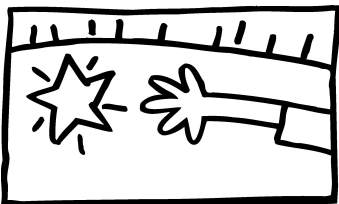


# Advocacy Toolkit



**Western Michigan Association for the  
Education of Young Children**



# Introduction to Advocacy

Advocacy is the “deliberate process of taking action in order to exert influence on issues of concern”

(Association for Childhood Education International, 2011).

# Who is an Advocate?

- **Teachers- Professors**
- **Parents**
- **School Administrators**
- **Students**
- **Law enforcement-- Doctors/Nurses--Health Department**
- **Grandparents**
- **Elected officials (Mayor/County Commissioners/Board of Trustees/School Boards)**
- **Churches**
- **Other**

# Why be an Advocate?

## **For children:**

- Today's children are tomorrow's future leaders
- Lawmakers' decisions directly impact children's lives
- Children depend on adults to ensure their safety, health, educational, and mental well being.
- Children can not vote

## **For Families:**

- Parents are children's first and most important teachers.
- Families lead busy lives that many result in them not being as active
- Families increased knowledge and support of early childhood and education issues will create more learning experiences for children.

## **For our staff:**

- Early childhood educators are typically under paid.
- ECE directly impact the lives of our future leaders
- ECE often lack resources and strategies
- ECE are often underappreciated in their role
- Their vote counts.

## **And:**

- Make a change
- Who is going to take care of us?
- You are the expert!
- Decisions will be made by individuals who may not know the issues
- Each of us has more power than we might imagine- Circle of Influence

# How to be an Advocate ?

- **Families**
- **Children**
- **Staff**
- **Community Partnerships**

**Effective Advocacy consists of:**

- **Intentional**
- **Strategic**
- **Flexible**
- **Organized**

# How to Use the Tool Kit

## Quenching the Thirst

### How is This Activity Related to Advocacy:

- Recognizes parents and teachers in their role in the lives of young children.

### How To:

- Using scrap booking paper and embellishments create water bottle cover with a pocket on it.
- Put a single serving Crystal Light, Koolaid, or Hawaiian Punch packet in the pocket.
- Include a tag that says “Thank you for quenching the thirst for knowledge in young children! Happy Month of the Young Child!”

### Resources:

- Contact Cyndi Andree, Mayfair Christian Day Care at [cyndiandree@yahoo.com](mailto:cyndiandree@yahoo.com).

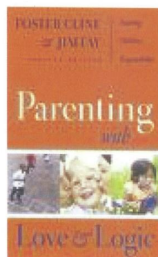


# Advocating for Families

## Love & Logic-Charles and Jim Fay

### Parenting Analogies

1. Helicopters-hovering over children, rescuing, constantly protecting them from "the world"
2. Drill Sergeants-authoritative, "when I say jump, you jump"
3. Consultants-see children as able to make decisions and make mistakes from them, hold children accountable for their decisions



Love and Logic is based on Four Principles:

1. Shared Control-Parents gain control by giving away the control they don't need.
2. Shared thinking and decision making-parents provide opportunities for children to do the greatest amount of thinking and decision making
3. Equal shares of consequences and empathy-an absence of parental anger causes a child to think and learn from his/her mistakes
4. Maintaining a child's self-concept-improved self-concept leads to improved behaviors

**Rule #1**-Adults set limits in loving way without anger, lecture, threats or repeated warnings

**Rule #2**-When children misbehave and cause problems, adults handle these problems back in loving ways



## Developmental Milestones of Early Literacy



	MOTOR:	COGNITIVE:	WHAT PARENTS CAN DO:
	<b>6-12 months</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reaches for book</li> <li>book to mouth</li> <li>sits in lap, head steady</li> <li>turns pages with adult help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>looks at pictures</li> <li>vocalizes, pats pictures</li> <li>prefers pictures of faces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>hold child comfortably; face-to-face gaze</li> <li>follow baby's cues for "more" and "stop"</li> <li>point and name pictures</li> </ul>
	<b>12-18 months</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sits without support</li> <li>may carry book</li> <li>holds book with help</li> <li>turns board pages, several at a time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>no longer mouths right away</li> <li>points at pictures with one finger</li> <li>may make same sound for particular picture (labels)</li> <li>points when asked, "where's...?"</li> <li>turns book right side up</li> <li>gives book to adult to read</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>respond to child's prompting to read</li> <li>let the child control the book</li> <li>be comfortable with toddler's short attention span</li> <li>ask "where's the...?" and let child point</li> </ul>
	<b>18-24 months</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>turns board book pages easily, one at a time</li> <li>carries book around the house</li> <li>may use book as transitional object</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>names familiar pictures</li> <li>fills in words in familiar stories</li> <li>"reads" to dolls or stuffed animals</li> <li>recites parts of well-known stories</li> <li>attention span highly variable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>relate books to child's experiences</li> <li>use books in routines, bedtimes</li> <li>ask "what's that?" and give child time to answer</li> <li>pause and let child complete the sentence</li> </ul>
	<b>24-36 months</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>learns to handle paper pages</li> <li>goes back and forth in books to find favorite pictures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recites whole phrases, sometimes whole stories</li> <li>coordinates text with picture</li> <li>protests when adult gets a word wrong in a familiar story</li> <li>reads familiar books to self</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>keep using books in routines</li> <li>read at bedtime</li> <li>be willing to read the same story over and over</li> <li>ask "what's that?"</li> <li>relate books to child's experiences</li> <li>provide crayons and paper</li> </ul>
	<b>3 years and up</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>competent book handling</li> <li>turns paper pages one at a time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>listens to longer stories</li> <li>can retell familiar story</li> <li>understands what text is</li> <li>moves finger along text</li> <li>"writes" name</li> <li>moves toward letter recognition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ask "what's happening?"</li> <li>encourage writing and drawing</li> <li>let child tell the story</li> </ul>



