

advocacy for **inclusion**

Self-Advocacy Kit

July 2018

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1. Introduction

Welcome to our **free** Self-Advocacy Kit.

What is this Kit?

A toolbox of resources and information to help you speak up for yourself.

How do I use it?

You can:

- Use parts of the Kit when and if you need them, or
- Read the whole Kit then come back to it as needed

Who is this Kit for?

People with disabilities who have some Self-Advocacy skills but need a little extra help to get their message across.

It may also be useful for parents and carers who are finding it hard to be heard.



What is 'Know Your Stuff'?

Throughout this Kit you will find “Know Your Stuff” marked with the information logo – a blue circle with a white i. This is where we have included internet links to extra information. There is also a full list of all internet links and internet addresses in the back section of this Kit.



What is the question mark for?

Throughout this kit you see a question mark for activities or questions to answer that will help you to learn how to Self Advocate.

Where can I get more copies?

-  Our website Advocacy for Inclusion at www.advocacyforinclusion.org
-  Phone us on (02) 6257 4005
-  Email info@advocacyforinclusion.org

Feedback

Tell us what you think of the Kit, or make suggestions by:

-  Phone us on (02) 6257 4005, or
-  Emailing info@advocacyforinclusion.org

Supported Communications Options



-  If you have a hearing and/or speech impairment, you can contact the [National Relay Service \(NRS\)](#) by calling **1800 555 677** then asking for the number for the relevant service
-  If you need an interpreter, you can call the [Translating and Interpreting Service \(TIS National\)](#) by calling **13 14 50**. TIS National will put you through to the relevant service

2. What is Self-Advocacy

2.1 Self Advocacy

Self-Advocacy is when you speak up for yourself.

It is about understanding your rights.

You may still seek help to find out information or make a decision, but you do it yourself.

- This kit provides information to help you with all these things.

2.2 What do I need to know?

Some of the specific skills you might find useful include:

- Being assertive
- Making a phone call
- Sending an email
- Writing a letter
- Making a complaint
- Preparing for a meeting

2.3 What skills do I need?

Other helpful skills you might like to work on include:

- Social skills
- Anger management
- Relaxation
- Stress management
- Assertiveness training
- Increasing self-awareness
- Decision-making, goal-setting skills
- Communication and relationship skills

2.4 What about support from others?

You can ask people around you to help develop these skills by:

- providing opportunities for you to learn and practice
- sharing information about these skills with you
- supporting your self-advocacy and providing feedback
- attending Advocacy for Inclusion's Supporting Self-advocacy workshop to learn more about supporting you



What does self-advocacy mean to me?



Use this space to write your thoughts

3. Am I ready?

Reminder: What is self-advocacy?

Self-advocacy is when you speak for yourself. It is about understanding your rights. You may still seek help to find out information or make a decision, but you do it yourself.

3.1 Am I ready?



Think about all of your skills, not just those you think are related to Self-Advocacy.

Increasing self-awareness:

- **What are my strengths?**

e.g.: I'm good at listening, I'm patient, I'm good at finding answers



Use this space to write your thoughts

- **What are my areas for development?**

What do I need to work on?

e.g.: Aggression scares me, I forget to listen when I'm busy, I take over sometimes



Use this space to write your thoughts

- **What do I know that will help?**

What skills and information do you have? What things are you good at?

e.g.: I am good at speaking to groups, I know someone working at the Human Rights Commission etc



Use this space to write your thoughts

How can I learn and improve on my skills?

Which skills could you improve? What can you do to improve them?

- **Communication skills**

e.g.: learning how to write an email, learning about body language



Use this space to write your thoughts

- **Assertiveness skills**

e.g.: learning how to use “I” statements, practicing speaking up when something makes me feel uncomfortable



Use this space to write your thoughts

- **Social and relationship skills**

e.g.: think about what you could do to meet more people and build friendships, practice making small talk and asking others about themselves

 Use this space to write your thoughts

- **Decision making and goal setting skills**

e.g.: asking others how they make decisions, deciding my own goals and planning how to reach them.

 Use this space to write your thoughts

- **Relaxation and stress management**

e.g.: find out more about yoga or meditation, join a walking group

 Use this space to write your thoughts

- **Emotion management**

e.g.: finding out ways to cope when I feel angry or emotional, attending an anger management course

 Use this space to write your thoughts

3.2 Step by Step Self Advocacy Plan



What is the issue?

What is your biggest concern? What would you like to change? Have any of your human rights have been affected?



Use this space to write your thoughts

Have your rights been taken away?

Have any of your human rights have been affected? Which rights?



Use this space to write your thoughts

What is your goal?

What result would you like? How will you know when your problem is solved?



Use this space to write your thoughts

What do you know?

You can only complain about definite things. What happened? What did you see? What did you hear? What do you know for sure?



Use this space to write your thoughts

Who are the people?

Who is causing the problem? Who are the people you can ask for support? Who might have advice or information?



Use this space to write your thoughts

How are you feeling?

How does it make you feel to think about or talk about this issue? Has it affected your health at all?



Use this space to write your thoughts

What can you do to change it?

What are the actions you can take? Who can you talk to? What is the best way to create change? What skills do you have and what will you need?



Use this space to write your thoughts

Based on 'Strategic Questioning' by Andrew King, Groupwork Solutions

3.3 Action plan



Action plan

- Put the actions you have listed previously into the order you need to do them.
- List who you need to talk to or involve for each step.
- List things you need.
- Check off each action as it's complete.

