

*Kith & Kids*

*supporting disability - focusing on abilities*

# Advocacy Training Pack



***A Comprehensive Collection of  
Ready-to-Use Workshops and Materials  
for Training Volunteers and Staff  
as Advocates Partnering People  
who have a Learning Disability***

***A Kith & Kids* Publication**



*supporting disability - focusing on abilities*

**Our Mission**

*To achieve empowerment and social inclusion  
with families who have one or more members with a disability*

Established in 1969, Kith & Kids has found its own unique niche in the community. A self-help group with a difference, together we provide support and advice for families with a member who has a learning, physical, and/or sensory disability. Our members who have a disability are of all ages (currently from about 7 to 45 years) with a whole range of abilities and disabilities (from people who have profound and multiple disabilities, to those with moderate learning disabilities).

We run a number of services, projects and activities for our member families: Social Development Projects during school holidays, a Summer Camp, Weekend Club Sessions, Half-Term activities, a Friendship Scheme, Family Support, and our Advocacy Project.

In addition we aim to share our experience with other families and organisations through various Outreach Projects.

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# Advocacy Training Pack

## What's the Pack about?

As part of our outreach work we wanted to be able to disseminate our experiences of running an Advocacy Project and felt it might be supportive to others to have easy access to ready-to-use training workshops and materials.

### ***Ideas which worked for us***

Over the years we have used numerous ideas for training and supporting ourselves, and our volunteers and staff with the demands and challenges of ensuring the needs of our members are met. We have included in the pack ideas for workshops, and the associated

materials, which we have found to be helpful to us. Many of these ideas we have developed for ourselves, responding to the needs of our advocates; others we have taken and adapted from elsewhere. We would love to be able to acknowledge the many people both in and out of Kith & Kids who originated the ideas, but for many of them we simply don't know who the originators are! So we certainly say thank you to all those unknown people, and ask that you contact us should you recognise a piece of your own work within the pack

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### **Initial Training**

This section is designed for training volunteers and staff new to advocating for people who have a learning disability.

It details workshops for **four one-day training sessions**. Each day is time-tabled into the various **workshops**. Each **workshop** has details of **Aims**, **Key Points** to come out of the workshop, **Materials**, and **What to do**, along with related *Activities*, *Worksheets*, and *Handouts*. There are also relevant references to our companion publication ***Partners with disAbility*** (see **Resource List** [p.126]) which contains comprehensive background and handout materials on many issues around working in partnership with people who have a learning disability.

You could run the days as a whole, or pick and choose the various workshops

and materials to suit your own situations. The materials are easily photocopied and produced - each workshop can stand alone.

### **Ongoing Training**

This section includes ideas which we have developed to respond to the needs of our advocates. It includes comprehensive workshops and activities on **Negotiation Skills**, **Being Blocked and Feeling Powerless**, **Building Positive Relationships with Parents**, and numerous **Miscellaneous Advocacy Scenarios**. Each workshop is similarly detailed as above and can also stand alone.

### **Background Information**

In addition to the main body of training materials there is information on Recruiting, Matching, Linking, and Supporting volunteers as well as some discussion of Kith & Kids successes and struggles in advocacy.

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# Advocacy in Kith & Kids

## Parents, Staff, and Volunteers as Advocates

### **Parents as Advocates**

Since its beginning, the families in Kith & Kids have offered both practical and emotional support to each other. Through regular parent meetings, and activities with their children we have shared our experiences, good and not-so-good. It could be said that we have been advocating for each other through our support for each other in establishing services for our children, and through our campaigning and lobbying of government.

### **Staff as Advocates**

Since the mid-70s a paid worker has also been advocating for and supporting all family members: parents, the son/daughter who has a disability, and siblings. Her role has been to discuss with parents their needs and those of their sons/daughters, to support them to access the various services that might meet those needs. This has involved attending numerous meetings with social services teams, learning disability teams, professionals in residential homes and day centres. In addition she has supported those members who are able, to self-advocate (the majority of our members are not able to do so). Advocacy staff still advocate directly with/for many members and parents.

### **Volunteers as Advocates**

Many of our advocates started out either on our holiday projects or in our Friendship Scheme. Through the time spent together socialising with their Kith & Kids friend they established a relationship in which they both gained an excellent picture of the needs of their friend, and also built a tremendous degree of trust and respect for each other.

These volunteers felt that they wanted to be able to support their friends to change those things in their lives with which they were unhappy. Kith & Kids staff and families trained and supported them with the necessary skills and personal development for them to 'evolve' in to advocates. Many of those advocacy partnerships started in the last 10 years are still thriving.

Our aim in Kith & Kids is for our advocates to take on the same advocacy functions as paid staff: to assess needs, attend review and other meetings, instigate changes of school, day centre, or residential home as necessary. This in addition to maintaining regular contact with their partner. We see the relationship with their partner, and with parents and service providers as essential to effective advocacy - indeed we use the term Relationship-Based Advocacy to describe what we do.

## Advocacy in Kith & Kids

### *Kith & Kids Advocacy Project*

In addition to supporting volunteers from our other projects and activities to become advocates, we are now recruiting volunteers directly into advocacy. The staff role is one of recruitment, training, matching, linking, and support/supervision.

#### **Recruitment**

Yes - it's difficult! For all our projects we've tried any number of ways: volunteer bureaux, libraries, colleges and universities, newspaper and magazine articles and advertising, speaking directly with various activity and social clubs, and trying to link with local and larger companies. The trend, as in most volunteering, is that it is becoming harder and harder; whereas 10 years ago we could place an advert in *The Guardian* and get a 100 responses with a third of those coming along, the reality is now that we only get one or two volunteers from each source. Why the downward trend in volunteering? In our view there are a number of factors: the financial difficulties placed upon students, 'disability' not being fashionable amongst volunteers, a major societal shift in the 80s/90s towards self-preservation, and current employment patterns seem to allow for less time for ourselves, let alone others.

Recruiting advocates seems doubly hard - we're asking for a long-term commitment (in *Kith & Kids* at least two years) of a few hours every two/three weeks, with time available during weekday day-times to attend various review and other meetings. We're

also looking for people who have gained some confidence and skills in their life to be able to negotiate with senior care professionals. Often volunteers have the skills but not the time, or the time but not the skills. In the latter case it is possible to train and support volunteers with the skills, but this takes much of their time, and our staff time - in the end we question whether it would be more cost effective for us to only advocate directly, rather than involve volunteers?

Then we see the quality and effectiveness of the relationships built up by volunteers who have participated in our other projects. All be it from a 'false' start, these partnerships are truly natural with a respect and honesty hard to rival. How can we recruit volunteers directly into advocacy who will be able to establish similar relationships?

At the time of writing we are still pursuing a number of avenues: companies, early-retired people, and paid advocacy. Perhaps we will need to sacrifice some of the quality of the relationship between our advocates and their partners, for a more effective means of striving to get our members needs met.



# Advocacy in Kith & Kids

## *Kith & Kids Advocacy Project*

### **Matching**

In Kith & Kids we aim to link two advocates together with one partner. We do this for a number of reasons:

- Two advocates can offer immediate and ongoing support to each other.
- Two advocates may have complementary skills and knowledge to bring to their roles.
- Between them there may be greater flexibility of time than one person on their own.
- There is greater continuity for the partner if one advocate goes away, or leaves the project.
- There is added benefit from a Safety & Protection point of view.

There are potentially added difficulties in matching together a group of three people (two advocates and one partner), and the possible difficulties of co-ordinating three peoples' diaries. We feel, however, that these difficulties are outweighed by the above benefits.

One of the reasons we use an experiential style of training is that we get to know something of our volunteers' personalities and approach to life. These aspects are important to us in our matching because, for example, it would be unlikely to be beneficial to match a volunteer who has a laid-back approach, to a partner who needs motivating and keeping focused. Similarly we need to consider whether the two advocates would be able to work together, as well as more practical details such as time availability, interests, skills, location, and transport.

Indeed, once we have suggested a match, we ask the two volunteers to get together for an evening to see if they feel they could work together, before we suggest anything to their potential partner.

### **Linking**

We try to introduce advocates to partners in as natural a way as possible - perhaps at one of our social events, or while our members are on one of our other activities. In this way the advocates would appear to be part of the team of volunteers and expectations would not be raised as to the possibility of an ongoing relationship. If this is not possible, our advocacy staff would go with the volunteers to do the introductions. This may be at their home, or doing an activity we know the partner would enjoy, or both.

If any of the three indicate to us after the meeting that the relationships would not be workable, we would explore alternatives with them. If all is well, however, our staff would continue to go with the volunteers until all feel comfortable for the relationship to be taken off on their own. As part of this process introductions are often also made to parents, and care staff in residential homes, or sometimes day centres. This usually takes two/three outings, but can take much more depending on the needs of the member and the volunteers - for us it is important that everyone feels comfortable with the situation.

## Advocacy in Kith & Kids

### *Kith & Kids Advocacy Project*

#### ***Support/Supervision***

This is crucial to maintain advocacy partnerships. In Kith & Kids support is available in a number of ways:

- Staff are at the end of the phone both during and outside office hours.
- Staff will willingly make time available to meet with advocates and/or partners as issues arise.
- Support meetings are held about once every 6-8 weeks. Advocates share their experiences and are offered the opportunity to 'try out' forthcoming negotiations. If it is felt to be worthwhile staff will organise training sessions to focus on particular issues

- Supervision sessions are held with individual advocates to explore the joys and fears of current advocacy activities. We feel it is essential that advocates are offered the opportunity to explore their own personal development in order to increase the effectiveness of their advocacy.
- Staff will accompany new advocates to their first few meetings with care professionals, and subsequently should the feel they need more experienced support to deal with complex issues.

