

ADVOCACY SOUTH WEST (INC.)

ABN 33 316 320 784

ROLES OF AN ADVOCATE

Spokesperson, mentor, ally, advisor, friend, guardian, representative, payee, adoptive parent, sponsor, companion, monitor, guide, financial sponsor, supporter, crisis advocatecan be more than one role.

BENEFITS OF CITIZEN ADVOCACY TO THE PARTICIPANT

- Opportunity to give and take
- Needs get addressed (or some of them do)
- More a part than apart
- Care, love and concern
- Learning and growth
- Protection
- Improved self image
- Autonomy and rights
- Support (of all kinds)
- Circumstances improve (overtime)
- Knowing someone cares
- Sharing suffering and joy

BENEFIT TO THE ADVOCATE

- Mutually satisfying relationships
- Improved self-image
- Gain insight & wisdom
- Learning & growth
- Positive example to others
- Increased moral strength (may never have been asked to take a position for someone else – therefore stronger)
- Learns commitment
- Suffering & joy

BENEFIT TO THE COMMUNITY

- More responsive to vulnerable citizens
- Receives contributions of citizens with & without handicaps
- Shinning examples of people being good
- More tolerance of differences
- “gentles” people
- Nurtures people’s gifts and talents, discover and nurture things that could benefit community

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SOME REASONS WHY SAFEGUARDS ARE NECESSARY FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

1. Impaired functioning results in:
 - Poor judgment and volition
 - Impaired ability to generalize and formation of rigid rules
 - Poor handling of complexity
 - Lack of inhibition
 - Poor communication skills
2. There is a lack of relevant supports and services
3. Dependence on others
4. Loss of control of one's life to agencies and professionals
5. Rejection and congregation with others who are devalued
6. Negative stereotypes, beliefs, roles
7. Insufficient concern for one's needs by others
8. Wasting of potential of one's life
9. Low expectations by others of, and for them
10. Low standing and worth in the lives of others
11. Separation from others
12. Loss of individualization
13. Poverty (material, opportunities, experiences)
14. Internalised devaluation – negative sense of one's worth
15. Abandonment, few personal relationships
16. Few positive social roles
17. Diminished credibility of the person
18. Weakened competencies, health and stamina
19. Increased neglect and violence to the person
20. Abnormalised life conditions

Source: John Armstrong, 20/04/01