Action	Dates	Who	Progress
What needs to be done	Important dates, deadlines	Who is responsible? Who is involved?	What have you done so far? Is it complete?

4. Communication

4.1 Being Assertive

Why be assertive?

So you:

- Feel good about yourself – good self esteem
- Have better relationships with others
- Reach your goals
- Get things done
- Are not taken advantage of
- Gain respect of others
- Protect your rights
- Take control of your life
- Let others know what you think, feel, need and want

Ways to be more assertive:

Get ready

- Use positive body language – sit or stand straight and tall, head up, look people in the eye
- Have a confident tone of voice
- Practice
- Know what you want
- Ask for help if you need or want it
- Believe in yourself
- Take a deep breath

Do it

- Don't apologise because your view is different to others
- Say "No" if you need to
- Use "I statements" (keep reading)
- Listen to others (see Are You Listening **Go to 4.2**)
- Be decisive – stick to your decision
- Stay calm – learn to deal with anger and emotion
- Have your say - Don't allow interruptions
- Repeat yourself if necessary
- Be reasonable – don't be unfair to others

Using "I statements"

Using an "I statement" you can tell someone how you feel, without accusing the other person.

When you want to use an "I Statement" you say these things:

"I feel" (what emotion do you feel?)

"when" (what is causing the feeling?)

"and I would like" (what outcome do you want?).

Instead of saying "Will you stop that racket, you are driving me insane!" (a "you statement") try saying "I feel annoyed when you won't stop singing and I'd rather that you went to your bedroom to sing"

? Your turn:

 Use this space to write your thoughts

I feel (emotion)
When (situation)
And I would like (outcome)

 Use this space to write your thoughts

I feel (emotion)
When (situation)
And I would like (outcome)

 Use this space to write your thoughts

I feel (emotion)
When (situation)
And I would like (outcome)

 Use this space to write your thoughts

I feel (emotion)
When (situation)
And I would like (outcome)

4.2 Are you listening?

One of the biggest problems self-advocates face is not being listened to.

It can be frustrating to speak up and not be heard.

Tips to help ensure that you are more likely to be listened to:

Listen

It might seem funny but when you make the effort to listen closely to others they are more likely to listen to you!

When you take the time to listen to others you will understand more about the situation.

- Let others have their say
- Try to see it from their point of view
- Ask them questions about what they are saying
- Use good body language – nod, “mirror” them
- Do not interrupt
- Use eye contact – look in their direction, possibly in the eyes, or look at their ears, forehead or chin

Keep to the point

Plan what you want to say:

- What is the main message you want to get across? Remember your issue!
- What are the points you want to make?

Communicate clearly

- Use a clear voice that is loud enough to be heard.
- If use additional ways to communicate to help you, have them ready to use.
- Write up a list of your message and points – this will keep you on track but also make it easier for others to follow you
- Use photos or video to support or tell your story

Look like you should be listened to

- Your body language should support your message. How you sit or stand tells people whether you are worth listening to or not.
- Sit or stand up straight and tall. Feel confident. Keep your body language 'open' – do not cross your arms across your body (this tells people to keep away).
- Look calm.
- Look like you are listening to what others are saying – turn toward them and look towards them.

Use support

It is ok to have a friend or supporter with you when you are speaking up.

You do not have to, but if you would like to have someone with you go ahead and ask someone. Be sure to tell them what support you are expecting from them – should they speak, or would you prefer them to stay silent?

Bring them back

If people get distracted and are talking about other things, it's OK to say something like

- "If we could get back to what we were talking about"
- "Can we focus on the topic"

If people are talking over the top of you, you can use statements such as

- "if I can finish what I was saying..."
- "Please let me have my say"

Tell them

If you are really struggling to get people to listen to you, it's OK to tell them that it's an issue for you. Think about what you would like from them instead and be sure to tell them that.



Know Your Stuff

-  <http://www.headinjury.com/assertskills.html>
-  <http://www.forbes.com/sites/erikaandersen/2012/04/27/3-simple-ways-to-get-people-to-listen-to-you/>

4.3 Making a Phone Call

Making a Phone Call

- Communication over the phone is a quick and easy way to get answers to the questions or problems you may have.
- Planning your call will help you be clear, strong and confident.
- Writing notes of the conversation can help you concentrate on the conversation and remember what was said.

Before you make the call:

- **Who** do you need to call?
Who is best to call?
- **Reason** for the call:
Why are you calling them, not someone else?
- What is the **issue**?
One short sentence to describe your issue.
- What is the **outcome**?
What results do you want?
- **Questions** you want to ask:
Keep it simple, about 3 questions.

During the phone call:

- **Who** are you speaking to?
Write their name/s down.
- **Time and date** of call:
Record for future reference.
- **What** they said to you:
What did they tell you?
- Do you need to make **contact again**?
Have they asked you to call them back at another time or contact someone else?

? Phone Record Sheet to use.

 Use this space to write your information

Who	Phone Numbers 	Comments



Make copies of this sheet to make notes of your phone calls.

~~Use~~ Use this space to write your information

Who	Phone Numbers 	Comments

Before the call

Who do you need to call? Who is the best person?	
What's the issue? Keep it simple - one short sentence.	
What outcome do you want? What results do you need?	
Questions you want to ask: Keep it simple, ask up to 3 questions.	1. 2. 3.