# Family Events – Stay and Play

- Dinner with Dad - We do a Very Important Person Event
- Muffins for mom
- Family game night
- Make it take it toys
- Pasta, puppets and play
- Math night
- Yoga and Stretch
- Music and Movement
- Special Person
- Pizza Party
- Nursery Rhymes
- Crazy Cooking
- Gingerbread Houses
- Gardens to go



# Advocating for Children



## Safe Sleep for Your Baby

### ◀ Protect Your Baby's Life ▶

Put baby on his or her back, with nothing else in the crib!

#### Safest Sleep

Babies should sleep:

- on their backs, even when they are unable to roll over on their own.
- in a safety approved crib or portable crib, even for naps.
- on a firm mattress with a tightly fitted sheet; no additional padding between sheet and mattress.
- wearing sleep sack or footed sleeper in colder weather - to keep baby warm. No loose blankets in the crib.
- with their heads uncovered at all times.
- in a smoke-free environment.

#### Unsafe Sleep

Babies should not sleep:

- on their bellies, if placed that way. Once babies can roll over, they don't need to be constantly flipped onto their backs; give them "tummy time" while awake to help strengthen their upper bodies.
- on waterbeds, sofas, chairs, soft mattresses or other soft surfaces.
- on or near soft objects such as bumper pads, pillows, blankets, clothing, towels, sheepskins or stuffed toys.
- on toddler or adult beds.
- with other children, adults or pets.
- in conditions that are too warm.

Of the sleep-related deaths reviewed by Child Death Review teams in Michigan in 2005 and 2006, **68%** were on a sleep **surface not designed for babies**, such as adult beds or couches.

The risk of suffocation is **40 times higher** for infants sleeping in **adult beds** compared with those in cribs, as reported in the medical journal Pediatrics.



#### RESOURCES

**Michigan Child Death Review Program**  
Michigan Public Health Institute  
2440 Woodlake Circle, Suite 150  
Okemos, MI 48864  
(517) 324-7330  
[www.keepingkidsalive.org](http://www.keepingkidsalive.org)

**Tomorrow's Child**  
112 E Allegan, Suite 500  
Lansing, MI 48933  
(517) 485-7437  
Toll Free (800) 331-7437  
[www.tomorrowschildmi.org](http://www.tomorrowschildmi.org)

**Michigan Dept. of Community Health**  
Division of Family and Community Health  
109 E Michigan Avenue  
Lansing, Michigan 48912  
(517) 335-8416  
[www.michigan.gov/mdch](http://www.michigan.gov/mdch)

**Michigan Department of Human Services**  
235 S Grand  
Lansing, Michigan 48933  
(517) 373-7394  
[www.michigan.gov/dhs](http://www.michigan.gov/dhs)

2010 PAM Organizers' Packet  
Prevention Network  
1-800-968-4968  
[www.preventionnetwork.org](http://www.preventionnetwork.org)

Transitioning to Kindergarten

I'm getting ready for kindergarten!

I can draw a picture of myself.

I can write my name.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

National Center for Learning Disabilities, Inc.  
The power to hope, to learn, and to succeed

Drawing and Writing Sample Template



# This message needs to:

- **E**ngage the Audience
- State the **P**roblem
- **I**nform Others about Potential Solutions
- **C**all to Action

The EPIC format, trademarked by the grassroots advocacy organization RESULTS ([www.results.org](http://www.results.org)), is a useful way to create a concise but powerful statement.

# Advocating to and for Staff

## Staff Team Building Activities

### How is This Activity Related to Advocacy:

- Healthy staff who work together create environments of excellence for children.

### How To:

- Open staff meetings with ice breakers that encourage staff members to work together on a short activity.
- Hold annual retreat events that bring staff members together to recharge both personally and professionally.