Through this support we hope to empower our advocates to become independently effective advocates. In this way we can ensure the needs of our members will be addressed.



# A Word About Role-Plays

## Facilitating Role-Plays

### **Benefits of Role-Play**

In our training and support we have found that offering advocates the opportunity of 'trying-out' phone conversations and meetings that they might need to hold has been one of the most beneficial activities. Not only does it offer the chance to use some of the practical tips for negotiating which advocates pick up from training and from each other, but it also allows participants to experience the challenges and feelings present. In effect they (and we) are learning about their (and our) own capabilities and fears. It is these that we are then able to pick up in supervision sessions to support advocates to find ways to overcome their fears.

### **Role-Play in Safety**

Role-play, however, is not everyone's cup of tea - on more than one occasion we've been told by our advocates, half-jokingly but half-seriously, that they do not wish to do one more role-play - ever. In the same breath they recognise the value of the experience, even if they don't particularly like what they find out about themselves.

What is important is that role-plays are setup and facilitated in a safe, supportive atmosphere. This will need to be built up during the session, but before the role-play happens, unless the group is sufficiently familiar and safe with each other to launch into it more or less straightaway. Participants must always have the right to opt out at any point, or to raise objections to any part of the process - and these must be listened to and acted upon.

There is a 'safer' option if the group is averse against the idea of each taking on a role and launching into (what often seem to become) a very heated meeting:

### The 'Coaching' System

- Each role may have more than one participant looking at it - there would be role groups.
- One person agrees to be the 'spokesperson' for the role and actually does the talking during the meeting.
- The others linked to that role 'coach' the spokesperson with what to say before the meeting.
- Either the spokesperson or the coaches for any role can stop the meeting at any time as they wish in order for them to confer on their next move.
- If the whole group agrees that it is allowed, each role group may change their spokesperson as and when they wish - fresh energy, fresh ideas!

In this way the ideas still come out, but no one person is 'on the spot' for the whole time - unless they want to be!

## A Word About Role-Plays

### *Facilitating Role-Plays*

#### ***Ending Role-Plays***

Some conversations/meetings come to a natural end with an agreement of a way forward. Other you will need to stop when it feels right. This may be when the discussion is going round in circles, or if tempers are getting too frayed, or simply if time runs out.

It may feel necessary for participants to 'de-role' before any feedback on the activity is started. Participants need to feel sure that they and the others are talking as themselves, and not in their role. This is particularly important if the discussion has been a particularly angry one.

# Training Evaluation

## Training Evaluation

In order to try to keep your training content and methods relevant to the needs of your advocates, it's important to evaluate as often as you can, ideally after every session; definitely after each training course.

It's good to reflect back yourself on the session(s):

- What were your aims? To what extent did you cover them?
- To what extent did you get across your key points?
- To what extent do you think participants took in your key points?
- Were any of the activities unclear to participants? Did anybody not want to participate? Do you need to change anything as a result of this?
- How was the timing? Does it need adjusting for next time?
- Were all the materials to hand and usable?
- Were there any awkward moments - could they have been avoided?
- How do you think participants were feeling at the beginning, during, and at the end of the session(s)?
- How were you feeling at these times?

In addition it's vital to get a sense from your participants as to how *they* felt the session(s) went. There is a debate as to whether responses to evaluation should be anonymous or not: one view is that participants feel safer to be more honest if they don't have to put their name to it; the other view says that participants should own their comments or not comment at all. You will need to decide for yourself!

There are a number of activities you could try:

### Evaluation Sheets

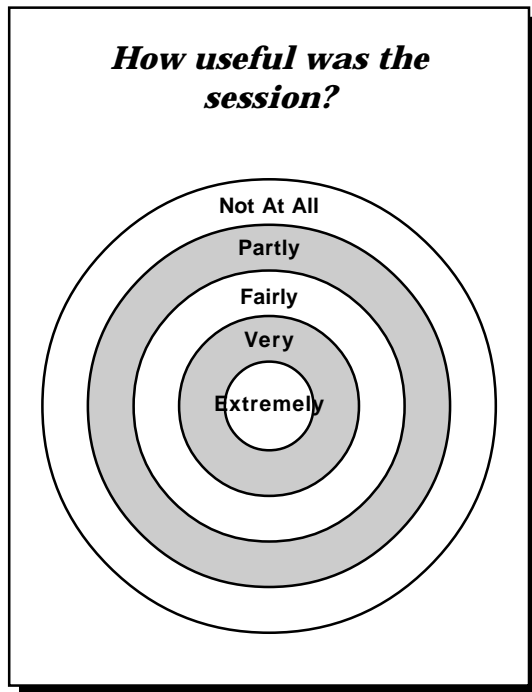
- After a long day participants are often reluctant to fill in evaluation sheets so you could make them multiple choice with a range of answers for each question. However, the results from these aren't always that helpful - if someone thinks your training style is 'Poor' you need to know why to do anything about it!
- If participants are willing to fill in a few sentences it can be more useful and you can design your sheets accordingly.

For some alternatives to evaluation sheets see overleaf.

# Training Evaluation

## Evaluation Activities

### Targets



- Make up some 'targets' like those above on some flipchart paper and put them round the room.
- You should ask questions to which people can respond with a range of values (e.g. How useful was the session? Not at All - Extremely).
- Each person moves round the room and places a mark on the target as to how they feel about the question.
- To gain some understanding of how the views participants have expressed, it can be helpful to briefly discuss the outcomes of the targets.

### Question Circle

- Participants sit in two concentric circles, facing someone from the other circle.
- Each participant has a different question to ask. You could try the **Question Circle Questions** (p.13) or write ones which are more appropriate to your group or session.
- Each pair facing each other in the circle in turn asks their questions for each other, and respond to each other. It can be helpful for each person to keep a note of the kinds of responses they are getting to the questions.
- Once these questions have been asked and responded to, the outside circle moves round on seat so they can ask their question of someone new, and get a new questions themselves.
- This continues until the circle returns to the beginning. Each participant should have been asked every questions, and each question should have a list of responses.

### Opinion Posters

- Similar to the Targets Activity, but participants are asked to write some comments on each question which is placed around the room on flipchart paper.
- This enables you to have some more detailed comments to take away. Comments could be anonymous or not as the group decides.

## **Training Evaluation**

### ***Question Circle Questions***

**I enjoyed myself when . . .**

**I would like to do more of . . .**

**I didn't like . . .**

**I would like to do less of . . .**

**It was a funny when . . .**

**I was most angry when . . .**

**The most interesting thing we did was . . .**

**What I learned about myself was . . .**

**The thing I most disliked was . . .**

**I was upset when . . .**

**The thing which interested me least was . . .**

**I was nervous when . . .**

## Initial Training

### *Our Approach to Initial Training*

#### *Participative and Experiential*

Training in Kith & Kids is facilitated in line with our core values of valuing and supporting each other. None of us claim to be experts: we all have much to learn from each other, and we all make mistakes. We seek to develop an environment in which all those involved with us feel able to talk; to talk about joys and successes, and also about fears and mistakes.

Our training is thus participative and experiential in approach. We seek to facilitate participants in exploring their own views and feelings about aspects of their lives related to their advocacy role. Our fundamental groundrule is that anyone involved in Kith & Kids is not expected to do anything with which they don't feel comfortable, or which they don't feel confident to do. People are encouraged to let us know if they wish to opt out: we can sometimes support them with a way do take on the activity, or we can usually find another way for it to happen. For us this is crucial - volunteers usually come to us with little or no experience, with a variety of fears, and with their own emotional make-up. We need to recognise and work with each of these factors.

#### *Training programmes*

On the following pages you will find the basis of our advocacy training for volunteers. Included are programmes, workshops and materials which you can use as they stand, or adapt to your own needs. These materials have been developed over a number of years through continual evaluation and adaptation - they have worked for us, and we believe they will work for you, and the volunteers or staff who wish to embark on the valued role of an advocate.

#### *Initial Training Aims*

Our broad aims for our Initial Training are:

- To introduce volunteers to a range of basic issues related to advocacy.
- To raise the awareness of volunteers of the individual, social, and community lives of people with learning disabilities and the issues which may arise for them.
- To raise the awareness of volunteers of the role of advocates in relation to their partner and others involved in their partners' lives.
- To reassure volunteers that they are not alone in their role - we have an effective support/supervision system.



# Programme

## *Day One*

### **10.00 Games & Introduction**

*Activities (p.19)*

- *This is my friend*
- *15-all*

*Introduction*

- Kith & Kids and our Advocacy Project
- Motivation/Expectations
- Friendships/Relationships
- Social/leisure activities - the practicalities
- Dignity & Respect
- Communication

### **10.15 Kith & Kids & our Advocacy Project**

- Kith & Kids history and services
- Why our members need advocates
- The need to meet regularly with partners
- Your link will be supported
- Regular training/support/supervision sessions are essential

### **10.30 Motivation/Expectations**

*Activity (p.22) Opinion Poll*

### **11.00 Friendships/relationships**

*Activity (p.34) Friendships/Relationships*

### **12.00 Social/Leisure Activities - Practicalities**

*Activity (p.36) Social/Leisure Activities*

### **12.30 Lunch**

### **1.30 Dignity & Respect**

*Activity (p.37) Dignity & Respect*

### **2.30 Communication**

*Activity (p.40) Communication*

### **3.30 Closing thoughts/queries, summary, next session**

### **4.00 Finish**

# Programme

## Day Two

### 10.00 **Games & Introduction**

✂ *Activities (p.19)*

- *Andy Aubergine*
- *All those who . . .*

*On Day One*

- Kith & Kids and our Advocacy Project
- Motivation/Expectations
- Friendships/Relationships
- Social/leisure-time activities - the practicalities
- Dignity & Respect
- Communication

*Today*

- Questions arising from Day One
- Issues faced by our members
- Listening Skills
- Range & Roles of Service Providers
- Issues around emotional and sexual needs
- What can advocates offer to their partners?

