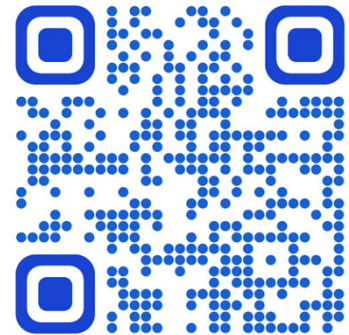


Promoting Self-Advocacy in Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Cindy Camp
ccamp@dcmp.org



Hello, my name is Cindy Camp, and I want to talk with you about developing self advocacy skill for children who are deaf and hard of hearing.

We talk about self-advocacy as an important skill. It's often written into IEP goals. However, it's not an easy skill to teach or to master. But it is a skill we need to start teaching at a young age if we want students to become proficient.

On this opening slide you see three images of common things children do-- a young boy contemplating how to tie his boots, a little girl brushing her teeth, and a boy and a girl washing dishes. Each of these activities is a teachable moment. The young boy is using problem solving skills. The little girl is practicing independence. And the boy and girl are using teamwork to accomplish a task. In this presentation, we'll look at how everyday moments can become steppingstones on the road to independence and self-advocacy.

Described & Captioned Media Program

Our Mission:

Our mission is to promote and provide equal access to communication and learning through described and captioned educational media.

Our Goal:

The ultimate goal of the DCMP is for accessible media to be an integral tool in the teaching and learning process for all stakeholders in the educational community, including students, educators and other school personnel, parents, service providers, businesses, and agencies.



www.dcmp.org

Let me start by telling you a little about myself. I'm a nationally certified interpreter, certified in mental health interpreting, as well as a C-Print captionist and trainer. I've worked in disability services for over 30 years.

Currently, I work for The Described and Captioned Media Program. This program is funded through the U.S. Department of Education so all our services are free of charge. We have an online video library of over 13,000 educational titles that we make accessible by adding captions for individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing and audio description for individuals who are blind and have low vision.

The mission of DCMP is to promote and provide equal access to communication and learning through described and captioned educational media.

During this presentation I'll explain how DCMP media and resources can be used to help students grow and develop self-advocacy skills. If aren't a member already you'll want to go to www.dcmp.org and sign up for your free

account. Professionals and families of students who are early-learners through high school and who have a disability are eligible.

What is Self-Advocacy?

- The action of representing oneself or one's views or interests.



Children need to begin developing self-advocacy as young as possible. But that isn't always easy. In fact, it takes a lot of work and patience to allow a child to do things on their own. It's much easier to do things for them.

So, what is self-advocacy? A dictionary definition is the action of representing oneself or one's views or interests.

The image on the slide shows a group of children, some with their hands raised and some not. This represents a positive way to voice an opinion. At the very basic level, self-advocacy is representing your individual views and interests. It can be as simple as saying that you don't like a particular restaurant when a group of friends or coworkers are trying to decide where to have lunch. But how many of us, even as adults, struggle with feeling comfortable giving voice to our wants and needs?

What is Self-Advocacy Really?

Self-Advocacy is learning how to speak up for yourself, making your own decisions about your own life, learning how to get information so that you can understand things that are of interest to you, finding out who will support you in your journey, knowing your rights and responsibilities, problem solving, listening and learning, reaching out to others when you need help and friendship, and learning about self-determination.



You may be asking why self-advocacy is important. It's important for everyone to be able to express their wants and needs in an appropriate manner. But self-advocacy has a deeper meaning for individuals with disabilities. Wright's Law website states self-advocacy is learning how to speak up for yourself, making your own decisions about your own life, learning how to get information so that you can understand things that are of interest to you, finding out who will support you in your journey, knowing your rights and responsibilities, problem-solving, listening and learning, reaching out to others when you need help and friendship, and learning about self-determination.

The self-advocacy movement started in the 1960s. This is the idea that people with disabilities have the right to speak up for themselves. People with disabilities also have the right to choose the services they want. So it is important for children with disabilities to know that they have rights and choices.

[A Conversation with Haben Girma: 2020 AFB Leadership Conference](#)



[A Conversation with Haben Girma: 2020 AFB Leadership Conference](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KPVjgNHnt5c&t=1413s)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KPVjgNHnt5c&t=1413s>

When Does Self-Advocacy Start?



