12 Steps to Advocacy

1) Make the Case for Change. Identify the problem. Support your case with data and examples. Be clear and concise. Do not rely on anecdotes alone.

2) Identify the Solution. Develop and describe the solution to the problem. Discuss the anticipated impact. Estimate cost.

3) Build a Base of Support. Engage supporters early. Involve them in developing solutions. Identify potential champions.

4) Find New Partners. Identify other potential supporters. Go beyond the usual suspects and think creatively about unlikely allies.

5) Consider the Opposition. Identify opponents. Be open to discussion. Address the reasons for opposition, if possible.

6) Choose the Right Forum. Can the issue be resolved by a policy change or is a regulatory or legislative change needed? Start at step one.

7) Communicate Strategically. Identify the audience. Frame the message. Plan a communications strategy and stick to it.

8) Activate Supporters. Develop quick response mechanism to inform supporters on progress of initiative, such as e-networks.

9) Add Authentic Voices. Include those directly affected by the issue – parents, children, community programs - in advocacy.

10) Remember Implementation. Identify steps needed to implement change. Include some mechanism to monitor results.

11) Be Open to Compromise. Consider whether a partial solution is possible. Think about good first steps for future follow up.

12) Thank Your Supporters. Acknowledge and thank your supporters at each step of the campaign.