### 10.15 **Questions arising from Day One**

### 10.30 **Issues which might be faced by Kith & Kids members**

✂ *Activity (p.42) Issues faced by people who have learning disabilities*

### 11.30 **Listening Skills**

✂ *Activity (p.49) Listening Skills*

### 12.30 **Lunch**

### 1.30 **Range & Roles of Service Providers**

✂ *Activity (p.52) Range & Role of Service Providers*

### 2.00 **Issues around emotional and sexual needs**

✂ *Activity (p.59) Issues around emotional and sexual needs*

### 3.00 **What can advocates offer to their partners?**

✂ *Activity (p.63) What do you want your advocate to do?*

### 3.30 **Closing thoughts/queries, summary, next session**

### 4.00 **Finish**

# Programme

## Day Three

### **10.00 Games & Introduction**

*Activities (p.19)*

- *Apple, Apple, Apple*
- *Personal Questions*

*On Day Two*

- Issues faced by our members
- Listening Skills
- Range & Roles of Service Providers
- Issues around emotional and sexual needs
- What can advocates offer to their partners?

*Today*

- Questions arising from Day Two
- Meet with members/advocates/parents/professionals
- The Advocate's Role/Relationship with others
- Assertiveness Skills
- Negotiation Skills
- Interviews

### **10.15 Questions arising from Day Two**

### **10.30 Meet with partners, advocates, parents, and/or professionals**

*Activity (p.65) Meet with partners, advocates, parents, professionals*

### **11.30 Advocates' Role/Relationships**

*Activity (p.68) Advocates' Role/Relationships*

### **12.30 Lunch & Interviews**

### **1.30 Assertiveness Skills**

*Activity (p.71) Assertiveness Skills*

### **2.30 Negotiation Skills**

*Activity (p.78) Negotiation Skills*

### **3.30 Closing thoughts/queries, summary, next session**

### **4.00 Finish**

# Programme

## **Day Four**

### **10.00 Games & Introduction**

*Activities (p.19)*

- **Legs Eleven**
- **Zip-Zap-Bop**

*On Day Three*

- Meet with members/advocates/parents/professionals
- The Advocate's Role/Relationship with others
- Assertiveness Skills
- Negotiation Skills
- Interviews

*Today*

- Questions arising from Day Three
- Safety & Protection/Support Systems
- Matching/linking suggestions
- Training/support/supervision and making mistakes
- Opportunity to review previous issues
- Interviews

### **10.30 Safety & Protection**

*Activity (p.82) Safety and Protection*

### **11.30 Matching/Linking Suggestions**

### **12.30 Lunch**

### **1.30 Training/support/supervision Making mistakes/recovering from them**

### **2.30 Opportunity to review previous issues**

### **3.30 Closing thoughts/queries**

### **4.00 Finish**

## Games & Ice-Breakers

### *Co-operative Games & Ice-Breakers*

#### **15 All**

The group must count consecutively from 1 to 15. Each player can only say one number at a time in the sequence. If two participants attempt to say the same number at the same time, the group must start again at 1.

#### **All those who . . .**

Participants stand in a circle. One calls out “All those who . . .” and then adds a group, for example: . . . have blue eyes; . . . had cornflakes for breakfast. Anyone who considers themselves to be in that particular group has to cross the circle and take the place of another player. If the caller starts in the centre and it is assumed there are only as many places as participants, the caller can grab a space as everyone runs; this way there will be a new player left without a space who can call the next group.

#### **Andy Aubergine**

Participants in a circle. One player starts by saying their name and something descriptive beginning with the same letter e.g. Andy Aubergine, Ter-rific Terrie. The next player then says all the names said before and adds their own - how many can you remember? Helpful hints to participants in difficulty are to be encouraged!

#### **Apple, Apple, Apple**

Each person chooses a unique ‘name’ from a particular category (e.g. fruit & veg.). One person calls someone else’s ‘name’ three times. They must complete this before that person called says their own ‘name’. If the caller succeeds then they swop with the person they were calling, otherwise they continue until they do succeed. To make this into a game for learning names simply ask participants to use their real names rather than one from the category.

e.g. Richard must call Mubeena’s name 3 times before Mubeena says her own name once.

#### **I sit in the grass with my friend . . .**

Participants sit in a circle with one spare space (this tends to be better on chairs). The two people either side of the space race to be the first to sit in it. The winner says “I sit”; the person who was sitting next to her/him moves round into the new spare space and says “in the grass”; the next person round then moves to the new spare space saying “with my friend . . .” and then invites someone from the circle to sit next to him/her. This, of course, opens up a new space for which there is a race . . .

## Games & Ice-Breakers

### Co-operative Games & Ice-Breakers

#### Jigsaw

Participants in groups of 10-15 people. Each player has the chance to write, draw, or scribble something creative on a large sheet of paper. Once this is done each player tears off a piece of the paper to keep. Each player can then swap their piece with another player. The final task is to re-create the picture by piecing together the torn-off bits of paper.

Try with two or three groups by swapping all your pieces with another group so they don't know what to create. Or how about using newspaper, or totally blank paper.

Make sure participants know their artwork is to be torn up. This can also be adapted for use in evaluation sessions.

#### Legs Eleven

Participants work in pairs taking turns to complete the task. A describes to B all the legs in their household (people, animals, insects, tables, chairs, beds etc.). B draws or writes down the details. The pair swap over and A draws or writes details of B's household legs. At the end of this go round and get each pair to show/describe the legs in each others' households.

#### Personal Questions

Copy the questions overleaf (p.21) onto card and cut them up. Place them in a mug and ask each participant to pick one to read out and answer. Participants choose whether or not to tell the truth!

#### Questions and Answers

Participants stand in two concentric circles facing a partner. The outside participants must each think of their own question. The inside participants must think of their own answers. As the inside circle moves round one person at a time, each question is asked, but with a different answer each time!

Also useful for evaluation sessions once adapted.

#### This is my friend

Participants stand in a circle and are given a short time to find out a few things about the person on their left (e.g. name, why they've come, something interesting or special about them). Participants then take turns to introduce the person on their left starting with "This is my friend (name) and they (other information about the person)."

#### Zip-Zap-Bop

Participants sit in a circle. A "Zip" is passed round very quickly from person to person (participants look to the person next to them, point their arm that way and say "Zip"). Any player may choose to "Bop" the "Zip" as it comes to them (two hands up to 'reject' the Zip). This has the effect of changing the direction in which the "Zip" travels. Participants can also "Zap" the "Zip" across the circle to any other player who has a choice of which way to start the "Zip" moving (point with arm to the person to whom you are 'Zapping').



## Games & Ice-Breakers

### Personal Questions

What was the last film you saw at the cinema?

What is your favourite animal?

What is your favourite drink?

What makes you cry?

What embarrasses you?

What do you do best?

What is the most dangerous, frightening thing you have ever done?

Where would you like to spend a day trip?

What made you laugh last week?

What angered you most last week?

What has pleased you most this week?

What was your happiest moment?

What will you be doing in ten years time?

If you could be someone else for a day, who would you be?

If you were Prime Minister, what would be the first law you would change?

If you had to give £1000 away to someone, who would you give it to?

Where would your perfect holiday be?

What sort of TV programmes do you like?

What is your pet hate?

Who would you most like to spend an evening with?

If you won £5000 what would you spend it on?

What book are you reading at the moment?

What lie have you told recently?

When did you last get out of bed after 12 noon?

# Motivation/Expectations

## Opinion Poll

🕒 Time Needed: 25-30 mins

### Aims

- To explore participants' motivation for and expectations of becoming an advocate.

### Key points

- Participants may have many different reasons for becoming an advocate.
- Advocates will hopefully gain from, as well as offer something to their partner.
- It's OK to expect something out of it for yourself.

### Materials

- A pen for each participant.
- There are 10 **Motivation Sheets** (pp.24-33). You will need at least one set, more if there are more than 10 people in the group.
- It is also helpful to have an enlarged copy of the **Motivation Totals Sheet** (p.23).

### What to do

- Each participant (including you) takes one (or more if there are fewer than 10 of you) of the Motivation Sheets.
- You wander round the room asking each of the other participants their opinion of the statement on your sheet(s). You put a mark for each person in either the Yes, No, or Sort Of boxes.
- Once everyone has asked everyone else you collate the totals on the Motivation Totals sheet.
- *Discuss the outcomes*  
What are the most popular reasons for people being there?  
Are there any which no-one agrees with?  
Find out why people put 'Sort Of'  
Which reasons do participants feel are about giving to others, and which are about getting something for themselves?  
Are there other reasons not listed?