During the phone call

Time and date of call	
Who are you speaking to? Name of person you speak to.	
What they said to you: What is the message you got from them?	

<p>Outcomes or Results?</p> <p>What have they said will be done?</p>	
<p>Do you need to call again?</p> <p>Have they asked you to call them back at another time?</p> <p>contact someone else?</p> <p>email or write?</p>	

5. Finding and Contacting Services

5.1 Phone numbers



How to find contact numbers

There are books available in hard copy (on paper) that you can look through. You can find them in Post offices if you do not have one at home. They are delivered yearly to homes but not everyone keeps them as people often use the internet now instead.

Phone book

Surnames and company names are listed A to Z in the **white pages**.

In the **yellow pages** you will need to search by TYPE of company.

Using the Yellow Pages

For example, if you are looking for a disability support organisation you would

1. search the index at the front and find a listing for Disability Organisations:

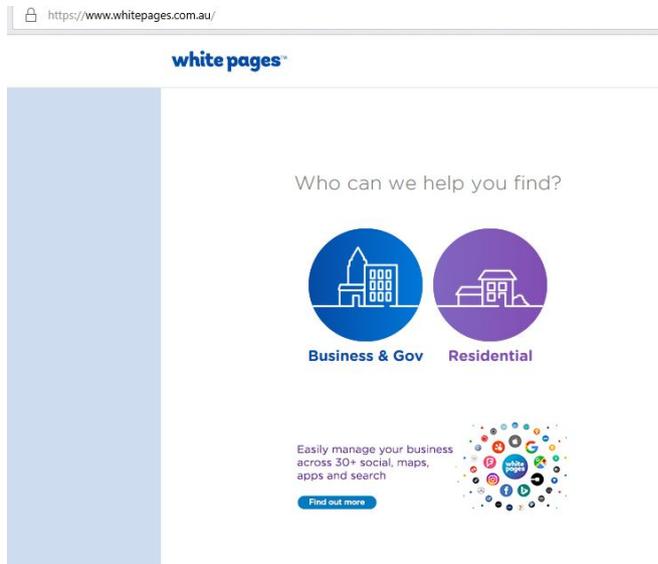


2. Then you would turn to the listed page – in this case 333 (circled in red) – to find all the organisations listed A to Z under the heading Disability services and support organisations (red arrow pointing to this):



White pages online

 <http://www.whitepages.com.au/>



If you are searching for a **business or government department**:

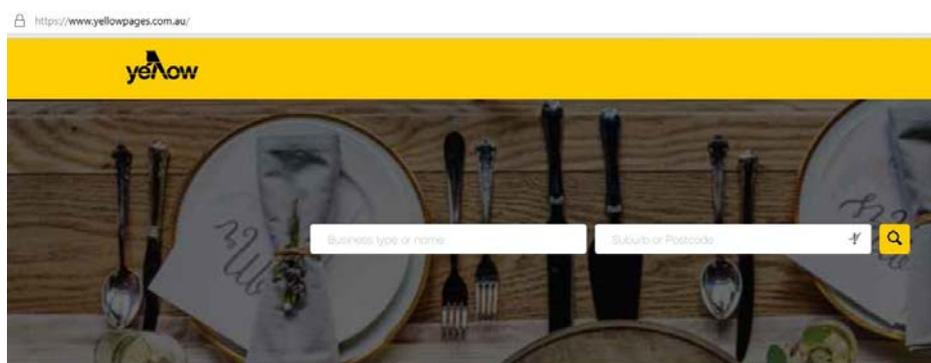
- click on the blue tab and type the business name and suburb
- then hit search

If you are looking for someone's **home number (residential number)**:

- click on the purple tab and put their surname and suburb in.
- Hit search

Yellow pages online

 <https://www.yellowpages.com.au/>



You can use a search engine for example Google  www.google.com.au to find the number. Just type in the name of the organisation or person you are looking for.

Supported Communications Options



- If you have a hearing and/or speech impairment, you can contact the [National Relay Service \(NRS\)](#) by calling **1800 555 677** then asking for the number for the relevant service



- If you need an interpreter, you can call the [Translating and Interpreting Service \(TIS National\)](#) by calling **13 14 50**. TIS National will put you through to the relevant service

Know Your Stuff

The ACT Community Directory helps you find services, community organisations and support groups in the Canberra region

- **Volunteering and Contact Canberra**



6248 7988



<https://vc-act.mycommunitydirectory.com.au/>

5.2 Email



Email can be a great way to communicate with other people, especially service providers and professionals.

Benefits of writing an email:

- You can write it any time.
- You can take your time writing it, even over days or weeks.
- A written record can be handy.
- Email is fast and cheap.
- Each email can be sent to one person or many.

Remember: Once you have pressed “send”, you cannot get it back so make sure your email is suitable to go!

Important tips:

1. Who are you sending to?

Send only to the people who need to know or see your email.

If you send it to everyone, no one will take responsibility.

2. Always double check:

Re-read what you've written before you press send.

Save it as a draft and come back later to check it again.

Be sure your message is clear.

3. Keep your email short and to the point:

4 to 5 paragraphs are enough for most emails.

Often people will not read a long email.

Using headings or a summary at the top can help.

4. Use the subject heading well:

A blank or unclear subject means your email might not be read.

