

# SELF-ADVOCACY & SELF-DETERMINATION

## HOW TO ENHANCE THE AGENCY OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Realizing self-advocacy and self-determination are rights of every child including children with special needs.
- Connecting self-advocacy with self-determination.
- Understanding the importance of self-advocacy skills for children with disabilities.
- How teachers can help facilitate self-advocacy/determination.
- Parental roles with respect to self-advocacy/determination.

# CHILD RIGHTS!

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) have developed 54 child rights.
- These rights have been agreed upon by approximately 196 countries.
- Serves to protect the interests of children globally.
- Right #29

*“Children’s education should help them fully develop their personalities, talents, and abilities. It should teach them to understand their own rights, and to respect other people’s rights, cultures, and differences. It should help them to live peacefully and protect the environment.”*

[UNCRC Link](#)



# WHAT IS SELF-ADVOCACY?

- The National Center for Learning Disabilities defines self-advocacy as “a set of skills based on self-knowledge, including awareness of personal strengths and limitations, knowledge of one’s rights and the ability to communicate this understanding.”
- Students should be stakeholders in their learning.

# DOMAINS TO ENHANCE FOR SELF-ADVOCACY

## **Cognitive: Thinking and memory**

- Set goals
- Decision making
- Problem solving
- Access supportive personnel

## **Intrapersonal: Self-management and Emotion management**

- Self-awareness
- Metacognition (Thinking about thinking)
- Confidence
- Self-regulation
- Growth mindset

## **Interpersonal: Sharing ideas with others**

- Co-regulation
- Establishing and maintaining relationships
- Collaboration
- Communicating ways that help them learn best
- Leadership and service

# STUDENTS AS STAKEHOLDERS

- Building self-advocacy and self-determination requires a collaborative effort between parents and educators.
- Instilling in our students the mindset that their opinions and insights with respect to their academic performance is needed.
- Encourage behaviors that afford students the opportunity to engage in self-management and model good decision making practices.

# HOW SELF-ADVOCACY INFORMS SELF-DETERMINATION...

- Students need self-advocacy skills to empower a state of self-determination.
- Self-determination means students take charge of their lives which includes their education.
- Students will make choices that align with their interests and take their developmental capacities into account.

# SELF-DETERMINATION REQUIRES:

- Setting Goals
- Problem Solving
- Critical Thinking

*Self-Determination allows students to steer their own lives in a way that is fulfilling and brings personal satisfaction.*





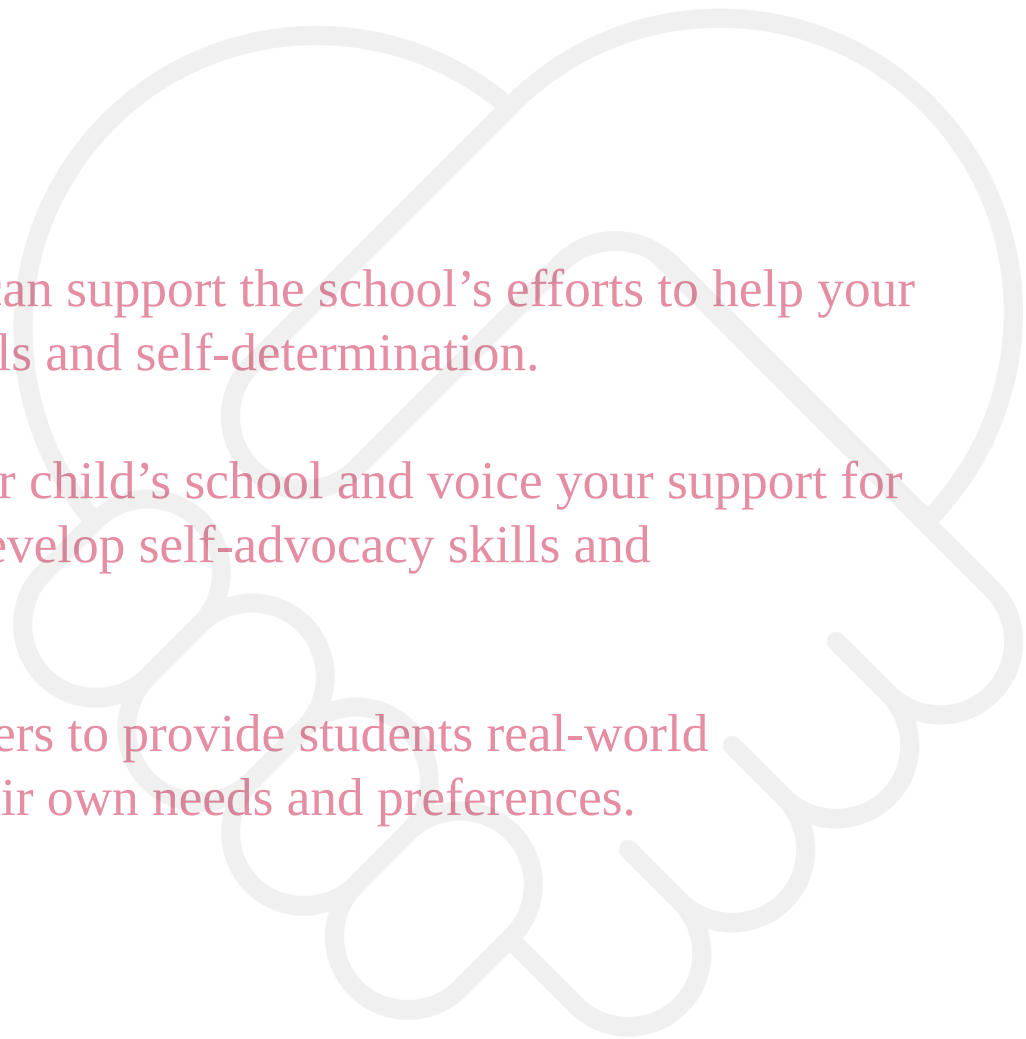
# HOW FAMILIES CAN HELP...

