



ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

Communications Specialist | April 2019

WHY ADVOCATE?

1

Advocacy furthers your mission.

2

Policymakers need you and you need them in order to create change.

3

Government impacts the funding and regulation of your organization.

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

1. Establish your SMART goals
 - Specific
 - Measurable
 - Attainable
 - Relevant
 - Timely
2. Identify the decision-makers who can give you what you want
3. Find your most credible messengers
4. Inventory your assets
5. Determine what you are missing



WHAT TYPE OF ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES SHOULD ALL NONPROFITS DO?

Regardless of whether an organization decides to take part in policy change, there are a few activities that all nonprofits should do to educate policymakers and the public about who they are as an organization, what they do and why they do it. It's important that policymakers view nonprofits as resources in their community.

- **Send newsletters and annual reports** to local, state and federal policymakers.
- **Invite policymakers**, their staff and the media to events.
- **Periodically visit lawmakers** in their district offices or in Lansing/Washington.
- **Recognize the work of your policymakers** at every opportunity.

USING STORYTELLING TO STRENGTHEN YOUR ADVOCACY

Sharing personal stories is a powerful way to show the deep impact of your work.

A good story:

- **Catches your attention** and doesn't feed stereotypes or trigger judgments.
- **Highlights inequities** in the system or problems that need to be addressed.
- **Demonstrates** concrete consequences.
- **Is free** of blame.
- **Helps promote** even-handed news coverage.
- **Humanizes** technical issues.