Your subject should clearly tell the topic of your email.

For example: “An email from Jane” is an unclear subject and does not tell you what the email is about. Subject headings such as “Information about Meeting” or “Advice on Problem Regarding Your Service” are clear.

5. Never write and send an email when angry or emotional:

It can be easy to write when upset, but not easy to write well - emotional emails can confuse or upset other people.

Take time to calm down and write your email and then come back to re-read it.

Make sure you have included the facts, not just how you feel.

You might like to have someone else read it and give you feedback before you send it.

Structuring an email:

An email is usually less formal than a letter. Emails should still include information.



The image shows a screenshot of an email composition interface. On the left, there is a 'Send' button with a paper plane icon. To its right are four input fields: 'From' (pre-filled with 'training@advocacyforinclusion.org'), 'To...', 'Cc...', and 'Subject'. Below these fields is a larger text area for the email body.

6. From

The from is often pre-set by your email settings. It may be your name or show an email address

7. To, Cc:

Use 'To' for the main person.

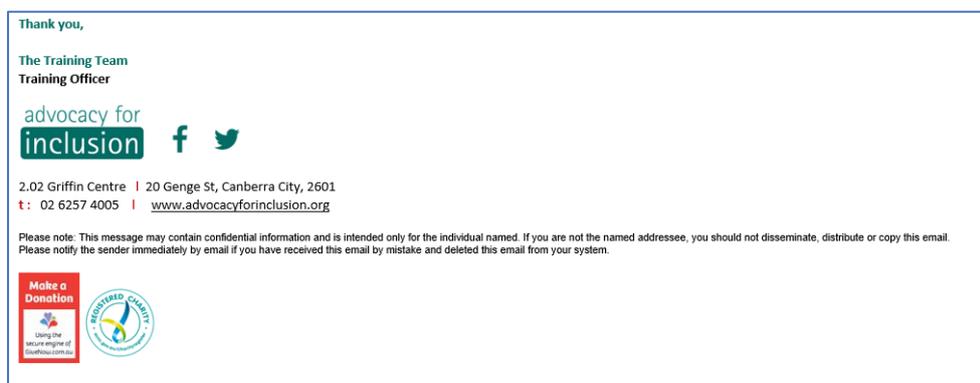
Cc is for other people, so they can see the email but it's not to them.

8. Subject:

The subject needs to be clear and informative

9. Signature:

Your Signature contains your details. Think about your privacy before using in a personal email– who is the email going to and do they need your personal information?



The content

1. Greeting: There are several ways you start a greeting.

Hello <name>,

Dear <name>,

To whom it may concern, (if you don't have a name)

2. Reason:

Explains why you are writing

3. Main Point/s:

What do you want to say?

What do you want them to do?

4. Closing: the way you close often depends on how well you know a person or the content and if it is a professional letter.

Regards,

Warm Regards,

Thank you,

An example email

Send	From ▼	training@advocacyforinclusion.org
	To...	Bob@hotmail.com
	Cc...	Jill@hotmail.com
	Subject	Confirming your appointment with AFI

Hi Bob,
I am writing to confirm your appointment with the Training team.
Your appointment is booked for Wednesday, 6 July 2020 at 4pm, at our office in the City.

Could you please call us to confirm 6275 4005

Thank you,

The Training Team
Training Officer

advocacy for inclusion  

2.02 Griffin Centre | 20 Genge St, Canberra City, 2601
t: 02 6257 4005 | www.advocacyforinclusion.org

Please note: This message may contain confidential information and is intended only for the individual named. If you are not the named addressee, you should not disseminate, distribute or copy this email. Please notify the sender immediately by email if you have received this email by mistake and deleted this email from your system.

5.3 Writing a Letter

Writing letters to people can be a great way to get your opinions noticed, provide feedback, or share information. Another great benefit to writing letters is that you can take your time and really think about and prepare what you are going to say.

Who might I write to?

Some examples of who you might want to write a letter to:

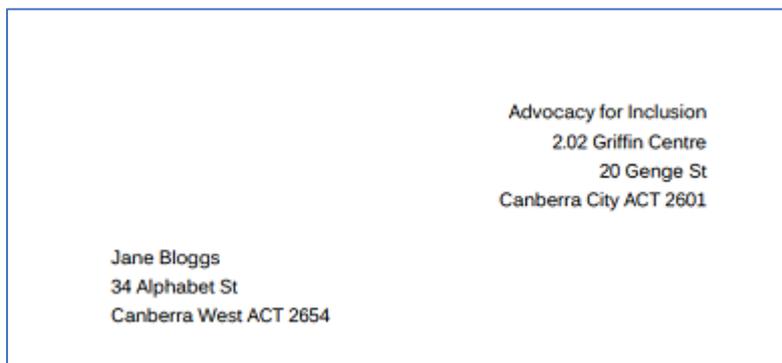
- Family members
- Friends
- Doctors
- Community members/ businesses
- Carers/social workers

What goes in a letter?

1. Your contact details – your address.

You might like to include your email address or phone number as well.

The picture below shows how to write your address in the **top right corner**.



2. Contact details of the person you are writing to.

You might need to make a phone call to find out who the best person is.

The picture above shows the letter addressed to Jane Bloggs.

The name and address of the person you are writing to is next, on the **left side of the page**.

