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Workshop Agenda


- Introduction
- Advocacy with Elected Officials
- Being an Effective Advocate for Family Centers
- Sharing Your Story: Advocacy and Personal Experience

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ADVOCACY WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS

Alison Gee, MPH
National Director of Public Policy & Advocacy
Parents as Teachers National Center




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First of all,

- You already know how to advocate
- You do it every day
- You're just talking to a different audience *(and legislators put their pants on one leg at a time, just like you)*



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What is advocacy?

An effort to shape the perception and behavior of a particular audience to effect public policy changes

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Advocacy involves:

- Knowing your audience & who makes the decisions
- Ensuring the key decision makers are well informed
- Using data that is relevant and persuasive
- Building relationships
- Telling stories that illustrate why your program & services make a difference
- Informing the public and opinion leaders about an issue or problem and mobilizing them to share their stories and speak their minds with those in the position to take action

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Your voice is important because:

- Children cannot vote & have no voice in the process
- Legislators don't always have all the facts
- Legislators face difficult choices over scarce resources
- If you do not make your voice heard, legislators will think your program is not important
- You are the voice for the children and families you serve
- You have compelling stories to tell
- YOU are the expert!

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Advocacy is not the same as lobbying

- Advocacy = information, education, stories, facts, figures, persuasion to a point of view
- Lobbying = Advocacy + "Vote NO on Senate Bill XXX"

Don't be afraid to talk about issues- just stay away from telling the legislator how to vote on a specific bill.

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Stay informed!
Join advocacy listservs, such as:



Pennsylvania:
PA Partnerships for Children: www.papartnerships.org
The Advocates Agenda: www.theadvocatesagenda.com
The Build Initiative: www.buildinitiative.org/content/pennsylvania

National:
Parents as Teachers National Center : www.parentstasteachers.org
National Association for the Education of Young Children: www.naeyc.org
National Head Start Association: www.nhsa.org

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What are the key issues?
Ask questions:

- What issues are of most concern to you, your program?
- Where are the gaps in services?
- What are the barriers to implementing programs?
- Are your programs reaching targeted populations?
- Do you have the resources you need?
- What could help you be more successful?

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Identify your key issue

Sample advocacy issue:

Background:
The first 2000 days of a child's life are critical to development. Early childhood education, including home visiting programs for children 0-5, has been demonstrated to help them be cognitively, socially and emotionally ready for school.

Issue:
The budget is tight, state revenues are down, and the Governor has proposed cutting early education funding by 25%.

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Develop goals & objectives


What is a goal?
An advocacy **goal** is the long-term outcome of your advocacy effort. It is the change you want to see, your vision, or your dream
Sample goal: All families have access to evidence-based early learning services and programs that enable children to start school prepared for success, and help parents advance and be productive in the workforce.

What is an objective?
An advocacy **objective** is a specific, short-term outcome that contributes toward your goal and is pursued in a certain period of time
Sample objective: Pennsylvania policy-makers will maintain current FY funding for early childhood programs in the 2014 budget

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Advocacy Objectives should be SMART



Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Realistic
Time-bound

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So, how does the process work?

Where do I begin?

Who can make the public policy changes we need?



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Understand process & players

3 Branches of Government:

- **General Assembly:** makes the laws
 - House of Representatives
 - Senate
- **Judiciary:** interprets the laws
- **Executive:** implements the laws



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Executive Branch

- Governor
- Lt. Governor (also President of Senate)
- State Departments
- State Boards & Commissions



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Legislative Branch

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

House of Representatives	Senate
Speaker of the House	President Pro-Tem
Majority Leader	Majority Leader
Minority Leader	Minority Leader
Committee Chairs & Members	Committee Chairs & Members
Full House (111 R, 92 D, 2v)	Full Senate (27R, 23D)

<http://www.legis.state.pa.us>

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How a bill becomes a law

- The bill is introduced in the Senate or House of Representatives
- The bill is sent to committee for debate and approval
- The bill is sent to Minority and Majority caucuses for review and approval
- The bill is sent on to the full Senate or House for consideration
- Passage of the bill is debated and voted upon
- Upon approval by one chamber, the bill is sent to the other chamber and the process is repeated
- If approved, the bill is signed by the Speaker of the House, the Senate Pro Tem, and sent to the Governor to be signed (or vetoed)