# Motivation/Expectations

## Motivation Totals Sheet

		Total
1	to get experience for work	
2	to meet some new people	
3	to put something back into society	
4	to get to know someone with a learning disability	
5	to help fight against authority	
6	to help someone make a change in their life	
7	because I have spare time and want to do something useful	
8	to expand my knowledge of disability	
9	because I have some skills/knowledge to offer	
10	because it would make me feel good about myself	

Motivation Totals Sheet

## Motivation/Expectations

### Motivation Sheet 1

I want to get involved as an advocate . . .

*to get experience for work*

	Tally	Totals
Yes, definitely		
Sort of		
No, not really		

# Motivation/Expectations

## Motivation Sheet 2

I want to get involved as an advocate . . .

*to meet some new people*

	Tally	Totals
Yes, definitely		
Sort of		
No, not really		

## Motivation/Expectations

### Motivation Sheet 3

**I want to get involved as an advocate . . .**

***to put something back into society***

	Tally	Totals
Yes, definitely		
Sort of		
No, not really		



# Motivation/Expectations

## Motivation Sheet 4

I want to get involved as an advocate . . .

*to get to know someone  
with a learning disability*

	Tally	Totals
Yes, definitely		
Sort of		
No, not really		

## Motivation/Expectations

### Motivation Sheet 5

**I want to get involved as an advocate . . .**

*to help fight against authority*

	Tally	Totals
Yes, definitely		
Sort of		
No, not really		

# Motivation/Expectations

## Motivation Sheet 6

I want to get involved as an advocate . . .

*to help someone make  
a change in their life*

	Tally	Totals
Yes, definitely		
Sort of		
No, not really		

## Motivation/Expectations

### Motivation Sheet 7

**I want to get involved as an advocate . . .**

*because I have spare time  
and want to do something useful*

	Tally	Totals
Yes, definitely		
Sort of		
No, not really		

# Motivation/Expectations

## Motivation Sheet 8

I want to get involved as an advocate . . .

*to expand my knowledge of disability*

	Tally	Totals
Yes, definitely		
Sort of		
No, not really		

## Motivation/Expectations

### Motivation Sheet 9

**I want to get involved as an advocate . . .**

*because I have some skills/knowledge to offer*

	Tally	Totals
Yes, definitely		
Sort of		
No, not really		



# Motivation/Expectations

## Motivation Sheet 10

I want to get involved as an advocate . . .

*because it would make me feel good about myself*

	Tally	Totals
Yes, definitely		
Sort of		
No, not really		

# Friendships/Relationships

## Friendships/Relationships

🕒 Time Needed: 50-55 mins

### Aims

- To examine the nature of participants' own friendships/relationships with others.
- To compare and contrast such relationships with those to be developed with advocacy partners.
- To consider what is needed to maintain the advocacy relationship.

### Key Points

- We meet people in a variety of places.
- We go on to develop friendships with only some of those we meet.
- We tend to have different levels of friendship with those we know - acquaintances to close friends.
- Many of the people we became friends with are no longer our friends - but we rarely say goodbye.
- There are a number of practical tasks to be done to maintain a friendship.
- People with learning disabilities rarely get the opportunity to meet a large variety of people, and haven't often developed the skills to develop friendships with those they do meet.
- Advocates may need to show their partners what it is to be a friend
- The advocate-partner friendship generally has an artificial beginning.
- Advocates need to take the initiative in maintaining contact with their partner.
- Advocates need to ensure they 'say goodbye' clearly to their partners if the partnership needs to end.

### Materials

- Flipchart & pens
- A4 blank paper & pens

### What to do

#### 1. How do we meet our friends?

*Brainstorm as a group*

- **'Where and how did we meet our friends?'**

*Discuss the outcomes*

- Which of these places might a person with a learning disability not have access to?
- How easy would it be to be in (or get to) these places on your own (without someone who knows you)?

#### 2. What makes a friend a friend?

*In small groups discuss for 5 mins*

- **'What makes someone you meet a friend rather than an acquaintance?'**
- Each group needs to note down their ideas to be able to feedback to the whole group.
- Combine the ideas onto one flipchart sheet.

*Discuss the outcomes*

- How many of our acquaintances become close friends?
- How easy is it to develop a close friendship?
- How long can it take to develop a close friendship?

# Friendships/Relationships

## Friendships/Relationships

### 3. Why do friendships end?

Brainstorm as a group

- **‘Why do friendships end?’**

Discuss the outcomes

- How equal do we need friendships to be?
- How often have we said ‘goodbye’ to a friend rather than letting things drift?
- What would be a respectful way to say ‘goodbye’?

### 4. Maintaining friendships

In small groups make a list of

- **5 practical things we need to do to maintain a friendship.**
- Each group needs to note down their ideas to be able to feedback to the whole group.
- Combine the ideas onto one flipchart sheet.

Discuss the outcomes


- What are the ‘must do’s’?
- Which of these things might someone with a learning disability have difficulty with?

### 5. What kind of relationship?

Discuss as a group

- What kind of friendship/relationship might we be able to (or need to) develop with our advocacy partner?

#### Handout Notes

 *Partners with disAbility (p.20)*  
**Friendship Scheme**

## Social/Leisure Activities

### Social/Leisure Activities

🕒 Time Needed: 25-30 mins

#### Aims

- To explore the range of social/leisure activities available.
- To consider the time, cost, and access to such activities.
- To consider what may be needed for a person with a learning disability to be able to participate in such activities.

#### Key Points

- There is a vast range of social/leisure activities available.
- Some indoor/some outdoor.
- Some may be in our own homes.
- There are free activities and there are expensive activities.
- For many activities transport is a major issue.
- Advocates need to look at our own and our partner's budgets when deciding activities.
- Advocates and their partners need to try activities which they both might enjoy.
- Advocates & partners need to negotiate what activities to do.
- Trying new activities can be fun for all!

#### Materials

- Flipchart & pens

#### What to do

*Brainstorm very quickly as a group*

- **'What social/leisure activities are there to do?'**

*Discuss the Outcomes*

- Which of these can we do at home?
- Which can we do in bad weather?
- Which are free?
- Which are very expensive?
- Which might we need transport for?
- Which might a person with a learning disability need transport for?
- Which are our favourites?
- What if your partner wants to do something you don't enjoy?

# Dignity & Respect

## Dignity & Respect

🕒 Time Needed: 45-50 mins

### Aims

- To explore the nature of dignity & respect.
- To consider what to do in potentially difficult situations with our partners.
- To consider public perceptions of people with learning disabilities.

### Key Points

- We need to try to treat everybody with dignity & respect, including ourselves.
- We need to try to remain respectful even in situations where we are not respected ourselves.
- When on an activity with their partner, advocates need to try to uphold their partner's dignity and rights as far as possible, without disrespecting themselves.
- We all make mistakes, but we can recover from them.
- We need to use whatever support is available to us.
- The public generally mean well when with people with learning disabilities but can sometimes have a lack of knowledge or experience.
- If it feels appropriate at the time, it is good to gently challenge assumptions about people with learning disabilities.

### Materials

- Card copies of **Dignity & Respect Scenarios One to Four** (pp.38-39) for each person in the group.
- Flipchart & pens

### Handout Notes

📖 *Partners with disAbility* (p.25)  
Dignity & Respect

### What to do

#### 1. *What do we mean by Dignity & Respect?*

*Brainstorm as a group*

- **'How would we like to be treated by others?'**  
e.g. with honesty, politely

*Discuss the outcomes*

- How easy is it to always treat others with dignity & respect?
- Do we always treat others in these ways? If not, what stops us doing so?
- What can we do if know we haven't treated someone with dignity & respect?

#### 2. *Dignity & Respect Scenarios*

*In groups of 3/4*

- Look at **Dignity & Respect Scenario One** (p.38) and discuss for 5 mins what you might do in this situation.

*As a whole group discuss the possibilities*

- Would we answer the woman directly?
- Would we mention her mistake in getting your partner's gender wrong?
- Would you accept the ice-cream?
- How appropriate is it for a 22 year-old to be playing on the swings?
- Do we need to educate the mother or humour her?
- What might happen if you get angry or indignant?
- What might your partner think of the interaction?

#### 3. *Repeat for more Scenarios*

*Take a look at as many of the other Dignity & Respect Scenarios as you want/have time for.*

- Work on them in small groups before discussing them together

## Dignity & Respect

### *Dignity & Respect Scenarios*

#### *Scenario One*

You're at the park with your 22-year-old advocacy partner. She loves going on the swings and is having a great time playing alongside the children.

You all decide to have a rest and sit down for a drink and a packet of crisps.

The mother of one of the children comes across and says to you, 'I feel really sorry for *him*. Would *he* like an ice cream?'

*What would you do?*

#### *Scenario Two*

You go to a restaurant with your partner. You have finished your meal and get up to leave when your friend starts to shout, sits down and won't move. Meanwhile the manager is waiting to get your table ready for some others.

*What would you do?*

## Dignity & Respect

### *Dignity & Respect Scenarios*

#### *Scenario Three*

You are on an outing and your partner needs to use the public toilets. You have to keep the door open in case she has a seizure.

*What could you do to ensure she maintains her dignity and respect?*

#### *Scenario Four*

You are pushing your partner in her wheelchair when a friend of yours comes across the street and starts chatting with you. You notice that your partner has become quite upset.

*What could have upset her?*

#### *Scenario Five*

You are at the theatre with your partner watching 'Fiddler on the Roof'. Your partner is clearly having a great time and starts singing along in a loud voice to the songs which she knows well. The man in front of you turns round abruptly and shouts, 'Will you shut up!'. Your partner starts crying.