3. The content of the letter – this could be clear, and concise (to the point):
Before you start writing identify your issue/s: Use the Self-Advocacy Step by Step plan (**Go to 3.2**) to help you work out what you are writing about. It is also good to think about what actions or changes you would like made.
If you want to use dot points to make your letter shorter and clearer you can.

Below is an example of how to start

Dear Jane,

Thank you for your phone call about our Self-advocacy Courses.
This letter is to send you more information about them.

- Write your greeting to the person
- The first paragraph is the introduction and says WHY you are writing.

Our courses run several times a year, and are free to people with disabilities. If we have none planned which suit you, you can still complete an expression of interest form and send it to us – then we will get in touch with you whenever we have a course you might be interested in.

Please give us a call on 6257 4005 if you have any other questions.

- The middle paragraph/s give the information you need to provide. Use a new paragraph for each topic as you can see in the example above.
- The last paragraph sums up the letter and outlines any possible actions you would like them to take. Above is an example of this.

4. If there is additional information to include you can add copies of other documents in with your letter (don't send originals!). Mention you have included them and why.

5. Make sure you sign and date your letter and keep a copy of it in your files.

Below is an example of how you can sign the letter off

Yours sincerely,

Karen Hedley

Karen Hedley
Training Officer
July 8, 2013

- Sign off with “Yours sincerely” or “Yours faithfully” if you are writing a formal letter.
- With a letter to family or friends you might sign off with “love from”, “best wishes”, “cheers” etc
- Sign your letter
- Under your signature you can put the date (it can also go at the top of the letter).
- You only need to put information about your position if you are writing a work letter.

Below is an example of a letter to help you get an idea of what yours may look like.

Advocacy for Inclusion
2.02 Griffin Centre
20 Genge St
Canberra City ACT 2601

Jane Bloggs
34 Alphabet St
Canberra West ACT 2654

Dear Jane,

Thank you for your phone call about our Self-advocacy Courses.
This letter is to send you more information about them.

Our courses run several times a year, and are free to people with disabilities. If we have none planned which suit you, you can still complete an expression of interest form and send it to us – then we will get in touch with you whenever we have a course you might be interested in.

Please give us a call on 6257 4005 if you have any other questions.

Yours sincerely,

Karen Hedley

Karen Hedley
Training Officer
July 8, 2013

Addressing an Envelope

Front of the envelope:

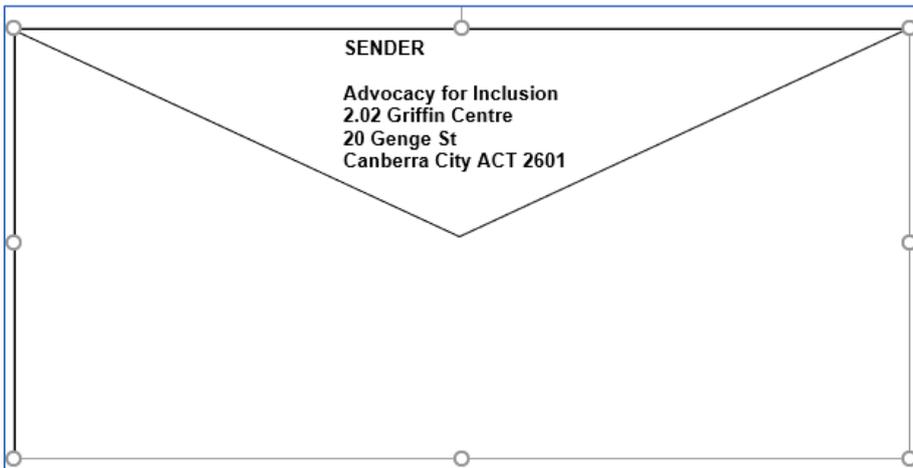
The name and address of the person you are writing to goes in the **middle** of the **front** of the envelope. Some envelopes have separate squares for the postcode to be written.

Write clearly!



Back of the envelope:

Write your name and address on the back. Writing “Sender” is optional.



6. Making a Complaint

Making a complaint

Sometimes you might not be happy with a service or product you have received. Providing feedback is always helpful to help others to improve what they are doing. Sometimes things might be so bad you might want to put in a formal complaint.

6.1 Why complain?

There can be many reasons you might complain, including:

- Receiving poor quality service
- Being treated rudely or unfairly
- Having your privacy breached
- Poor accessibility

Complaining gives the other person or service the chance to find out about the problem in order to fix it or improve what they are doing.

6.2 Who should I complain to?

Usually it's best to start with the person you are having the problem with, then work up the chain.

Do not forget that you are entitled to support throughout a complaint process. This could be from a family member, friend or advocate.

1. Talk to the person or people involved.

If you have no success, then...

2. Talk to the person's supervisor or manager.

If you have no success, then...

3. Check who is more senior and talk to them.

You might do this by checking policies, asking those you have already spoken with, or asking others for advice.

6.3 How should I make my complaint?

1. Identify your issue/s
2. Do your research
3. Find out how to complain
4. Make your complaint
5. Keep records
6. Take it further if needed (see over)

Identify your issue

Be clear about what has happened and what you want done about it.

Use the 'Self-advocacy Step-by-Step Plan' (**Go to 3.2**) to help this process.

Do your research

Do they have any policies that might support your complaint?

Are there any laws, standards or human rights which might apply?

Find this out by looking on their website or asking others who might know.

Find out how to complain

Find out what the complaint process is for the organisation, company or department.

