

HELPING STUDENTS TO ADVOCATE

**BTS Administration, Guidance & CST Departments
(Part I of II)**

WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

Grown & Flown

Remember the Little Engine that Could?

Self Awareness

Knowing & Understanding

Communicating

WHY SUPPORT STUDENT ADVOCACY?

Both short and long term...

Future relationships

Self Esteem

Growth

Boundaries

Self Respect

Expression

Stress Management

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

Children and Young Adults May:

- Be lacking knowledge of the concepts they are learning and/or struggling to describe what they need.
- They may not know who to speak to about getting help.
- They may lack the ability to identify their needs and express them.
- They may lack self-esteem and confidence in themselves, resulting in reluctance to ask questions.
- They may rely on others to advocate for them.
- They may feel others don't understand their needs.

Communication: When there is a barrier, explore the barrier! Children learn how to advocate for themselves by observing parents, teachers, and others.

Your child may have to practice these with you, their counselors, and guidance counselors at school.

Topics May Include:

K5: manners, requests, sharing, 'friend talk' (conflict)
6-12: boundaries, feelings validated, respect, extra help with academics, play time in sports, roles in clubs & activities

TEACHERS, COUNSELORS & PARENTS...

- **Goal 1: Accountability:** identify their need and role in the event
- **Goal 2: Feelings:** ask them to reflect on how they feel and how others might feel
- **Goal 3: Strategize/Brainstorm:** have them present ideas, solutions or a plan to tackle the situation
- **Goal 4: Communication:** support and guide them communicating this need to the adult/peer
- **Goal 5: Resolve:** role play/model dialogue to resolve barriers and conflicts

GIMME THE "HOW"

- If your child has any programs they are in, such as an IEP, or receiving services, or even with sports and clubs, include your child in those plans and schedules.
- ***What are your thoughts about taking this class? Do you think having an extra teacher in the room might help so you could get help from either?***
- Encourage your child to talk to their teachers and ask for help.
- ***Why don't you start that email to your teacher and I can help with what you want to say? How about you email them and include me!***
- It is important to encourage your child to reach out to their teacher first, asking for what they need. They may need additional help on an assignment or understanding a concept.
- ***Great job emailing or sending a chat to your teacher! Is there another class where we should check in?***
- Encourage your child to speak to their guidance counselor as well about the issue.
- ***If that bothers you how that student spoke or what you heard them post, how do you think we should handle it? Your counselor might have some great ideas; why not see if they can meet with you 1 on 1?***

GIMME THE "HOW"

- So that was a low quiz; do you know the material now? When do we want to meet to go over it before the test? Before our next quiz, do you want to meet 2-3 days before and you can bring your study guide for me to review?
- Do you want your snack now or after we do 20 minutes of reading? Which shirt do you want to wear with these pants tomorrow? How do you think you want to break apart that big writing assignment, should we try 20 minutes a night?
- *So, I see when you organized yourself like this, you more got done. What if we organize it again like this (your backpack, your folder, assignment) and I can help while you work on it?*
- Seems like your project partner is not pulling their weight...did you show your teacher what you accomplished yet? Did you ask for their advice on how to assign them a part?
- .
- Sorry to hear you and your friend had a fight. Do you have any ideas on what you want to do first? Is it better to have a conversation or say that you want to talk, but now is not the right time?
- *Do you want to meet with me to go over your outline after you work for 15 minutes or do you want to come me when your stuck?*

LET'S TRY ONE..

Elementary Parents/Teachers (K-4):

A child/student shares that their friends tease them when they arrive late to recess. It takes them longer to eat and lunch, so they are the last to be dismissed. His/her always get to the playground first and take all of the balls.

Middle Grade Parents/Teachers (5-8):

A child/student does not like being singled out by the teacher at the end of each class when she asks if they are okay and if they understood the lesson. How do you encourage them to proceed?

***Upper Grade Parents/Teachers (9 and up):*

A child is upset they can't stay alone, although they are 13 (Or: your student is upset you are emailing home about a bad grade). How do we encourage continued communication and trust, but independence & accountability?

WHERE DO I GET ASSISTANCE?

Program/Placement/Teacher Strategies:

Case Managers:

Ms. Zybdel (Pk-3)

Ms. Kastell (4-8)

Student Conflict/Peer Relationships:

Guidance Counselors:

Ms. Infante (Pk-4)

Ms. Deckhut (5-8)

Classroom teachers often are the best place to start to get their feedback and observations.

Should students need assistance to advocate for themselves, they may loop in a counselor or case manager depending on the concern or goal.

Counselor and Case Managers keep building Principal's informed along with teaching staff so the whole team can support the goals and needs of all students.

RESOURCES

For MS/HS Parents

[Washington Post Article](#)

[Positive talk](#)

For MS/HS Teachers & Coaches

[Advocacy Role Play](#)

[Empowerment](#)

General

[Best Practices](#)

[Strategies for All](#)

For K-6 Teachers

[In the Classroom](#)

[Communication Game](#)

Q & A

Thank You For Your Joining Us!