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# Introduction

Welcome to our Self-Advocacy Kit.

**What is this Kit?**

This kit contains 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?**

This book is 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”. 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.

**Where can I get more copies?**

* Our website Advocacy for Inclusion at [www.advocacyforinclusion.org](file://zone/group/Publications/NDIS%20Troubleshooting%20Kit%20-%20In%20Development/www.advocacyforinclusion.org)
* Phone us on (02) 6257 4005
* Email [info@advocacyforinclusion.org](file://zone/group/Publications/NDIS%20Troubleshooting%20Kit%20-%20In%20Development/info%40advocacyforinclusion.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)](http://relayservice.gov.au/) by calling **1800 555 677** then ask for the number for the relevant service

 If you need an interpreter, you can call the [Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National](https://www.tisnational.gov.au/)) by calling **13 14 50**. TIS National will put you through to the relevant service

# 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.

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?

Skills you might like to work on include:

* Social skills, communication and relationship skills
* Anger management
* Relaxation & Stress management
* Assertiveness
* Self-awareness
* Decision-making, goal-setting 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:

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# 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 your skills, not just those you think are related to Self-Advocacy.

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| **Use the spaces to write your thoughts** |

**Skill:** Increasing self-awareness:

**Think:** What are my strengths?

Examples:

* I’m good at listening
* I’m patient
* I’m good at finding answers

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**What are my areas for development?**

**Think:** What areas do I need to work on?

Examples:

* Aggression
* I forget to listen when I’m busy
* I take over sometimes

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

**Think:** What skills and information do you have?

What things are you good at?

Examples:

* I am good at speaking to groups
* I know about my Human Rights

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How can I learn and improve on my skills?

**Skill: Communication**

**Think:** Which skills could you improve? What can you do to improve them?

Examples:

* learning how to write an email
* learning about body language

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**Skill:** Assertiveness

Examples:

* learning how to use “I” statements
* practising speaking up when something makes me feel uncomfortable

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**Skill:** Social and relationship

**Think:** what you could do to meet more people and build friendships?

Example:

* practice making small talk
* asking others about themselves

Use this space to write your thoughts

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**Skill:** Decision making and goal setting

Examples:

* asking others how they make decisions
* deciding my own goals and planning how to reach them.

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**Skill:**Relaxation and stress management

**Think:** what relaxes you and makes you feel calm?

Examples:

* find out more about yoga or meditation
* join a walking group

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**Skill:** Emotion management

Examples:

* finding out ways to cope when I feel angry or emotional
* attending an anger management course

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3.2 Step by Step Self Advocacy Plan[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Think:** What is the issue?

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

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**Have your rights been taken away?**

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

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**What is your goal?**

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

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**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?

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**Who are the people?**

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

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**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

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**Think:** 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?

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3.3 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 is completed.

| 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?* |
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# Communication

4.1 Being Assertive

**Why be assertive?**

* Feel good about yourself – good self-esteem
* Have better relationships with others
* Reach your goals
* Get things done
* Are not taken advantage of
* Gain the 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:**

* 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**

* Do **not** apologise because your view is different from others
* Say “No” if you need to
* Use “I statements” (Explained below)
* 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 - Do **not** allow interruptions
* Repeat yourself if necessary
* Be reasonable – do **not** 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:

1. “**I feel** ……………” (what emotion do you feel?)
2. “**when** ……………” (what is causing the feeling?)
3. “**and I would like** ……………” (what outcome do you want?).

Example:

Instead of saying “Will you stop that noise, you are driving me insane!”.

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:**

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| I feel (emotion) |
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| When (situation) |
|  |
| And I would like (outcome) |
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| --- |
| **I feel (emotion)** |
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| **When (situation)** |
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| **And I would like (outcome)** |
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| **I feel (emotion)** |
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| **When (situation)** |
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| **And I would like (outcome)** |
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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.

Here are some helpful tips to help you:

**Listen**

It might seem funny, but when you make an effort to listen carefully 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 your body language – a nod, “mirror” them
* Do not interrupt
* Use eye contact – look in their direction, 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 you use other ways to communicate to help you, have them ready
* Write up a list of your messages 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 determines 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.

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 is 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 is OK to tell them that it is 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/>

#  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 and confident.

Writing notes of the conversation can help you concentrate on the conversation and remember what was said.