From the moment a family finds out their child is deaf or hard of hearing they will need to begin making decisions for their child. However, as early as possible they should include the child in the process.

And children are good at letting their wishes be know. There are times when you'll need to do what is best for your child and not what your child wants but whenever possible let them make decisions. An easy way to begin this is by giving them the option between two appropriate thing. That way they can't make a "wrong" decision. As they get older you can give them more options.

This is not easy for any parent, but it can be especially difficult for parents of children with disabilities. The natural tendency is to protect and nurture, but this can quickly turn into over-protectiveness if we aren't careful.

I am not a Stranger: A Deaf Child's View of Growing Up in a Hearing Family



Let's take a look at clip from a video called, *I Am Not a Stranger: A Deaf Child's View of Growing Up in a Hearing Family*. This clip shows the importance of communication with children and involving them in the decision-making process.

The key to including your child in the decision-making process is communication. Children need language as soon as possible. The mode is not as important as the fact that language is developed, and communication takes place. This video shows examples of two methods. In the first the first clip the child is not included in discussions and all decisions are made for her. In the second clip the family uses a mixture of lipreading and gesture. The child is included in discussions and allowed to make decisions. This leads to more independence.

[Video link \(https://dcmp.org/media/5221-i-am-not-a-stranger-a-deaf-child-s-view-of-growing-up-in-a-hearing-family\)](https://dcmp.org/media/5221-i-am-not-a-stranger-a-deaf-child-s-view-of-growing-up-in-a-hearing-family)

Strategies for Teaching Self-Advocacy



- Start Early
- Encourage Self-Awareness
- Stay Positive
- Support Critical Thinking
- Engage in Problem Solving
- Promote Self-Advocacy
- Require Involvement
- Plan for the Future
- Build Self-Esteem



I found some good strategies for teaching self advocacy on a website called Smart Kids. You'll find the link in my handout.

First, start early. When children start school, they should be able to tell teachers and other adults what their unique needs are.

Encourage self-awareness: Children disabilities need to know how to talk about their disability and tell teachers what they need. Don't just assume that everything in a child's IEP will be followed to the letter. For example, a student with low vision may need to remind teachers to say what is written on the board or on a slide.

Stay positive. It is easy for students to want to try an "pass" for "normal." They may want to pretend that they are the same as their peers. Put a positive spin in their disability by discussing role models who have the same disability they do.

Support Critical Thinking. Discuss with the child their strengths and weaknesses. Discuss what tools they find most effective. What accommodation do they prefer and in what situation? By helping them learn about themselves they will be better able to self-advocate.

Promote Self-Advocacy. By middle school children should know understand their disability and be able to explain it. They should know which learning methods and adaptable technology are most effective for them. And they should be able to appropriately discuss their accommodations with adults.

Require Involvement. Student led IEPs are a very popular topic but they can be time consuming and probably most teachers and students would prefer not to go through the process. But encouraging and requiring that a student be involved in planning for their future will lead to a better future.

Plan for the Future. Transition planning should begin long before high school. Students should be encouraged to explore different careers and interview individuals in those positions. Find role models with disabilities so that students can dream big and not feel limited.

Build Self-Esteem. Children with disabilities often struggle in this area because so much of their lives are focused on trying to catch up with their peers. It is important to provide them with role models like them. Look for opportunities to praise accomplishments and help them feel good about themselves.

Map It: What Comes Next? Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy



Map It: What Comes Next? Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy
<https://dcmp.org/media/14033-map-it-what-comes-next-self-determination-and-self-advocacy>

Self-Advocacy Has 3 Parts

1. Knowing yourself



- [Leo the Late Bloomer](#)
- [Goose](#)
- [The Dot](#)
- [T is for Terrible](#)
- [Everybody's Different: We Like Different Things](#)
- [Deaf History That](#)
- [Achieving Goals! Career Stories of Individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#)

Self-Advocacy has 3 main parts. The first is to know yourself. If you don't know about yourself, your likes and dislikes, your strengths and weaknesses, your motivations, and such then you can't really tell others what you want or need.

The videos listed here are in the DCMP collection they are just a few that help teach children of all ages that everyone is different, and we should celebrate those differences.