- Partner with your child
- Foster decision making
- Promote problem solving
- Encourage self-direction
- Establish open communication



# HOME SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP...

- Learn from educators how you can support the school's efforts to help your child develop self-advocacy skills and self-determination.
- Participate in meetings with your child's school and voice your support for instruction that helps students develop self-advocacy skills and self-determination.
- Work collaboratively with teachers to provide students real-world opportunities to advocate for their own needs and preferences.



# STUDENTS

Take ownership. Consider your current capacity, use a personalized learning plan to set goals, engage in IEP and transition meetings, and learn more about your disabilities and rights.



# SELF-ADVOCACY STRATEGY

## I-PLAN

Inventory - students learn and share their strengths, goals for improvement, what helps them learn best, and choices that would like to explore for learning.

Provide information to parents, teachers, and other team members at your meeting.

Listen to understand and then respond to questions or statements.

Ask questions that are related to your needs, interests, and goals.

Name your goals.

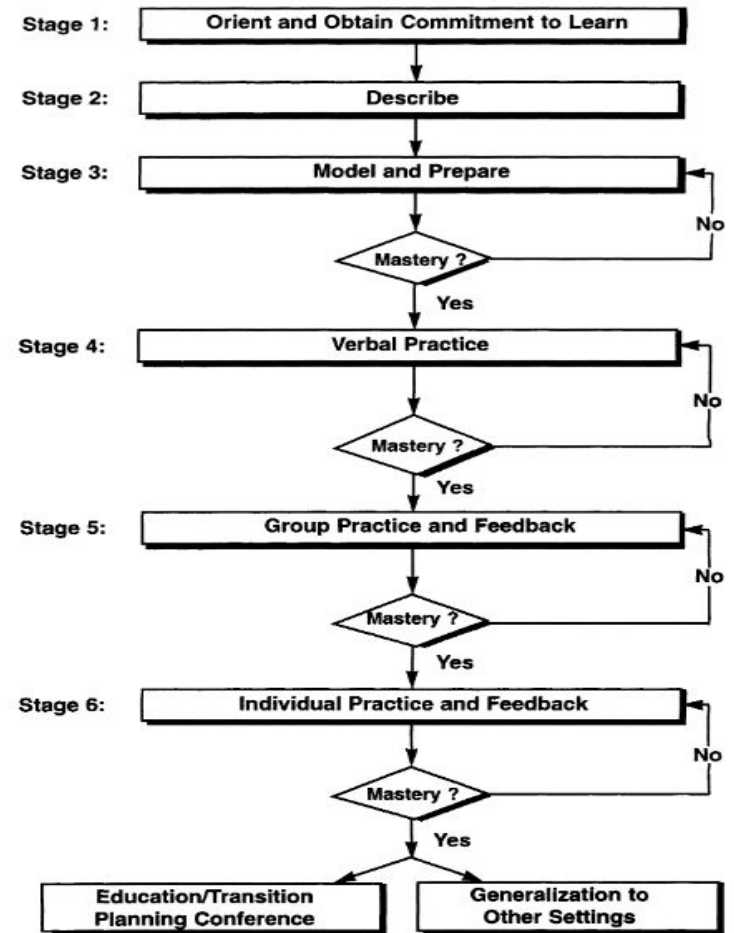


Figure 1. The Self-Advocacy Strategy instructional sequence.

# REFERENCES

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Reusen, A. K. V. (1996, September). The Self-Advocacy Strategy for Education and Transition Planning. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 32(1), 49–54. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105345129603200110>