*What do you do?*

# Communication

## Communication

🕒 Time Needed: 45-50 mins

### Aims

- To explore why we need to communicate.
- To recognise the variety of methods of communication we all use.
- To recognise how we actively listen to others.
- To explore our feelings around communication which is difficult.

### Key Points

- We all need to communicate for a variety of reasons, particularly to prevent isolation.
- We need to communicate our feelings as well as our basic needs.
- We don't just communicate through speech.
- People with learning disabilities will want to communicate with us even if they are not speaking.
- When people don't communicate through speech, the conversation may lose detail. It may also be difficult to convey feelings.
- We need to actively listen to what others are saying, even if they aren't communicating with speech.
- There will be situations where we just don't understand what is being communicated; we need to be honest in these situations and acknowledge our own feelings.

### Materials

- Flipchart & pens

### What to do

#### 1. Why communicate?

*Brainstorm as a group*

- **'Why do we need to communicate?'**

e.g. to let other people know what we need

to tell others how we feel

to connect with others

*Discuss the outcomes*

- Are there any of the outcomes we feel aren't really essential?
- How might it affect our life if we could only communicate certain things?
- How might we feel if we weren't able to communicate anything that we need to?

#### 2. How do we communicate?

a) *In pairs chat to your partner for one minute; see if you can find a few things you have in common.*



# Communication

## Communication

*Discuss the outcomes*

- How easy was it to find things in common?
- What kinds of things did you discuss?

*b) In different pairs repeat the task for one minute but without talking, writing, or drawing.*

*Discuss the outcomes*

- How easy was it this time to find things in common?
- Was what you discussed/found out any different from before?
- How detailed was your conversation?
- In what ways did you manage to communicate?
- Was anyone using a recognised sign language?
- Was anyone using signs which we all tend to recognise?

### 3. Active listening

*In pairs take turns to do the following task:*

- *Person A talks for one minute about something of interest to them. Person B sits and listens, but without reacting in any way - no talking, movement, expression etc.*
- *After the minute is up swop roles to try the other experience.*

*Discuss the outcomes*

- Which was most difficult - talking or listening?
- What was most difficult for the talker?
- What was most difficult for the listener?
- How did it feel not being listened to, or not showing you were listening?
- As the talker - what were you missing from the listener to know they were listening?
- As the listener - what did you want to do to show you were listening?

### 4. Not understanding

*Brainstorm as a group*

- **‘What would you do/how might it feel if you just can’t understand what someone is trying to communicate to you?’**

*Discuss the outcomes*

- Should we let on that we don’t understand?
- How honest should we be about our feelings in the situation?
- Even if we don’t understand - can we still somehow show we are connected?

#### Handout Notes

*Partners with disAbility (p.31)*  
Communication

## Issues faced by people with learning disabilities

### *Issues faced by people with learning disabilities*

🕒 Time Needed: 50-55 mins

#### Aims

- To consider the kinds of issues or opportunities which may arise for people with learning disabilities.
- To offer participants a 'taster' of what might be involved in advocating for a person with a learning disability.
- To briefly consider what an advocate may need to do to begin addressing such issues or opportunities.

#### Key Points

- It is vital to seek the views of your partner regarding the issue where possible - usually as the first step.
- It is important to gain as many facts about a situation as possible; lateral thinking can often help with this.
- We need to try not to make assumptions about anything.
- We need to consider other people's agendas (and our own) when asking for information.
- Assertiveness and persistence are useful qualities for advocates.
- A non-judgemental, diplomatic approach may be necessary and can be more effective.
- Addressing one issue may lead to the need to address further issues.
- Advocates need to use the support systems available to them.

#### Materials

- Flipchart & pens.
- Enough pens for each small group to have one.
- There are 5 **Issues Sheets** (pp. 44-48). You will need copies of each one for each participant.

#### What to do

*Ask participants to get into small groups (3/4 people per group).*

- *Each group has copies of one of the Issues. That group considers the questions on the that sheet and writes their collective response on one copy of the sheet.*
- *After 10 minutes the groups pass their response sheet to another group, and receive one from a different group.*
- *Each group looks at the new issue and the responses and considers any amendments or additions to the responses already suggested.*

*Discuss the outcomes*

#### **Issue Sheet 1 - Health**

- What could be the causes of your partner walking differently to the way he usually does?
- If his feet *are* hurting, what could be the causes of that?
- Would it feel OK to ask your partner about his feet?
- What facts do you need to find out?
- How might his parents or carers feel about you asking them about his feet, or his visits to the chiropodist?
- How much would you involve your partner in talking with others about his feet?
- What if you're simply told, 'He's only allowed four appointments a year. He has another one in four weeks - it'll wait until then'?
- What rights do you have to address this issue?

## Issues faced by people with learning disabilities

### *Issues faced by people with learning disabilities*

#### **Issue Sheet 2 - At Home**

- For what reasons might your partner enjoy visiting galleries?
- What reasons might there be for her not having pictures on her walls at home?
- Who would you talk to first about this issue?
- How might staff in the home feel about you raising this issue?
- If there are rules in the home about not having pictures on the walls - what could you do, if anything?
- This issue isn't really a matter of life and death - is it really worth you spending time on? Why?

#### **Issue Sheet 3 - Daytime**

- What might you need to find out from your partner before approaching anyone else?
- For what reasons might your partner have mentioned the computers at the college?
- What might she have enjoyed about the experience of having had a go at the college?
- What issues might this one comment possibly lead on to?
- Is this really an issue, or an opportunity, or potentially both? Why?

#### **Issue Sheet 4 - Relationships**

- How do we know what your partner says happened is true?
- If it isn't true what reasons may she have had for saying it to you?
- This is potentially a very serious issue. How would you feel about the possibility of the day centre staff feeling threatened or getting angry with you?
- What if they deny it happens, that your partner is making it up?
- Could your partner be at fault in this, somehow causing the staff member to get angry? How would you approach this possibility?

#### **Issues Sheet 5 - Money**

- Is this really a problem - his parents seem to be happy to give him money each time he goes out?
- What are the possible reasons for him saying he has no money each time you go out?
- If he really has no money left, what could be happening to it?
- Money seems to be a very touchy subject for a lot of people in UK society. How would you feel about raising the subject with your partner, or his parents?

## **Issues faced by people with learning disabilities**

### *Issues Sheet 1 - Health*

**You notice your partner's feet seem to hurt when he is walking. You know he sometimes sees a chiropodist.**

*What do you need to find out?*

*Who could you ask?*

*What would you say to them?*

## **Issues faced by people with learning disabilities**

### ***Issues Sheet 2 - At Home***

**You visit your partner in the group home where she lives and notice she doesn't have any pictures or posters in her room. You know she appreciates paintings because you've visited galleries with her.**

***What do you need to find out?***

***Who could you ask?***

***What would you say to them?***

## **Issues faced by people with learning disabilities**

### *Issues Sheet 3 - Daytime*

**Your partner mentions she once had a go on a computer when visiting a college and really enjoyed it**

*What do you need to find out?*

*Who could you ask?*

*What would you say to them?*

## **Issues faced by people with learning disabilities**

### ***Issues Sheet 4 - Relationships***

**Your partner mentions that one of the staff at her day centre often tells her off and swears at her. She gets upset by this.**

***What do you need to find out?***

***Who could you ask?***

***What would you say to them?***

## **Issues faced by people with learning disabilities**

### *Issues Sheet 5 - Money*

Your partner is given £10 by his parents when you visit him to go out. He doesn't spend all of it because he says he'd like to save it for next time. On each further occasion you go out he never seems to have any money and asks his parents for more.

*What do you need to find out?*

*Who could you ask?*

*What would you say to them?*



# Listening Skills

## Listening Skills

🕒 Time Needed: 45-50 mins

### Aims

- To raise our own awareness of our existing listening skills.
- To consider what it may be important to listen for when advocating.
- To consider how we can support communication by active listening.

### Key Points

- It can be very difficult to take in the relevant points within a conversation.
- We need to be clear what we are listening for: facts, opinions, feelings?
- Our responses to the person talking can aid the flow of the conversation and can help us focus.
- Our responses may include questions, body language, or other encouraging sounds or gestures.
- It's important to acknowledge to ourselves and others when we didn't quite get what was being said, even though this can sometimes be difficult.

### Materials

- One copy of **Listening Skills Activity Sheet** (p. 50) for each member of the group

### What to do

*Split up into groups of 3 people.*

- Give each person a copy of the **Listening Skills Activity Sheet**.
- Explain how the activity works (look at the explanation on the sheet)

*Discuss the outcomes*

- Which role was the hardest? Why?
- Was body language important? How?
- To what extent were you able to recognise what was fact, opinion, or feelings?
- What kinds of things did you remember easiest?
- What were you able to do to help yourself listen?
- What did you learn about your own listening skills?

### Handout Notes

📄 Handout (p.51)

**Listening Skills Notes**

# Listening Skills

## Listening Skills Activity Sheet

### To Begin

- Decide which of you is to be person A, B, or, C.

### Round 1

- Person A talks to person B for **3 minutes** about something that is of interest to A - their family, a friend, their work, a hobby . . .
- Person C watches A talking to B.

### Round 2

- Once time is called (after 3 minutes), B will have **2 minutes** to reflect back to A what she/he was saying.  
*(The key thing here is for B to try to 'catch' the main issues. For example, A might have stressed more than once that all his/her brothers and sisters still keep in touch. B might say, 'all your brothers and sisters keep in touch and it sounds as if that is pretty important to you').*
- Meanwhile, C's job is to listen to what B says and watch how he/she says it.