Do this by asking or looking on their website.

They may have a form for complaints that you can request or download.

Make your complaint

Write out a draft (practice) complaint. Be sure to keep to the issues you identified.

Have someone you trust read through it and give feedback before you send it.

Make sure it is clear and it sticks to the point.

You might choose to complain by (see information sheets for more):

- Using a complaint form
- Making a phone call (**Go to 4.3**)
- Writing a letter (**Go to 5.2**)
- Writing an email (**Go to 5.3**)

Keep records

Keep copies and notes of everything. You may need to know details later and will be able to refer to your notes. Keep them together in a safe place.

Take it further if needed

If you are not happy with the result of your complaint you may be able to take it further. There might be an external complaint process (outside the service, or department) or an appeal process.

It is likely you will receive a written response to your complaint and should be told what the next steps are if you are not happy. If not, consider asking an advocacy agency or other people who may be able to help.

7. Preparing for Meetings

It can be confronting to attend and participate in meetings, but they can be very productive. Here are some tips and tricks to help you participate effectively.

7.1 Why Meetings?

- Get a group of people together and tell your story once
- Save time
- Have your say
- Everyone will have the same understanding of your issue

7.2 Tips and Tricks

There are a lot of things to think about before attending a meeting. Often people can become anxious making it hard to remember all the things you need to do.

Be prepared

- Be clear about your issue and what you want done about it. Use the 'Self-advocacy Step-by-Step Plan' (**Go to 3.2**) to help this process.
- Plan any questions you might like to ask.
- Talk to others and get their input. Ask a friend to come with you if you want support.

Make the meeting suitable

- Be sure the meeting is organised for a day and time that suits you as well as the others attending.
- If the meeting is about you it's OK to insist it's at a day or time that suits you (and your friend or supporter).
- Tell meeting organisers about any accessibility needs you have.

Take what you need

- Take your Self-Advocacy Step-by-Step Plan (**Go to 3.2**) and list of questions.
- Take copies of any important documents, including records of any other important communication.
- Take a friend or supporter with you if needed.

Participate effectively

- Stick to the point of the meeting.
- Don't take over the meeting, let others have their say.
- Listen to what others have to say. Acknowledge what they've said even if you don't agree.
- If others interrupt, take over or talk about unimportant things, it's OK to ask them to let you finish or get back to the point.

For example:

- "If we could get back to what we were talking about"
- or "Can we focus on the topic"

If people are talking over the top of you, you can use statements such as

- "if I can finish what I was saying..."
- Or "Please let me have my say"

Record

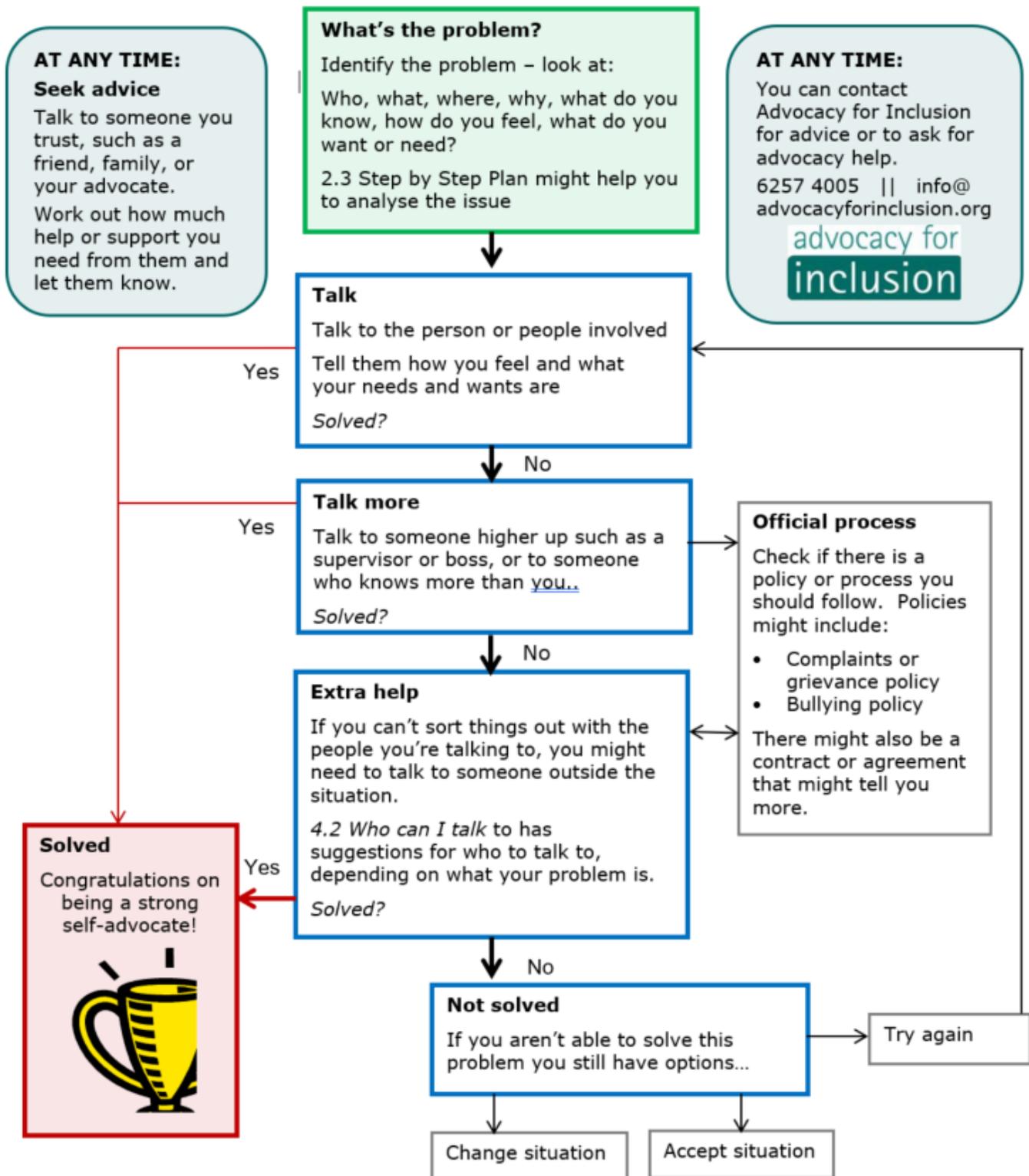
- Take notes during the meeting (or ask your friend or supporter to). You might note down what is discussed, what is agreed or who will do what after the meeting.
- If official notes or minutes are taken ask to have a copy sent to you.