Before you make the call:

**Think:**

* **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 problem.
* **What is the outcome?** What results do you want?
* **Questions you want to ask.** Keep it simple, about 3 questions.

During the phone call

**Think:**

* **Who are you speaking to?** Write their name/s down.
* **Time and date of the call.** Record for future reference.
* **What did they say to you?** What did they tell you?

Phone Record Sheet

Use this space to write your information

| **Who** | **Phone Numbers** | **Comments** |
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Before the call Worksheet

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| --- | --- |
| Who do you need to call? |  |
| What is the issue? Keep it simple - one short sentence. |  |
| What outcome do you want?  |  |
| Questions you want to ask:  | 1. |
| 2. |
| 3. |

During the phone call

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Time and date of the call |  |
| Who are you speaking to?  |  |
| What they said to you: |  |
| What is the message you got from them? |  |
| Outcomes or Results?What have they said will be done? |  |
| Do you need to call again? Have they asked you to call them back at another time? |  |
| Do you need to contact someone else? |  |

5.1 Finding Services

**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.

**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 podiatrist, you would:

1. Search the index at the front and find a listing for a podiatrist
2. Then you would turn to the listed page find all the podiatrists listed A to Z under the heading podiatrists

**Phone Books Online**

**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
* Press 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/>

**Internet**

You can use a search engine to a phone number. Just type in the name of the organisation or person you are looking for.

Example: Google [www.google.com.au](http://www.google.com.au).

**Supported Communications Options**

If you have a hearing and/or speech impairment, you can contact the [National Relay Service (NRS)](http://relayservice.gov.au/) by calling **1800 555 677** then ask for the number for the relevant service

If you need an interpreter, you can call the [Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National](https://www.tisnational.gov.au/)) 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**

Phone: 6248 7988

Online: <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. An email is usually less formal than a letter.

**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!

**How to write an Email**



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

**To, Cc:** Use ‘To’ for the main person. Cc is for other people, so they can see the email, but it is **not** to them.

**Subject:** The subject needs to be clear and informative.

**Signature:** Your Signature has your details, like your full name and contact number and goes at the end of the email. 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**

**Greeting:** There are several ways you start a greeting:

* Hello <name>,
* Dear <name>,
* To whom it may concern, (if you do not have a name)

**Reason:** explains why you are writing

* What do you want to say?
* What do you want them to do?

**Closing: t**he 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,

**Tips for email writing:**

**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.

**Always double-check:**

* Re-read what you have written before you press send.
* Save it as a draft and come back later to recheck it.
* Be sure your message is clear.

**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.

**Use the subject heading:**

Your subject should clearly tell the topic of your email.

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.

**Never write and send an email when angry or emotional:**

It can be easy to write when upset, but not easy to write well. 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.

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 can I write to?**

Examples of some people you can 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**.



* 1. 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 are next, on the **left side of the page.**

* 1. 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

* Write your greeting to the person
* The first paragraph is the introduction and says **why** you are writing



* 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 actions you would like them to take. Above is an example of this.
* If there is other information to include you can add copies of other documents in with your letter (do not send originals!). Mention you have included them and why.
* 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

  

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

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.



**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:**

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



# Making a Complaint

**Making a complaint**

Sometimes you might not be happy with a service or product you have received. Giving 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:

* You get poor quality service
* You are treated rudely or unfairly
* Your privacy breached
* Poor accessibility

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

6.2 Who should I complain 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.
2. Talk to the person’s supervisor or manager.
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 to be 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 to read 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 here 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.

# Preparing for Meetings

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

**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 is OK to insist it is 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 relevant communication.
* Take a friend or supporter with you if needed.

**Participate effectively**

* Stick to the point of the meeting.
* Do not take over the meeting, let others have their say.
* Listen to what others have to say. Acknowledge what they have said even if you do not agree.
* If others interrupt, take over or talk about unimportant things, it is OK to ask them to let you finish or get back to the point.

Examples:

“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 too). 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**

You can ask if there is something else that can be done instead of a meeting.

* 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

# Problem Solving Flowchart

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

**What’s the problem?**

Identify the problem – look at:

Who, what, where, why, what do you know, how do you feel, what do you want or need?

