



Advocacy is NOT a Dirty Word

21CCLC February Best Practices Webinar
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This is Timely!

- IAA will be at the Capitol this afternoon to advocate in support of high quality programs



- You can advocate from your desk!

Agenda Overview



- What is advocacy?
- What is not lobbying
- Advocacy Activities
- Steps to Effective Advocacy
- What You Can Do Today

What is Advocacy? What is Lobbying?

Advocacy

- Actual definition: the act of pleading for, supporting, or recommending; active espousal.
- This means that you're actively supporting a position on an issue and does not specifically mean legislation, but may include being in support of or in opposition to a law, policy, or program.

Lobbying

- Directly communicating with legislators and their staff to express a view about a specific legislative proposal (“direct lobbying”)
- Encouraging the public to contact their legislators using a “call to action” (“grassroots lobbying”)

What is Not Lobbying



Meaning no restrictions on activities (IRS).

1. Education – telling legislators what services you provide and the needs of your community
2. Public communications explaining how a legislator voted on a specific issue, candidate positions
3. Public communications that do not include calls to action

Advocacy Activities



- Contacting legislators to thank them for their work on children's issues, such as school funding and child care investments
- Letters to the Editor, Op-Eds
- Outreach to local elected officials, such as mayor, city council, others
- Using social media to educate stakeholders
- Showing up at town halls or coffees
- **SITE VISITS**

More Opportunities with the Caucuses



- Presidential candidates are coming to a town near you to engage with voters
- Events now (early in the caucus cycle) are small making it easier to get to candidates
- Be prepared with a question for the candidate that makes them take a position on afterschool
- Get them on record and share with your friends on social media

Steps to Effective Advocacy



- Get to know your audience
 - Find your state legislators online at <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/find>
 - Figure out what makes them “tick”
- Know your goal
- Develop your elevator speech (resource: IAA *Advocacy Guide*)

What You Can Do Today



- Takes two minutes:
 - Write each of your legislators an email about the importance of afterschool in your community
 - Invite them to your program for a site visit
- Takes more time:
 - Make plans to visit the Capitol during legislative session to speak with your legislators in person
 - Find scheduled coffees, town halls, forums, or other legislator/candidate events and plan to attend

Contact



We're available to talk advocacy anytime!

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