Alternatives

- If you find meetings impossible ask if there is something else that can be done, for instance:
 - Meet with one person only
 - Have them come to you
 - Talk over the phone or via the computer / internet
 - Discuss issues by email
 - Ask a 'proxy' to attend (someone who attends on your behalf)

8. Problem Solving Flowchart

When you have a problem in your life it can make it very difficult to enjoy your work and keep working hard. If you have a problem check out our step by step guide to lead you through working it out.



9. Your Rights

Human rights are rights that every person has. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights say that every person should be treated equally.

Human rights mean that the government should protect the rights and freedoms of everyone.

9.1 Human Rights

There are many human rights – 30 of them. They include:

- The right to be treated equally
- The right to choose where to live
- The right to an education
- The right to vote and run for government
- The right to marry and have a family
- The right to work and choose where to work

Why is it important to know your human rights?

- So that you can have a happy and safe life
- So that you are respected
- So that you can understand your responsibilities to protect other people's human rights
- So that you feel confident when speaking up for yourself

Why might it be hard to protect your rights?

- Because sometimes you might not know what your rights are
- Because you might feel like people may not listen to you or believe you
- Because you might be worried that making a complaint about something may mean that people might treat you worse than before
- Because It takes a lot of energy sometimes

What are some things that you can do to help you protect your rights?

- Know what your rights are
- Know who to talk to
- Know where to get support if you need it
- Know how to be assertive (instead of passive or aggressive) when speaking up for yourself

(Adapted from 'The right to have a say: A kit of tools for consumer participation': Redfern Legal Centre, 1992)

9.2 The Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (The CRPD)

The CRPD is an agreement that protects the human rights of people with disabilities.

The CRPD does not give people with disabilities new rights, but it says that people cannot be treated differently or unfairly because of their disability.

Countries that sign and ratify the convention must make sure that people with disabilities get their human rights. Australia signed the CRPD in 2007 and ratified it in 2008.

9.3 Other Examples of Rights

As well as Human Rights and the CRPD we also have laws and legislation that protect our rights for example:

Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights

The Disability Service Standards (2013)

Racial Discrimination Act 1975

The Privacy Act 1988

10. Where can I go for help

10.1 Canberra ACT

- **ACT Policing**



Phone: 000

Triple Zero Emergency



Phone: 131 444

For police assistance where life is not at risk



Phone: 1800 333 000

Crime Stoppers

- **Advocacy for Inclusion**



Phone:(02) 6257 4005



Email: info@advocacyforinclusion.org

- **ADACAS (ACT Disability, Aged and Carer Advocacy Service)**



Phone:(02) 6242 5060



Email: adacas@adacas.org.au

- **Legal Aid ACT**



Website: <http://www.legalaidact.org.au/>



Phone: 1300 654 314



Email: legalaid@legalaidact.org.au

- **ACT Australian Human Rights Commission**



Website: <http://hrc.act.gov.au/>



Phone: (02) 6205 2222 (9am-5pm Monday to Friday)



Email: human.rights@act.gov.au

- **ACCC Contact**

ACCC (Australian Competition and Consumer Commission)

The ACCC makes sure that individuals and businesses meet the Australian competition, fair trading, and consumer protection laws - in particular the Commonwealth Competition and Consumer Act 2010. The ACCC websites provides for consumers with a disability about:

- Your rights
- Dealing with problems
- Entering contracts



Phone: 1300 302 502 (Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5.30pm)



Website (information for people with disabilities):

<https://www.accc.gov.au/focus-areas/information-for/consumers-with-disability>



Online (make an enquiry): <https://www.accc.gov.au/contact-us/contact-the-accc/make-an-enquiry>



Online (report an issue): <https://www.accc.gov.au/contact-us/contact-the-accc/report-a-consumer-issue>

- **QCR (Quality, Complaints and Regulation unit)**



Website: <http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/home/quality-complaints-and-regulation>



Phone: (02) 6207 5474 (9am-5pm Monday to Friday)



Email: quality@act.gov.au

- **Access Canberra**

If you are not happy with a product or service provided



Website: <https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/ask/c/233>



Phone: 13 22 81 (7 days)