2.3 Step by Step Plan might help you to analyse the issue

**AT ANY TIME:**

**Seek advice**

Talk to someone you trust, such as a friend, family, or your advocate.

Work out how much help or support you need from them and let them know.

**AT ANY TIME:**

**Seek advice**

Talk to someone you trust, such as a friend, family, or your advocate.

Work out how much help or support you need from them and let them know.

Accept situation

Try again

Change situation

**Not solved**

If you aren’t able to solve this problem you still have options…

**Extra help**

If you can’t sort things out with the people you’re talking to, you might need to talk to someone outside the situation.

*4.2 Who can I talk* to has suggestions for who to talk to, depending on what your problem is.

*Solved?*

**Talk more**

Talk to someone higher up such as a supervisor or boss, or to someone who knows more than you..

*Solved?*

**Talk**

Talk to the person or people involved

Tell them how you feel and what your needs and wants are

*Solved?*

**Solved**

Congratulations on being a strong self-advocate!

**Official process**

Check if there is a policy or process you should follow. Policies might include:

* Complaints or grievance policy
* Bullying policy

There might also be a contract or agreement that might tell you more.

# Your Rights

Human rights are rights that every person has. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) says 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?[[2]](#footnote-2)**

* 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

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 approved it in 2008.

# Where Can I go for help?

10.1 Canberra ACT

**ACT Policing**

Phone: 000 Triple Zero Emergency

For police assistance where life is not at-risk

Phone: 131 444

Crime Stoppers

Phone: 1800 333 000

**Advocacy for Inclusion**

Phone:(02) 6257 4005

Email: [info@advocacyforinclusion.org](file://zone/group/Publications/NDIS%20Troubleshooting%20Kit%20-%20In%20Development/info%40advocacyforinclusion.org)

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

Phone: (02) 6242 5060

Email: [adacas@adacas.org.au](file://zone/group/Publications/NDIS%20Troubleshooting%20Kit%20-%20In%20Development/adacas%40adacas.org.au)

**Legal Aid ACT**

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

Phone: 1300 654 314

Email: [legalaid@legalaidact.org.au](file://zone/group/Publications/NDIS%20Troubleshooting%20Kit%20-%20In%20Development/legalaid%40legalaidact.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](file://zone/group/Publications/NDIS%20Troubleshooting%20Kit%20-%20In%20Development/human.rights%40act.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 support 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>

**Quality, Complaints and Regulation unit**

Website[: http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/home/quality-complaints-and-regulation](file://zone/group/Publications/NDIS%20Troubleshooting%20Kit%20-%20In%20Development/%20http/www.communityservices.act.gov.au/home/quality-complaints-and-regulation)

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

Email: [quality@act.gov.au](file://zone/group/Publications/NDIS%20Troubleshooting%20Kit%20-%20In%20Development/quality%40act.gov.au)

**Access Canberra**

If you are not happy with a product or service

Website[: https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/ask/c/233](file://zone/group/Publications/NDIS%20Troubleshooting%20Kit%20-%20In%20Development/%20https/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](file://zone/group/Publications/NDIS%20Troubleshooting%20Kit%20-%20In%20Development/hotline%40workfocus.com)

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

Complaints about experiences with DSS, DSS funded service providers including the Complaints Resolution and Referral Service, Job Access 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](file://zone/group/Publications/NDIS%20Troubleshooting%20Kit%20-%20In%20Development/complaints%40dss.gov.au)

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 is not all correct or reliable.

You do not 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/](http://www.bereal.com.au/)

**Understanding Intellectual Disability and Health**

[www.intellectualdisability.info/changing-values/self-advocacy](http://www.intellectualdisability.info/changing-values/self-advocacy)

**Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre – Let me Speak**

[www.edac.org.au/letmespeak/](http://www.edac.org.au/letmespeak/)

**Suite 101 – Assertive Communication Skills**

[suite101.com/article/assertive-communication-skills-a44334](http://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

**Human Rights**

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

[odi.dwp.gov.uk/docs/wor/uncon/un-agree.pdf](http://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](http://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](http://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>

1. Based on ‘Strategic Questioning’ by Andrew King, Groupwork Solutions [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. (Adapted from ‘The right to have a say: A kit of tools for consumer participation’: Redfern Legal Centre, 1992) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)