### Resources:

- Early Childhood Workshops That Work!: The Essential Guide to Successful Training and Workshops by Nancy Alexander

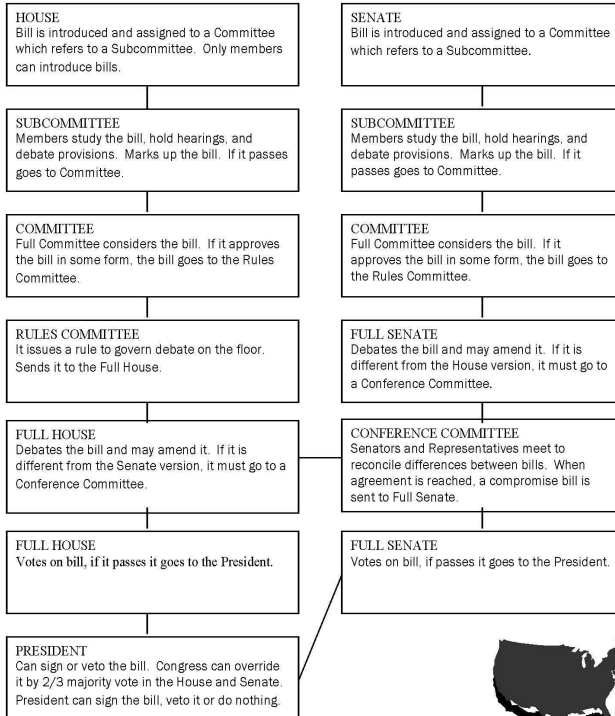
# Advocating to Lawmakers



## How a Bill Becomes a Law Flowchart

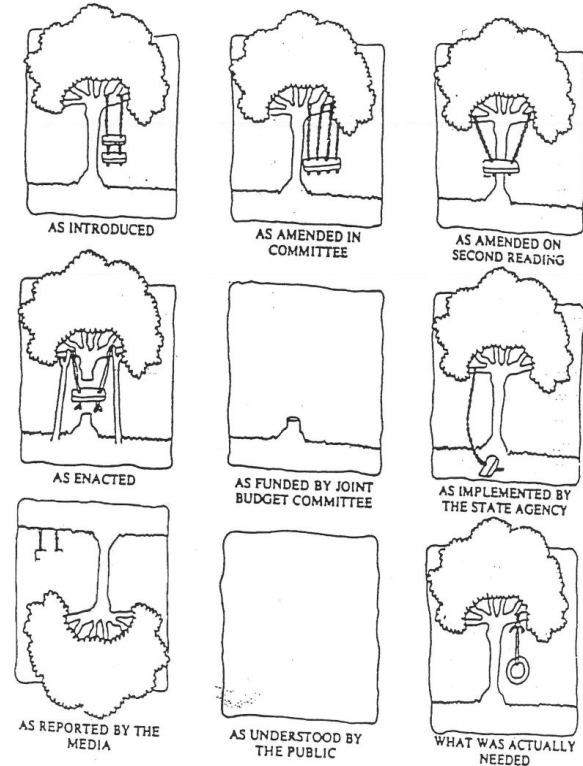
**BILL IS DRAFTED**  
Members of Congress, the Executive Branch, and even outside groups can draft (write or draw up) bills.

About 10,000 bills are introduced per year. Each is given a number and assigned to a committee. There are 22 committees in the House of Representatives and 15 committees in the Senate.



Teacher Resource

## How a Bill Becomes Law



Source: The cover of *The ATLA Docker* (4th quarter 1984), a publication of the Arkansas Trial Lawyers Association. Reprinted with permission.

## Chapter 3 Advocates in Action

# Advocating in the Schools

- Family / child theme for the year
- Sending child made thank you to principal and board members or key employees
- Posting pictures or articles in school or district newsletter
- Invite key members into the classroom for a special event.

# Additional Resources

- Week of the Young Child
- National Reading Month
- Parent Awareness Month
- National Child Abuse Prevention Month
- Glossary
- References
- Resources

# Remember!

- **Be there! Build relationships that lead to rapport and trust**
- **Make a personal commitment to something- one hour a month**
- **Be informed! Do you know the issues?**
- **Children are a ‘bi-partisan’ issue- currently, no one is talking about early childhood- we need to ask the question....why not? Currently, funding for 0-5 year olds to be used to offset the K-12 deficit, although we know if a child is not successful in kindergarten, it leads to larger issues later on in life and costs the state more dealing with that larger issue...invest in children early!**
- **Be prepared**
- **Vote- understand the process**
- **Don’t take no for an answer**
- **Follow through- hold your officials accountable**
- **Say “thank you”! Very difficult to be in their shoes right now**
- **Policy makers are looking for innovative solutions**
- **Change is very slow...celebrate success**
- **Be intentional (knowing what you are seeking to accomplish)**
- **Strategic (taking into account social, economic and political climate) and being aware of the capacity if opportunities and challenges**
- **Flexible (adjusting plans, tools, partners and tactics as needed)**
- **Organized (having a plan of action)**
- **Advocate not only for the child, but for the provider too**



# GRCC Building Advocacy