- **ACT Official Visitor Scheme**

A monitoring and complaints system who visit persons staying in institutions owned, operated or funded by the ACT Government



Website: <https://www.ptg.act.gov.au/resources/visitor-scheme>



Phone: 1800 150 036

10.2 National

- **Complaints Resolution and Referral Service (CRRS)**

Contact the CRRS with complaints about the compliance of Disability Employment Service (DES) providers, Australian Disability Enterprises (ADE) and Advocacy Services that are funded by the Australian Government



Website: <https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/people-with-disability/making-complaint>



Phone: 1800 880 052



Online form: <https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/contacts/online-complaint-form>

- **National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline**

Contact the Hotline to report cases of physical, sexual, psychological, legal and civil abuse, restraint and restrictive practices, or financial abuse



Website: <https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/people-with-disability/do-you-need-report-abuse-or-neglect-people-with-disability>



Phone: 1800 880 052



Email: hotline@workfocus.com

- **Department of Social Services (DSS) Complaints**

Complaints about experiences with DSS, DSS funded service providers including the Complaints Resolution and Referral Service, JobAccess and the National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline.



Phone: 1800 634 035



Online form: <https://www.dss.gov.au/contact/feedback-compliments-complaints-and-enquiries/feedback-form>



Email: complaints@dss.gov.au

11. Online resources

The internet can be a great place to look for information. Be careful though as anyone can have their own website which means it's not all accurate or reliable.

You don't need your own computer or internet to see these sites. Every public library in the ACT has computers you can use for no cost. Just ask at the service desk to book a time. You can also print for a small fee.

You can even book your time online!

<http://www.librarycatalogue.act.gov.au:8089/cgi-bin/pcres/reserve.pl>

Self-advocacy Resources

Be Real

www.bereal.com.au/

Understanding Intellectual Disability and Health

www.intellectualdisability.info/changing-values/self-advocacy

Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre – Let me Speak

www.edac.org.au/letmespeak/

Suite 101 – Assertive Communication Skills

suite101.com/article/assertive-communication-skills-a44334

Centre for Clinical Interventions – Assertive Communication

www.cci.health.wa.gov.au-resources-docs-Info-assertive%20communication.pdf

Health, Sexuality and Relationships

Being a Healthy Woman

www0.health.nsw.gov.au/pubs/2010/being_healthy_woman.html

Family Planning Queensland – Free activity books

www.fpq.com.au/education/disability/resources.php

ShineSA – Friendships and Dating

www.shinesa.org.au/index.cfm?objectid=222C7C7C-B988-DA94-EB64F74C1FB9883D

Human Rights

International agreement on the rights of disabled people (easy read)

odi.dwp.gov.uk/docs/wor/uncon/un-agree.pdf

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities: What does it mean for you? (Easy Read)

www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/publications/uncrpd_guide_easyread.pdf

We have Human Rights: a human rights handbook for people with developmental disabilities

hpod.pmhclients.com/pdf/we-have-humna-rights.pdf

Support Groups

Connecting Canberra's Disability Community

(Facebook group – you will need a Facebook account to join)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/canberrasdisabled/>

People with Disabilities ACT

<http://www.pwdact.org.au/>

Women with Disability ACT (WWDACT)

<http://www.wchm.org.au/WWDACT/wwdact>

Disability Information

Canberra Disability Information

<http://actdisability.blogspot.com.au/>

Community Services Directorate – Disability ACT

http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/disability_act

12. Disclosure

- You can choose to say you are a person with disabilities, or not.
- Some people don't feel they have disabilities even though other people might give them that label – they just need some extra help with parts of their life.
- Some people like to be 'out and proud' about their disabilities and try to raise awareness in others.
- Other people prefer to keep it private and only share with people they really trust.
- No matter what you prefer you will probably be interested in learning more about what is called the Social Model of Disability.
- This is the model Advocacy for Inclusion uses.



Did you know

that other cultures have different ideas of disability? Some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities don't even have a word for disability?!

- Queensland Department of Communities (Disability Services), See *Beyond the Disability*, 2007

12.1 Social Model of Disability

The idea of 'disability' only exists because of the way our society is.

It is not things about the person which are disabling, it is things within society that create barriers. These barriers can include:

- Physical access
- Communication
- Beliefs
- Practices
- Attitudes
- Discrimination
- Lack of services

Some thoughts

- If there were no barriers everyone would live equally and there would be no 'disability'.
- “If I lived in a society where being in a wheelchair was no more remarkable than wearing glasses, and if the community was completely accepting and accessible, my disability would be an inconvenience and not much more than that. It is society which handicaps me, far more seriously and completely than the fact that I have Spina Bifida” (National People with Disabilities and Carer Council, Shut Out, 2009)
- The social model of disability wants to change society rather than changing people to fit into society. (People with Disability Australia, Students Information – the Social Model of Disability, accessed January 2013)
- Each person is more than a diagnosis and their needs should be looked at individually.
- Each person should be valued as part of society.

Talk – a UK Video from the Disability Rights Commission

The award-winning 'Talk' portrays a society in which non-disabled people are a pitied minority and disabled people lead full and active lives. Jonathan Kerrigan, of BBC's 'Casualty' fame, plays a business executive whose negative preconceptions of disability are dramatically shattered.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vSG6LGutkHo>

End of Self-Advocacy Kit