### Round 3

- Once time is called again (after 2 minutes), it is C's turn. She/he has **3 minutes** to give feedback to B on how she listened to A, and how well, in C's view B reflected what A was saying.  
*(The key thing here is for C to say what he/she observed, but not to pass judgement or assume that she/he is necessarily right).*
- B and A then have a brief opportunity to comment on what C says.

### Round 4

- Once time is called again (after 3 minutes), you all swop round and take on a different role:  
B becomes A  
A becomes C  
C becomes B
- **We'll do the activity 3 times so everyone has played each of the 3 roles.**

# Listening Skills

## Listening Skills Notes

### Invitation to talk/communicate

- This can involve a comment about the person's body language, e.g. 'You're looking a bit down', or 'How have things gone for you today?' This *opens* the communication.
- Silence, waiting for the other person to speak.
- Eye contact.

### Encouragers

- These are head nods, 'Mm-hm's', 'Oh's', 'And?' etc., which encourage the person to continue to communicate. If talking, an encourager like, 'Keep talking, I'm with you', can help.

### Relevant questions

- A good listener asks fewer questions and when they do ask a question it follows the concerns of the person talking. The questions are open and do not require a one word answer.

### Attentive silence

- Wait for the person to think of their response, silence is alright! Most of us try to jump in when there is a silence because we feel awkward or think we know what the person is about to say.

### Open/Closed Questions

- An open question leads the other person into talking.
- A closed question is looking for a one word response, or it puts a suggestion forward with no scope for further ideas to be explored.

### Closed

'We could go shopping couldn't we?'  
'Going to the cinema is a good idea, isn't it?'

### Open

'What would you like to do today/next week?'  
'How do you feel about going to the cinema or would you like to do something else?'

- Open questions can start with 'What would you . . .', or 'How do you feel . . .'

### Reflecting

- To reflect what you have seen or heard confirms to the person that you understand.  
This can be done by:

### Paraphrasing

- By repeating the essence of what the person has said, in your own words can show the person that you are listening and it helps you to check that you have understood what has been said.

### Reflecting feelings

- Feelings can be conveyed by what the person does, facial expression, posture, eyes etc. If a person is talking about a sad event it would show lack of understanding if you had a happy smile.

# Range & Roles of Service Providers

## Range & Roles of Service Providers

🕒 Time Needed: 25-30 mins

### Aims

- To raise participants awareness of some of the community services involved with people with learning disabilities.
- To consider the roles of care professionals involved in such services.
- To recognise the need to be clear about which workers are responsible for which aspects of service provision.

### Key Points

- There may be many different care professionals involved in the lives of people with learning disabilities.
- Some of their roles may appear to overlap; it is important to establish clarity about what each worker's responsibilities are.
- You may need to go through several layers of hierarchy to reach the person who has the authority to make a decision.
- The systems may differ in different areas of the country - it's important to find out how it works where your partner lives.
- As an advocate you don't need to know how the system works straightaway - you can find out as you go along.
- As an advocate it's not essential to get to know each professional personally straightaway. This will certainly be useful, however, should issues arise with the service for which they are responsible.

### Materials

- Flipchart and pens
  - **Job Cards 1-4** (pp.53-56):
1. Copy onto card one set for each small group of 3/4 people.
  2. Cut each sheet into two Job Descriptions with their Job Title.
  3. Cut the Job Titles off the top of each Job Description.
  4. Separate the Job Titles from the Job Descriptions for each set of Jobs
  5. Provide each small group with a set of jumbled Job Titles and Job Descriptions for them to match up.

### What to do

The Job Descriptions are based on those of one London borough.

- *Split the group into small groups of 3/4 people.*
- *Give each group a set of jumbled Job Titles and Job Descriptions.*
- *Ask them to match up the Job Titles with the Job Descriptions.*

### Discuss the outcomes

- How clear are each care professional's responsibilities?
- Has anyone come across any of these professionals?
- Are there any other care professionals you have come across, or you think someone with a learning disability may come into contact with? (e.g. doctors, support workers in homes/day centres, managers of homes/day centres, teachers etc.)
- Which of the care professionals do you think an advocate would most likely have contact with?
- How would you feel about making contact or meeting with some of these care professionals?

### Handout Notes

📄 Handout (p.57)  
**Job Descriptions**

# Range & Roles of Service Providers

## Job Cards 1

### Social Workers

#### *Responsibilities*

- A caseload of people with learning disabilities and their families.
- Working out what services they and their families need.
- Helping to fill in gaps in services.
- Ensuring that people receive their full entitlements to financial benefits.
- Support in day to day living problems.

### Clinical Psychologist

#### *Responsibilities*

- Working with individual clients, providing psychological assessments and interventions - e.g. assessing and/or treating intellectual, behavioural, social and emotional difficulties, designing and implementing programmes to promote independent living skills, counselling etc.
- Working with groups of clients - advising, training, counselling and supporting care-givers (i.e. staff and/or parents).

# Range & Roles of Service Providers

## Job Cards 2

### Community Care Workers

They work with adults and children who live in the community, either with parents, relatives, or living independently after moving into the community from hospital.

#### *Responsibilities*

- helping to identify the needs of all their clients and teach them the skills they require that will enable them to have more freedom, confidence and independence to enjoy every aspect of ordinary living.

### Community Support Workers

#### *Responsibilities*

- To support people who are, or hope to be, living in the community, either within a family, alone or sharing with others. The tasks undertaken are both numerous and varied, e.g. helping people from hospital or hostel to venture out into the community, and to move into their own homes, living a normal life in the community.
- Often, people living at home with their families, require a different level of support, with teaching and with learning how to socialise in the community, being a high priority. They have a role to play in all these tasks.

# Range & Roles of Service Providers

## *Job Cards 3*

### **Home Support Workers**

#### ***Responsibilities***

- **Providing practical support to enable clients to live within their own home - assisting, as necessary with all aspects of personal care and domestic tasks.**
- **Encouraging development of social activities that benefit or enhance the quality of life.**

### **Speech Therapist**

#### ***Responsibilities***

**Assessing the abilities and needs of children and adults with communication difficulties. Following this, treatment may be undertaken on an individual or group basis. They may give help in the following areas:**

- **Feeding**
- **Developing skills which are necessary before language can be acquired**
- **Developing understanding of language**
- **Developing speech and language abilities**
- **Training in the use of alternative communication systems and signing**

**The aim is to look at the client's needs within the environment and to develop potential communication skills within that in a practical way.**

# Range & Roles of Service Providers

## Job Cards 4

### Physiotherapist

#### **Responsibilities**

To advise on:

- the correct provision and use of walking aids, special footwear, orthopedic appliances, wheelchairs etc.
- the use of exercise, outdoor pursuits, and recreation to improve normal movement patterns, co-ordination skills and balance
- to assess and treat physical problems resulting from fractures, neurological, respiratory and orthopedic conditions.
- the advising and teaching of carers, relatives and other professionals on treatment plans and management of the above.

### Occupational Therapist

#### **Responsibilities**

- To assess and treat people who have a learning disability, and to offer advice and support to those people and their families, where necessary. The areas that they could be involved in include the following:
  - Self-care skills
  - Social skills
  - Play and leisure activities
  - Movement co-ordination
  - Sensory skills
  - Advice on aids and adaptations
- They aim to help the client become as independent as possible in whichever areas are necessary. She/he may suggest and carry out a training programme to teach new skills or offer advice on alternative ways to overcome an individual's difficulty.



# Range & Roles of Service Providers

## Job Descriptions

### Social Workers

#### Responsibilities

- A caseload of people with learning disabilities and their families.
- Working out what services they and their families need.
- Helping to fill in gaps in services
- Ensuring that people receive their full entitlements to financial benefits
- Support in day to day living problems

### Community Care Workers

- They work with adults and children who live in the community, either with parents, relatives, or living independently after moving into the community from hospital.

#### Responsibilities

- Helping to identify the needs of all their clients and teach them the skills they require that will enable them to have more freedom, confidence and independence to enjoy every aspect of ordinary living.

### Clinical Psychologist

#### Responsibilities

- Working with individual clients, providing psychological assessments and interventions - e.g. assessing and/or treating intellectual, behavioural, social and emotional difficulties, designing and implementing programmes to promote independent living skills, counselling etc.
- Working with groups of clients - advising, training, counselling and supporting care-givers (i.e. staff and/or parents).

### Community Support Workers

#### Responsibilities

- To support people who are, or hope to be, living in the community, either within a family, alone or sharing with others. The tasks undertaken are both numerous and varied, e.g. helping people from hospital or hostel to venture out into the community, and to move into their own homes, living a normal life in the community.
- Often, people living at home with their families, require a different level of support, with teaching and with learning how to socialise in the community, being a high priority. They have a role to play in all these tasks.

### Speech Therapist

#### Responsibilities

- Assessing the abilities and needs of children and adults with communication difficulties. Following this, treatment may be undertaken on an individual or group basis. They may give help in the following areas:
  - Feeding
  - Developing skills which are necessary before language can be acquired
  - Developing understanding of language
  - Developing speech and language abilities
  - Training in the use of alternative communication systems and signing
- They aim to look at the client's needs within the environment and to develop potential communication skills within that in a practical way.

# Range & Roles of Service Providers

## Job Descriptions

### Physiotherapist

#### *Responsibilities*

To advise on:

- the correct provision and use of walking aids, special footwear, orthopedic appliances, wheelchairs etc.
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- to assess and treat physical problems resulting from fractures, neurological, respiratory and orthopedic conditions.
- the advising and teaching of carers, relatives and other professionals on treatment plans and management of the above.