[Leo the Late Bloomer](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/4677-leo-the-late-bloomer>)

(Spanish version <https://dcmp.org/media/4678-leo-the-late-bloomer-Spanish>)

[Goose](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/9660-goose>)

(ASL version <https://dcmp.org/media/13945-goose>)

[The Dot](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/5088-the-dot>)

(Spanish version <https://dcmp.org/media/5510-the-dot-Spanish>)

[T is for Terrible](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/5816-t-is-for-terrible>)

[Everybody's Different: We Like Different Things](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/6752-everybody-s-different-we-like-different-things>)

[Deaf History That Series](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/series/475-deaf-history-that>)

[*Achieving Goals! Career Stories of Individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing*](https://dcmp.org/series/424-achieving-goals-career-stories-of-individuals-who-are-deaf-and-hard-of-hearing)

([*https://dcmp.org/series/424-achieving-goals-career-stories-of-individuals-who-are-deaf-and-hard-of-hearing*](https://dcmp.org/series/424-achieving-goals-career-stories-of-individuals-who-are-deaf-and-hard-of-hearing))

Self-Advocacy Has 3 Parts

2. Knowing your needs



- [Self-Advocacy Solutions to School Problems](#)
- [Self-Esteem: Being The Real Me](#)
- [Respecting Yourself](#)
- [Amazing Kids of Character \(series\)](#)



The second part of self-advocacy is to know your needs. This is especially important for students with disabilities. Too often teachers and parents don't take the time to talk with students about their accommodations. The result can be that a student simply expects access services. I know of deaf students who have shown for the first day of college classes and were confused that no interpreter was there, even though they didn't register with the disability services office or request an interpreter. In K-12 the interpreter just magically appeared each day and they had no idea that this would change when they started college.

[Self-Advocacy Solutions to School Problems](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/7021-self-advocacy-solutions-to-school-problems>)

[Self-Esteem: Being The Real Me](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/4017-self-esteem-being-the-real-me>)

[Respecting Yourself](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/3493-respecting-yourself>)

[Amazing Kids of Character \(series\)](#)

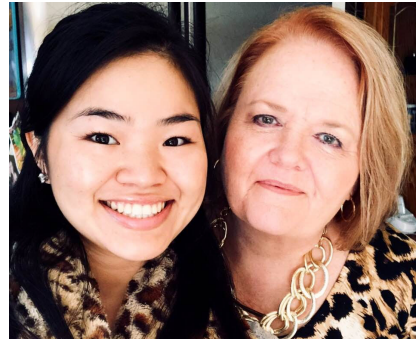
(<https://dcmp.org/series/152-amazing-kids-of-character>)

Amy's Start Toward a Successful Future

[Print interview with Amy](#)

[Print interview with Theresa](#)

[Video Interview](#)



Next, let's take a look at a clip from a video of a mother and her young adult daughter. Theresa, the mother, adopted Amy, the daughter, from China. Amy is deaf and came to America with almost no language. But Theresa recognized the importance of her daughter learning to take control of her IEP meetings.

Taxonomy for Transition Programming Webinar Series by Pepnet 2: Student-Focused Planning--First-Hand Experiences

<https://dcmp.org/media/15548-taxonomy-for-transition-programming-webinar-series-by-pepnet-2-student-focused-planning-first-hand-experiences>

At the time of this video she was a college student at the Rochester School of Technology. Now she is in graduate school. The process of teaching her self-advocacy was not easy or quick but it has led to Amy becoming a successful young woman.

Print interview with Amy - <https://dcmp.org/learn/261>

Print interview with Theresa - <https://dcmp.org/learn/262>

Taxonomy for Transition Programming Webinar Series by Pepnet 2: Student-Focused Planning--First-Hand Experiences

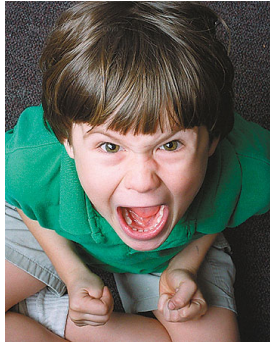


At the time of this video, she was a college student at the Rochester School of Technology. Now she is a working professional. The process of teaching her self-advocacy was not easy or quick but it has led to Amy becoming a successful young woman.

