Self-Advocacy & Disclosure
Preparing Transition Age Youth with Autism for Employment

Self-Disclosure: As an individual

Self-Advocacy: Defined
Self-advocacy involves knowing when and how to approach others in order to negotiate desired goals, and in order to build better mutual understanding, fulfillment, and productivity.
Steps to Self-Advocacy

1. Awareness of strengths and challenges through verbal, pictorial, and other communication.
2. Back-up strengths and challenges.
3. Non-judgmental comparison of characteristics with others and potential role models.
4. Present the label summarizing a condition rather than a name for a set of deficits.
5. Making one needs known in a way that others can understand and provide support.

Self-Determination

What are we doing now to prepare for successful self-advocacy?

- Awareness of need
  - Environmental
  - Cognitive
  - Social/functional
- Advocacy Effort
- Disclosure

Independent Living for:
- Education
- Community
- Relationships
- Residential Employment

Planning for Disclosure

1. Awareness of strengths and challenges
2. "Back up" strengths and challenges
3. Nonjudgmental comparison
4. Present the label summarizing the condition
Self-Advocacy: Defined

Self-advocacy involves knowing when and how to approach others in order to negotiate desired goals, and in order to build better mutual understanding, fulfillment, and productivity.

Successful self-advocacy often involves an amount of disclosure about oneself that carries some degree of risk, in order to reach a subsequent goal of better mutual understanding.

Developing a Self-Advocacy Plan

Parts of a Self-Advocacy Plan

1. Scan

Challenge: What is causing the difficulty?
1. Sensory: Perception of the environment
2. Cognitive: How we think
3. Socio-emotional: Social cues and how we feel
Advocacy: Explaining our needs
Disclosure: Giving the reason why
Parts of a Self-Advocacy Plan

2. Advocate

Explaining your needs: Promoting greater understanding and in a way the other can provide assistance.

3. Disclose

The Reason:

1. Partial: Note specific characteristic affecting a situation only
2. Fully: Diagnosis

Self-Advocacy Plan: Examples

Sensory

1. Scan 2. Advocate 3. Disclose

- Fluorescent lights
  - Ask instructor to change lighting
  - I have sensitive eyes (partial)

Cognitive

1. Scan 2. Advocate 3. Disclose

- Remembering verbal instruction
  - Request written instructions from instructor
  - I remember things better when I write them down (partial)
Self-Advocacy Plan: Examples

Socio-Emotional

1. Scan 2. Advocate 3. Disclose

Decoding jokes  Ask peers to tell you when they make a joke  I take things very literally (partial)

Self-Advocacy: 3 Steps

1. SCAN  

2. Advocate  

3. Disclose

Scenario

You're lost and you ask someone for directions

After the 8th light you look for the big tree on the left and take the third right. Then after the second church you see a fire station and go left. After going left you take a right at Tom Street. Drive for 4 blocks and keep bearing right until you see a stream on left which tells you to take a bridge on the right headed towards the water tower. When you pass the water tower take the second left and pull into a parking space in front of International Bicycle Shop and you are there!
1. Scan
You're lost and you ask someone for directions

After the 6th light you look for the big tree on the left and take the third right. Then after the second church you see a fire station and go left. After going left you take a right at Tom Street. Drive for 4 blocks and keep bearing right until you see a stream on left which tells you to take a bridge on the right headed towards the water tower. When you pass the water tower take he second left and pull into a parking space in front of International Bicycle Shop and you are there!

2. Advocate
You're lost and you ask someone for directions

After the 6th light you look for the big tree on the left and take the third right. Then after the second church you see a fire station and go left. After going left you take a right at Tom Street. Drive for 4 blocks and keep bearing right until you see a stream on left which tells you to take a bridge on the right headed towards the water tower. When you pass the water tower take he second left and pull into a parking space in front of International Bicycle Shop and you are there!

3. Disclose
You're lost and you ask someone for directions

After the 6th light you look for the big tree on the left and take the third right. Then after the second church you see a fire station and go left. After going left you take a right at Tom Street. Drive for 4 blocks and keep bearing right until you see a stream on left which tells you to take a bridge on the right headed towards the water tower. When you pass the water tower take he second left and pull into a parking space in front of International Bicycle Shop and you are there!
Promoting Life-Long Strategies for Success

Self-Advocacy as a Critical Key to Success in Employment

The House of Self-Advocacy

Developing & Implementing an Advocacy Plan

- Full: The diagnosis or just the aspect causing concern
- Partial: Enabling others to provide support

Scanning the Environment

SELF-AWARENESS

Sometimes and endeavor does not work out...

...and a change in plans is required