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  - Self-care skills
  - Social skills
  - Play and leisure activities
  - Movement co-ordination
  - Sensory skills
  - Advice on aids and adaptations
- They aim to help the client become as independent as possible in whichever areas are necessary. She may suggest and carry out a training programme to teach new skills or offer advice on alternative ways to overcome an individual's difficulty.

### Home Support Workers

#### *Responsibilities*

- Providing practical support to enable clients to live within their own home - assisting, as necessary with all aspects of personal care and domestic tasks.
- Encouraging development of social activities that benefit or enhance the quality of life.

## Issues around emotional and sexual needs

### Issues around emotional and sexual needs

🕒 Time Needed: 50-55 mins

#### Aims

- To raise awareness of the emotional and sexual needs of people with learning disabilities.
- To recognise the difficulties many of us experience when discussing issues of our own sexuality, let alone that of people with learning disabilities.
- To explore attitudes and approaches with which we can seek to positively support people with learning disabilities around such issues.

#### Key Points

- People usually learn from experience the various social codes regarding the differences between friends and strangers - we cannot assume that people with learning disabilities have also learnt them.
- We need to offer people with learning disabilities a model of how to be with other people, and to support them to use it.
- Using such a model may offer people with learning disabilities some protection from abuse, as well as enhance their interaction with others.
- We need to give clear messages about the times and places in which it is appropriate to express our sexuality.
- It would be most unusual for anyone to be happy all of the time - we all feel and show a variety of emotions, including people with learning disabilities.

- We need to be honest and explicit with people with learning disabilities (and each other!) about the emotions we, or they may be experiencing.
- We need to seek support for ourselves when addressing issues around emotional and sexual needs with people with learning disabilities.

#### Materials

- Flipchart and pens.
- Copy of the **Emotional and Sexual Needs Talk Notes** (pp.60-62) for the facilitator.

#### What to do

- *This workshop takes the form of an extended talk with a couple of short activities to highlight various issues.*
- *The talk needs to be given sensitively, recognising the possible embarrassment of participants. It is good to remind participants that no-one will be coerced into participating or commenting if they feel uncomfortable in doing so. It can be helpful to acknowledge with the group our own feelings around discussing such issues with strangers.*
- *The **Emotional and Sexual Needs Talk Notes** offer 'scripted' notes which address the various issues in an order and manner which participants can hopefully relate to their own experiences.*

#### Handout Notes

📖 *Partners with disAbility* (p.57)  
Affection, touch, and sexuality

# Issues around emotional and sexual needs

## *Emotional and Sexual Needs Talk Notes*

### **1. Introduction**

- It isn't the intention of this workshop to show you up or to get you to disclose personal details; it is more to raise an awareness around the emotional and sexual needs of people with learning disabilities and to explore how we may be able to support them and ourselves around such issues.
- This workshop looks into areas which are often felt to be sensitive and I'm sure your sensitivity to what other say would be appreciated.

### **2. Activity**

- In pairs imagine you've just started a new job and you're meeting the person next to you for the first time. Introduce yourselves to each other.

#### *Questions for the whole group*

- What did you do?
- What things did you find out or discuss with each other?
- Was there any touching, hugging, kissing?
- How would you do this differently in different situations, with people of a different culture, sex, age etc.?
- How do we know how to behave in these situations? Were there lessons on introductions at school?

#### *Points to highlight*

- Most of us are able to decide on ways to greet people which are appropriate to the situations we find ourselves in.
- We have learnt the various codes through our own experiences. People with learning disabilities may not have had as many experiences or learnt those codes and may therefore act in inappropriate ways in the same situations.
- Some people with learning disabilities may greet you with questions which you find embarrassing or funny e.g. How much money do you earn? Have you got a boyfriend or girlfriend? They may not have intended to embarrass you or make you laugh; they may not have the awareness to know of the inappropriateness of their questions in that situation.
- We need to offer people with learning disabilities a model of how people behave in different situations - and this needs to be done explicitly.

### **3. Questions for the whole group**

- What would you do, or how would you feel if you met someone for the first time at a new job and they hugged you?
- Would you feel any differently if a person with a learning disability hugged you when they met you for the first time?

## Issues around emotional and sexual needs

### *Emotional and Sexual Needs Talk Notes*

*Points to highlight*

- There may be positive and negative feelings and they may be different for different people.
- People with learning disabilities may not be aware of the effect they have on others by hugging them.
- It's important to be explicit about what you feel if someone with a learning disability hugs you as a stranger. Let them know you feel uncomfortable (if you do!).

**4. Questions for the whole group**

- How would you feel if someone hugged you when they first met you . . . and held the hug for 30 seconds, a minute, 5 minutes?
- Is there a point where it begins to feel uncomfortable, or unsafe?

*Points to highlight*

- Most of us have safety sensors which let us know when things don't feel comfortable or safe. Like other codes we pick these up through experience.
- People with learning disabilities don't necessarily know that some things they do may be unsafe; that this trust in others can make them particularly vulnerable.
- We feel it is better to encourage people with learning disabilities to consider their safety first - by not hugging strangers when they first meet them. But how do we do this?

**5. Question for the whole group**

- So . . . what *would* you do if someone with a learning disability who you didn't know went to hug you the first time you met?

*Points to highlight*

- We need to find a way to reject the hug without rejecting the person.
- Let them know how why you don't feel comfortable hugging them - because they're a stranger.
- Perhaps suggest a more appropriate form of contact - a handshake? We don't want to give the message that touching is bad, although it feels uncomfortable in this situation.
- The message you're giving must be clear.
- Don't worry if it all happens too fast, or if you feel you handled the situation badly. Seek support and think about it for next time.

**6. Sexuality/Sexual needs**

- People who have learning disabilities have the same emotional and sexual needs as all of us.
- It is often (mis)understood that someone who has a learning disability does not have any sexual desires or needs. This is a myth - they have them as much as anyone else.

## Issues around emotional and sexual needs

### *Emotional and Sexual Needs Talk Notes*

- This (mis)understanding can lead to confusion for people who have a learning disability since they may be told they are bad, dirty, evil, or naughty.
- We would like to give people who have a learning disability the impression that expressing their sexuality is not a bad thing in any way.
- It may be that you are supporting someone who has a learning disability who has a tendency to masturbate at inappropriate times and places. For example where there are other people around, at a picnic, or at dinner time.

#### *Questions for the whole group*

- What could you do if the person who has a learning disability you are supporting starts masturbating at an inappropriate time or place?

#### *Points to highlight*

- It is important to respect their needs and not to give a negative message.
- It can be suggested to them that they need to go to a place where they can be on their own. If there are safety issues and you need to be with them make sure there are two of you and turn your back if you can't leave them. Don't physically help them to masturbate in any way.
- The message to get across is that what they want to do is perfectly natural, but that they need to do it in private.
- It may take some time and a number of different methods to get the message across.

#### **7. Emotional needs**

- There is also often a misunderstanding concerning the emotional needs of people who have a learning disability and there are ways in which they can be supported.
- If the person you are with appears to be in a bad mood, happy, or unhappy then that mood needs to be respected. Few people are happy all of the time - the same is true for people who have a learning disability. Any number of things may be making them unhappy
- It is important to name the mood or emotion in order to offer a vocabulary for them to talk about how they are feeling.

#### **8. Rounding off**

- We need to present a model of socially acceptable and safe behaviour to people who have a learning disability.
- People who have a learning disability may not have an awareness of appropriate ways of greeting strangers and/or friends. They may be very vulnerable - they need clear messages.
- We have a responsibility to empower people who have a learning disability - 65% of people who have a learning disability have been abused.



# What can advocates offer to their partners?

## What do you want your advocate to do?

🕒 Time Needed: 25-30 mins

### Aims

- To explore what having an advocate can mean for someone.

### Key Points

- Partners can reasonably expect the same things that advocates might want from having their own advocate.
- Only an independent advocate can offer much of what a partner may expect.
- We all have things which we struggle to do alone.

### Materials

- Flipchart & pens
- A4 blank paper & pens

### What to do

- In pairs ask participants to list 5 things they would ask of their own advocate if they had one  
*e.g. Treat me with dignity and respect.*  
*Help me talk to people I get anxious talking to.*
- Ask the pairs to feedback their suggestions to collate a collective list on the flipchart.

### Discuss the outcomes

- Are any of the requests unreasonable?
- Who already does some of these things for us?
- What stops us doing some of these things ourselves?
- Who may be able to do some of these things for someone who has a learning disability?

### Handout Notes

📄 Handout (p.64)

**What might a partner ask of their advocate?**

**What do you want your advocate to do?**

## What can advocates offer to their partners?

### *What might a partner ask of their advocate?*

- Treat me with dignity and respect.
- Be a friend so that we may spend time together and share interests.
- Spend time alone together.
- Form an adult relationship with me.
- Share what is important to you with me.
- Care about me.
- Offer security and love.
- Be sensitive to my moods and feelings; leave me alone when I want to be alone.
- Listen.
- Allow me to express myself emotionally.
- Make sure there is fun in my life.
  
- Help me have a say in my life.
- Be with me and represent me in all meetings, reviews and conferences involving me.
- Introduce me to the community - shops, buses, amenities, people, outings, holidays etc..
- Help me to keep in touch with my family and friends.
- Represent me in matters of law.
- Make sure you seek support/supervision for the way getting involved makes you feel.
- Make sure you seek training to gain the skills needed to advocate for me.
- Monitor the standard of my accommodation and make sure I have the best home possible.
- Support me to express myself appropriately.
- Help me to find worthwhile things to do with my time.