Remember to download the handout for this presentation. It contains links to all the videos shown.

Self-Advocacy Has 3 Parts

3. Knowing how to get what you need



- [*Respecting Others*](#)
- [*Student Workshop: Respecting Differences*](#)
- [*What's Respect? We're All Different*](#)
- [*Talking to Your Teacher*](#)
- [*I Can Greet a Grown Up*](#)
- [*I Can Show I Care*](#)

The third part of self-advocacy is know how to get what you need. This is also an important one. When a person is too pushy and rude or too meek, they aren't likely to get a positive response. Being assertive yet still respectful is a good skill for all of us to practice. The videos listed here help students know the right way to ask for what they need.

[*Respecting Others*](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/3491-respecting-others>)

[*Student Workshop: Respecting Differences*](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/4040-student-workshop-respecting-differences>)

[*What's Respect? We're All Different*](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/1672-what-s-respect>)

[*Talking to Your Teacher*](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/11838-talking-to-your-teacher>)

[*I Can Greet a Grown Up*](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/11856-i-can-greet-a-grown-up>)

[*I Can Show I Care*](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/11858-i-can-show-i-care>)

Self-Advocacy, Self-Determination, & Self-Respect

Title	Grades	Title	Grades
<i>Short Stories for Children (Series)</i>	Ps-3	<i>Building Resilience</i>	7-10
<i>Chrysanthemum</i>	Ps-4	<i>Drowning in D's: You Can Turn Your Grades Around</i>	7-12
<i>The North Star</i>	K-6	<i>Self-Esteem for Native American Students</i>	7-12
<i>My Best Me: All About Self-Esteem</i>	3-6	<i>Unlocking Your Potential: Grit, Determination, and Mindset</i>	7-12
<i>My Blog (Series)</i>	4-8	<i>The Dream Share Project</i>	7-12
<i>Great Cup Stack Challenge</i>	5-6	<i>My:24 (series)</i>	7-12
<i>Chicken Soup for the Soul's Hidden Heroes (Series)</i>	5-12	<i>Real Life Teens (Series)</i>	7-12
<i>No Ordinary Hero: The SuperDeafy Movie</i>	5-12	<i>Tin Soldiers</i>	9-12



Here are some additional titles in the DCMP collection that help to teach self advocacy, self determination, and self respect. As you can see there are titles for all ages. Using videos as a jumping off point is a good way to bring up a topic and have an open discussion with your students.

Title

[*Short Stories for Children \(Series\)*](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/series/234-short-stories-for-children>)

[*Chrysanthemum*](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/4659-chrysanthemum>)

(Spanish version <https://dcmp.org/media/4661-chrysanthemum-spanish>)

[*The North Star*](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/7602-the-north-star>)

[*My Best Me: All About Self-Esteem*](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/8462-my-best-me-all-about-self-esteem>)

[*My Blog \(Series\)*](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/series/633-my-blog>)

[*Great Cup Stack Challenge*](#)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/6774-great-cup-stack-challenge>)

[Chicken Soup for the Soul's Hidden Heroes \(Series\)](https://dcmp.org/media/6774-great-cup-stack-challenge)

(<https://dcmp.org/series/530-chicken-soup-for-the-soul-s-hidden-heroes>)

[No Ordinary Hero: The SuperDeafy Movie](https://dcmp.org/series/530-chicken-soup-for-the-soul-s-hidden-heroes)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/9594-no-ordinary-hero-the-superdeafy-movie>)

[Building Resilience](https://dcmp.org/media/9594-no-ordinary-hero-the-superdeafy-movie)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/6066-building-resilience>)

[Drowning in D's: You Can Turn Your Grades Around](https://dcmp.org/media/6066-building-resilience)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/8458-drowning-in-d-s-you-can-turn-your-grades-around>)

[Self-Esteem for Native American Students](https://dcmp.org/media/8458-drowning-in-d-s-you-can-turn-your-grades-around)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/6581-self-esteem-for-native-american-students>)

[Unlocking Your Potential: Grit, Determination, and Mindset](https://dcmp.org/media/6581-self-esteem-for-native-american-students)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/12374-unlocking-your-potential-grit-determination-and-mindset>)

[The Dream Share Project](https://dcmp.org/media/12374-unlocking-your-potential-grit-determination-and-mindset)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/7589-the-dream-share-project>)