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Budget Cycle

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graph TD
    A[Governor Unveils Next Year's Budget Proposal February] --> B[Governor's Legislative Budget Briefing December]
    B --> C[Agency Budget Submissions]
    C --> D[Agency Re-Budgets]
    D --> E[Appropriations Budget Hearings]
    E --> F[Amendment Process]
    F --> G[Conference Committee]
    G --> H[Final Passage June 30]
    H --> A
  
```

<http://www.govtol.pitt.edu/commonwealth/pabudget.html>

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Where to begin...

First, get to know your member(s):


- Republican or Democrat? In the majority or minority?
- Socially or fiscally liberal, moderate, or conservative?
- What is the district like?
- Is this issue relevant to the member? Does s/he have children or grandchildren?
- Does someone on your board or advisory council know her/him?
- What are her/his key issues of interest?
- What do you know about the spouse/partner's interest?

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It's all about the relationship

- Use your research to identify ways to build a relationship
- Build those relationships **before** you need to ask them to do something
- Once you have a relationship, if s/he is supportive, ask her/him to help you with other members



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What's my message?

An effective advocacy message

Informs • Persuades • Moves audience to action

- Uses facts, figures, and real-life examples
- Appeals to the values of your target audience
- Addresses the perceived barriers of your audience
- Is simple and concise
- Is tailored for your target audience
- And, tells a story




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Stay on message:

- Know your message
- Anticipate push-back
- Don't make things up
- Avoid jargon and 'alphabet soup'
- Don't repeat back negative questions
- Always tell a story



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Identify your Change makers and Influencers

Change makers are individuals and/or institutions that can make the change you seek

Examples: Governor, State Department Director, Committee Chair, General Assembly

Influencers are individuals and/or institutions that can influence the primary target.

Examples: Spouses/families of politicians, Educators, Parents, Constituents, Business Leaders, Faith Leaders

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Advocacy tactics

Tactics are the means to gain your objective

- Invite your elected officials to join your advisory council
- Invite legislators to visit your program and/or shadow you
- Visit your member at the Capitol
- Hold an 'in-district' meeting at someone's home or a public library with a group of parents
- Call or write your elected officials

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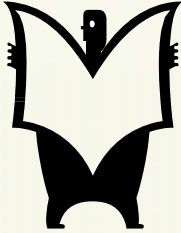
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Get the word out

- Develop district or region-specific fact sheets
- Deliver petitions signed by their constituents
- Write letters-to-the-editor (LTEs); send copies of LTEs to your legislators
- Submit an 'op-ed' to the paper signed by an influencer
- Implement a Tell Your Story campaign; deliver stories to your legislators



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Keys to a successful meeting

- Plan : Have a clear goal and spokesperson(s)
- Make an appointment. Be prompt, patient, & persistent
- Practice your message
- Introduce yourself and say where you live in the district and/or where your center is located and who it serves
- Make your case. Be honest & respectful
- Share a story
- Leave a **fact sheet** with information about your issue
- Say thank you and follow up

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Monitor implementation

Sometimes we have a really big win, but then no follow-up...

- Rules and regulations
- Dissemination of information
- Oversight
- Appropriations



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“If you think you’re too small to have an impact, try going to sleep with a mosquito.”
Anita Roddick




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Questions?




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BEING AN EFFECTIVE ADVOCATE FOR FAMILY CENTERS
Jamie Baxter
Director of Legislative Policy and Advocacy
Allegheny Intermediate Unit




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Current Fight

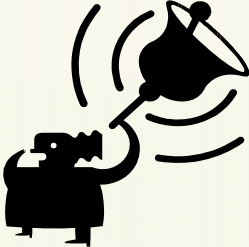
- Funding cuts on the local level
- Funding cuts on the state level
