

## What is advocacy & when can it be useful?

This section explains some of the basic concepts about advocacy, its benefits, when and how it may be appropriate, and answers questions such as:

- What is advocacy?
- When can advocacy be useful?

Further information is available about

- Types of advocate
- Types of advocacy

Advocacy is a way of making sure someone's voice is heard when a decision is made. It involves looking at choices, enabling people to know their rights and helping to defend those rights. Advocacy helps people to speak up - on their own OR with help. It makes sure people's interests are heard directly or are represented. We talk about independent advocacy because it is important that advocates are independent of the organizations that are providing services. Being independent helps us make sure that your voice is heard.

When is Advocacy useful?

Advocacy is useful when:

- Others seem to have more say about your life than you do
- Others are making decisions for you - but you do not feel involved
- You cannot get what you want
- Life seems out of control
- You do not feel that you can speak up for yourself.

Disagreement or conflict can make it hard for anyone to speak up and be heard.