[My:24 \(series\)](https://dcmp.org/media/7589-the-dream-share-project)

(<https://dcmp.org/series/319-my-24>)

[Real Life Teens \(Series\)](https://dcmp.org/series/319-my-24)

(<https://dcmp.org/series/250-real-life-teens>)

[Tin Soldiers](https://dcmp.org/series/250-real-life-teens)

(<https://dcmp.org/media/9626-tin-soldiers>)

Additional Resources

- [Self-Advocacy: Strategies for All Ages](#)
- [Self-Advocacy for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students](#)
- [The Importance of Self-Advocacy for Kids who Learn and Think Differently](#)
- [How to Build the Foundation for Self-Advocacy in Young Children](#)
- [Can I Ask for Self-Advocacy IEP Goals for My Child?](#)
- [Should My Child Go to IEP Meetings?](#)



These links are additional websites with helpful resources and information.

[Self-Advocacy: Strategies for All Ages](#)

(<https://www.smartkidswithld.org/getting-help/raising-independent-kids/self-advocacystrategies-ages/>)

[Self-Advocacy for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students](#)

(https://www.handsandvoices.org/articles/education/advocacy/V8-4_selfAdv.htm)

[The Importance of Self-Advocacy for Kids who Learn and Think Differently](#)

(<https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/empowering-your-child/selfadvocacy/the-importance-of-self-advocacy>)

[How to Build the Foundation for Self-Advocacy in Young Children](#)

(<https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/empowering-your-child/selfadvocacy/how-to-build-the-foundation-for-self-advocacy-in-young-children>)

[Can I Ask for Self-Advocacy IEP Goals for My Child?](#)

(<https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/empowering-your-child/self-advocacy/can-i-ask-to-have-self-advocacy-goals-included-in-my-childs-iep>)

[Should My Child Go to IEP Meetings?](#)

(<https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/empowering-your-child/self-advocacy/should-i-encourage-my-child-to-go-to-iep-meetings?>)

Takeaways

- Self-advocacy is an important skill that can help your child do better in school and be more independent in the long run.
- You can take specific steps to help your child learn self-advocacy.
- Self-advocacy isn't easy, but with practice your child can develop this skill over time.



There are three things I'd like you to take away from this discussion:

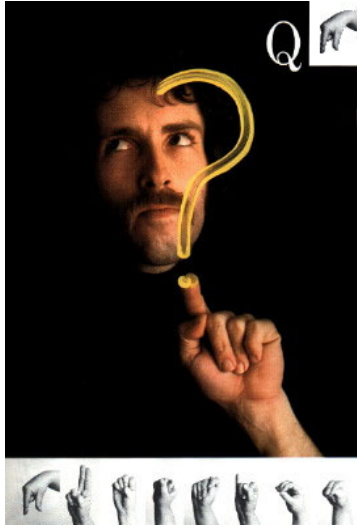
1. Self-advocacy is an important skill that can help children do better in school and be more independent in the long run.
2. You can take specific steps to help children learn self-advocacy.
3. Self-advocacy isn't easy, but with practice children can develop this skill over time.

Taxonomy for Transition Programming Webinar Series by Pepnet 2: Family Involvement--First-Hand Experiences

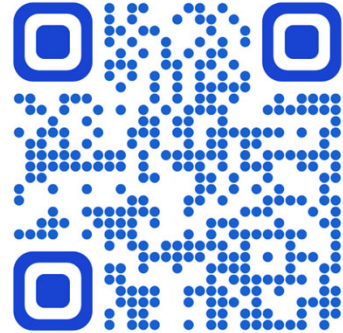
How did you involve your children in
planning for their education and transition?



Taxonomy for Transition Programming Webinar Series by Pepnet 2: Family Involvement--First-Hand Experiences
<https://dcmp.org/media/15550-taxonomy-for-transition-programming-webinar-series-by-pepnet-2-family-involvement-first-hand-experiences>



Questions?



Thank you for viewing my presentation. I hope you have found it informative and that you'll create an account with DCMP so that you can utilize these resources. If you have any questions visit our website www.dcmp.org Or email me at ccamp@dcmp.org Please use the QR code to complete a short evaluation. This will help ensure that DCMP continues to receive funding.