to have in order to support ourselves, and others, to achieve what we believe is right or needed.</p> <p>To be a successful advocate we need to be able to define the problem we are concerned about, research the issue and understand it in detail, remain confident and firm when challenged by others, and be persistent (never give up!).</p>	<p>10 minutes</p>



<p><b>Influential Advocates - Quiz</b></p>	<p><b>Resources:</b>  Pens  Markers  Quiz answer sheet  Prizes (optional)</p> <p>Advocacy is an important skill that is utilised at all levels within society. As young people we have ourselves, friends, parents, teachers, youth workers, social workers, police, charities, councillors, MLA's, MPs, and more, to advocate on our behalf. It is important that we recognise and appreciate this advocacy support. But it is important that we advocate our plans/ ideas to the correct people who will listen and have the authority to make change.</p> <p><b>Quiz</b>  Split participants into smaller groups of 3-4. Provide each group with a quiz answer sheet. Go through the questions on slides 67 – 76 at a pace that is suitable for the group. Answers are provided in the notes section.</p> <p>Once all questions are complete, go through the correct answers. Probe participants on what else they know about their local council, government, and influential people within their community.</p> <p>Tally up all the scores and announce the winning group!</p> <p><b>Debrief:</b> Were the questions hard/ easy? What did you learn? Are you surprised by any of the answers?</p>	<p>40 minutes</p>
<p><b>Round up of the Role of MLA's</b></p>	<p>The quiz should have given participants a taster of what MLA's do, and the role of other influential people in society.</p> <p>Provide an overview of the important roles that MLA's do when they are in office:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They work with other people and other political parties to <b>make decisions</b> about Northern Ireland.</li> <li>• It's their job to make sure that hospitals, schools, museums, sports centres, and all the other public spaces are open and working well.</li> <li>• They make sure there are buses and trains for people to get to work/ socialize/ stay connected.</li> <li>• They make sure that businesses and charities have support and money to do their work.</li> <li>• They make sure that roads and communities are safe, and that the environment is protected.</li> <li>• They <b>represent</b> their <b>constituents</b> (the people who elected them) by listening and advocating on their behalf.</li> <li>• They <b>make laws</b> which aim to <b>protect people, promote equality and enrich diversity</b>.</li> </ul>	<p>15 minutes</p>

	<p>Further information on the NI Assembly for this age group can be found at:  <a href="https://education.niassembly.gov.uk/">https://education.niassembly.gov.uk/</a></p> <p>Tip: If time and resources permit, plan a visit to Stormont with your group, or invite your local MLA/ Councillor to the club for a Q&amp;A session.</p>	
<b>Advocacy in Action – Teacher’s Den</b>	<p>Teacher’s Den activity will help participants to practise their advocacy skills in a group context and will also help to prepare them for potential challenges or difficulties they might face in the real world.  Split participants into five groups, depending on group size.  One group will be the teachers. The other four groups will be advocating for the teachers to put a new rule which they have designed, into the school handbook. Only one group, and therefore one rule, can be chosen.</p> <p>Provide the four groups pitching with 10-15 minutes to design and develop their new rule and to carry out some background research into the issue/ problem it addresses. Each group will have three minutes to pitch their new rule to the teachers and will then answer questions from the teachers after. Ask participants to think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the rule</li> <li>• How will it work</li> <li>• Why it is needed (the problem)</li> <li>• Back this up with some research/ statistics</li> <li>• Explain how your rule will help pupils/ the school</li> <li>• What will your rule achieve?</li> </ul> <p>Once all four groups have completed their pitch, teachers will have three minutes to make their decision on what rule they pick and why!</p> <p><b>Debrief:</b> What skills did you use throughout this activity? Did you do enough research before you approached the teachers? Was the teachers’ decision fair? Why/ why not? Offer some feedback to participants on skills and knowledge utilised throughout the activity.</p>	45 minutes
<b>Check-Out/ Evaluation</b>	<p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Informal evaluation ideas</a>  Choose an activity from the list provided.</p> 	10 minutes

# Quiz Answer Sheet

Team Name:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

BONUS - Can you name any of your local MLA's? (1 point for each correct answer)

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6.

BONUS - Which Council area do you live in?

.....

7.

8.

9.

10.