- Funding cuts on the federal level



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Are You Angry?



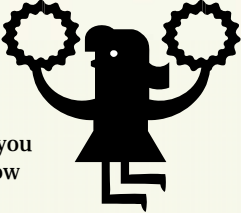
- What are you doing about it?
- Who else are you getting involved?
- How can we fight back?

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Advocating for Your Programs

- How can you get involved earlier in the process?
- Who should you be targeting?
- What partnerships do you have? How can you grow your partnerships?

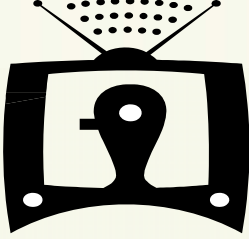


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Contacting the Media



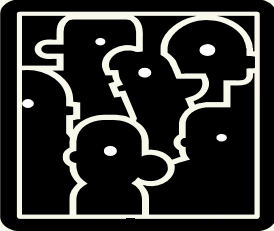
- Build relationships with reporters
- Invite media to events
- Alert media if policymakers will be in attendance
- Write letters to the editor and Op/Ed pieces

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Other Audiences

- Parents
- Community members
- Students
- Other educators

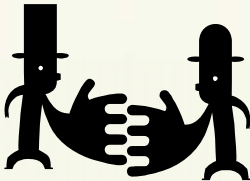


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Coalition Building

- What partnerships do you have?
- What groups can you reach out to support your efforts?
- Role of larger education coalitions



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The Future


- The fight will continue.
- Remember: You are the Expert!
- If we don't advocate for family centers, who will?
- Keep it up! Your voice is being heard!
- Together we can build legislative and community support.

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Contact Information


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 412-394-4966



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Questions?




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SHARING YOUR STORY: ADVOCACY AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCE
Denise Hoffman
Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center

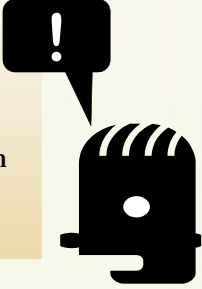


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Overview:

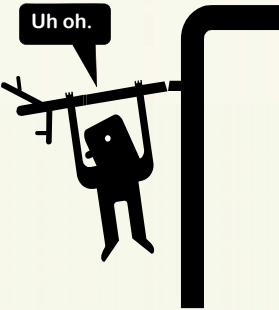
- Strategic Sharing
- Benefits
- Risks
- Choose, Connect & Claim
- Practice



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What is Strategic Sharing?



Uh oh.

Training designed to help you share your personal story in a way that is meaningful, effective, and safe.

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Why is it important to share our stories?


- Helps “put a face” to an issue
- Inspires change in the system and in individuals
- Influences people’s perceptions and stereotypes
- Youth and alumni of the system are the experts

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What are some of the risks?

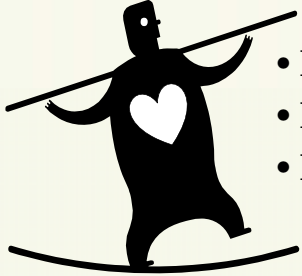
- Sharing regret/over-sharing
- Memories can be painful
- Some people only hear what they want to hear
- It’s personal – it’s YOUR life!



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How do we guard against the risks?



- Be prepared
- Be strategic
- Be honest

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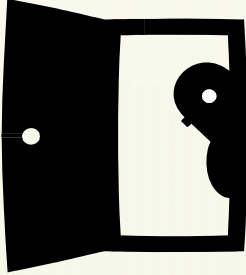
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Being Strategic

Choose:

- Your purpose
- What you share
- The details




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Being Strategic



Connect with your

- Audience
- Purpose

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Being Strategic

Claim the

- Meaning and significance
- Emotion
- Process of sharing



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Responding to Difficult Questions

- Restate your purpose and move on
- Open the question up to the group
- Generalize to the larger issue
- Decline to answer

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Credibility

Can vary due to:

- Manner of communicating
- Perceived trustworthiness
- Professional allies
- Appearance

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Panel Presentation

- Typical questions
- Format and flow
- Tips


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Choose, Connect, and Claim


- Take time to choose one part of your story to share
- Think about how you will choose, connect, and claim
- Practice presenting



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Assess Results



- How did it feel?
- What was the toughest part?
- What was the easiest part?


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Resource

This presentation was adapted from the Strategic Sharing booklet developed by Casey Family Programs and Foster Care Alumni of America

This booklet is available for download at www.casey.org



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