## Meet with partners, advocates, parents, and/or professionals

### Meet with partners, advocates, parents, professionals

🕒 Time Needed: 55-60 mins

#### Aims

- To offer a variety of views on the involvement of advocates with people who have a learning disability.
- To enable potential advocates to ask questions of existing partners, advocates, parents, and/or professionals.
- To recognise the value placed on advocates by others involved with people who have a learning disability.

#### Key Points

- Advocates can be well respected but can also be seen as a threat to both parents and care professionals.
- There is a need for an advocate and their partner to meet regularly in order to build and maintain their relationship.
- There needs to be an ongoing dialogue between an advocate, their partners family, and the care professionals involved.

#### Materials

- Copy of **Ask Me Another** (pp.66-67) for the facilitator.
- Any other pre-prepared questions you feel may be of interest.

#### What to do

*You will firstly need to decide who you wish to invite to come along to this session:*

- Some people who have a learning disability may feel too exposed to participate, others may feel more secure if they have an advocate who can support them, other may feel confident to offer their experiences of advocacy. You will need to decide whether it feels appropriate to invite any of your existing or potential partners.

- If people who have a learning disability are invited then the pace of the session may need to be adapted in order that they can fully follow the discussion. You may need to use a number of alternative methods of communication and expression to seek their genuine feelings about advocacy (e.g. video, music, arts & crafts etc.). You will need to decide what is within the scope of your training course.

- Parents may find it difficult to discuss the involvement of advocates with their son/daughter if the son/daughter or their advocate are present.
- Similarly, advocates may feel inhibited by having family members there, or even the presence of professionals, especially if they come into contact through their advocacy role.
- You might like to invite some care professionals (social worker, home manager, support workers, psychologists etc.) whether or not they've had much involvement with advocates.
- You may need to consider carefully whether or not you need several sessions, and who to invite to which session. The ideal would be to have a mix of partners, advocates, parents, and professionals in order that an open discussion can be held.

#### Special Note

- It can sometimes be helpful and/or interesting to use the following activity **Advocate's Role/Relationships** (p.68) as a discussion starter within this session to hear the views of all those involved.

## Meet with partners, advocates, parents, and/or professionals

### Ask me another

#### Questions for partners

- What do you like about having an advocate?
- What kinds of things do you do together?
- What kinds of things do you talk about?
- How easy do you find it to let your advocate know when your worried about something?
- Has your advocate helped you change anything you weren't happy with? What did he/she do to help?
- Why do you think your advocate helps you out?
- What's the best thing about having an advocate?
- What's the worst thing about having an advocate?
- Are there things you'd like your advocate to do which they don't do at the moment?

#### Questions for advocates

- How well do you think you know your partner?
- How do you find out about things which they're not happy with?
- Have they ever disagreed with what you have suggested doing? What happened?
- What would you do if you felt you needed to do something in particular to help them, but they didn't want you to do it?
- What kind of contact do you have with your partner's family?
- Have there been any conflicts between you and you partner's family? What happened?
- What kind of contact do you have with the care professionals involved with your partner (e.g. social worker, home manager/ keyworker, day centre manager/ keyworker)?
- How do you think they view you?
- Have there been conflicts between you and care professionals? What happened?
- What do you see as the role of an advocate?
- What do you expect of the others involved with your partner?

# Meet with partners, advocates, parents, and/or professionals

## *Ask me another*

### *Questions for parents*

- How long has your son/daughter's advocate been involved?
- How often do they meet together?
- What kinds of things do your son/daughter's advocate and your son/daughter do when they meet up?
- What has your son/daughter's advocate advocated about in the last few months?
- What did they actually do? (phone calls, letters, meetings)
- How was their help important to you?
- When issues arise for your son/daughter, how do you and the advocate get to know about them?
- What do you think having an advocate and/or friend means to your son/daughter?
- What does having an advocate and/or friend for your son/daughter mean to you?
- What has been the best thing about your son/daughter having an advocate?
- What has been the worst thing about your son/daughter having an advocate?
- What would you see as an advocate's role? What do you expect of them?

### *Questions for professionals*

- What is your role in relation to your clients? What do you have a responsibility for?
- To what extent do you feel it's your responsibility to ensure your client has an advocate, and makes use of them?
- What kind of contact have you had with advocates in your work?
- How has the involvement of an advocate with one of your clients affected the way you have approached the situation?
- Have you come into conflict with an advocate? What happened?
- How do you see your role as being different from that of an advocate?
- What kind of contact do you think an advocate should have with their partner? How often?
- What would make you take note of what they are saying?
- What do you see as an advocate's role? What would you expect of them?

# Advocate's Role/Relationships

## Advocate's Role/Relationships

🕒 Time Needed: 55-60 mins

### Aims

- To consider the nature of the role and responsibilities of an advocate.
- To clarify the basis on which an advocate has a right to advocate.

### Key Points

- An advocate has a right to advocate, once their partner agrees to it, on the basis of the knowledge they have gained through their relationship with their partner.
- Your scheme will need to decide whether or not you will pay travel or other expenses. (In Kith & Kids we pay travel expenses to the advocate to and from their partner's home so they can at least get to see each other).
- An advocate should always check with their partner that it is OK to raise an issue with those who may be able to change things.
- An advocate's loyalty is to their partner, even if this means coming into conflict with parents or care professionals.
- In Kith & Kids we feel the advocacy agency has some responsibility to ensure that advocates are not pursuing courses of action which may be detrimental to the partners' development. We would wish to raise such issues with advocates when we become aware of them. Other agencies may feel their responsibility ends once a link between the advocate and partner has been agreed.
- An advocate must be independent of the services their partner uses. It is this which gives them their unique status without vested interests. It is still essential, however, for advocates to consider their own agendas through effective support and su-

pervision.

### Materials

- One set of cards made from **Advocate's Role/Relationships Cards** (p.69) for each small group of 3/4 participants.

### What to do

#### ***Diamond-ranking***

*Split the group into small groups of 3/4 participants.*

- *Give each group a set of Advocate's Role/Relationship Cards.*
- *Ask the groups to discuss which they agree with, which they don't, and which they half agree with.*
- *Groups should place the cards on a table (or the floor): those they agree with at the top, those they disagree with at the bottom, those they half-agree with halfway. The cards don't need to be placed in a strict order - just to give a sense of how much the group agree with them.*
- *Once groups have decided where to place their cards, ask them to have a walk around and look at the other group's decisions.*

#### ***Discuss the outcomes***

- Which cards do different groups disagree on? Which are the controversial ones?
- What rights/authority does an advocate have?
- Are advocates listened to/valued more than parents/more than the partner?

#### **Handout Notes**

📄 Handout (p.70)

**Code for Advocates**

## **Advocate's Role/Relationships**

### ***Advocate's Role/Relationships Cards***

**An advocacy partnership goes ahead once the advocate decides they want to**

**An advocate is accountable to the advocacy agency's workers and management**

**An advocate should be paid expenses for their involvement with their partner**

**An advocate should see their involvement with their partner lasting for as long as it takes to improve the quality of their life**

**An advocate has the right to raise anything which they or their partner are worried or concerned about**

**An advocate is there to tell their partner what to do when issues of concern arise**

**Where an advocate is worried or concerned about an issue they have noticed related to their partner they should automatically take it up with those in charge**

**An advocate is there to make sure care staff always arrange what their partner wants**

**When socialising with their partner an advocate should only do things their partner really enjoys**

**An advocate is there to help their partner to make friends and relationships in the community**

**Where conflicts arise with care staff an advocate should support the views of their partner's parents**

**An advocate should be independent of services which their partner uses**

# Advocate's Role/Relationships

## Code for Advocates

1. An advocacy partnership only goes ahead if both people agree it is what they want.
2. An advocacy partnership shall continue as long as both people wish. If an advocate decides to end the partnership, the advocacy co-ordinator should be informed immediately.
3. An advocate has the right to raise anything which they or their partner are worried or concerned about.
7. If serious problems or conflicts of interest arise the advocacy agency must be informed in order that they can provide appropriate information, back up and support.
8. An advocate's first loyalty is always to their partner, not to the advocacy co-ordinators, carers, family or people who provide services.
9. An advocate will try to make sure people have equal opportunities and that all people are treated equally and fairly.

This could be things to do with:

Access	Money
Being treated unfairly	Housing
Education	Training
Social Services	Transport
Work or employment	Legal matters

4. Where possible an advocate should get permission from their partner before taking up an issue on their behalf. If a partner does not want the advocate to take up an issue, they should not do so unless their partner's safety is at risk.
5. An advocate should remember that they are speaking on behalf of a partner because they are a concerned friend, not because they are a worker.
6. An advocate should at all times remember and respect the rights to confidentiality of their partner, unless their safety is at risk.
10. An advocate must remember they are working towards:
  - helping people make their own choices and decisions
  - supporting people to increase their skills and making sure people are able to do the same kinds of things as anyone else
  - helping people to make friends and relationships within the community that will last
  - ensuring their partner is always treated with dignity and respect

This code has been established to secure the rights of advocacy partners. It recognises the importance of relatives and other people providing services, whilst maintaining the independent status of advocates.



# Assertiveness Skills

## Assertiveness Skills

🕒 Time Needed: 55-60 mins

### Aims

- To consider the range of approaches to advocacy situations and which may be the most effective.
- To consider what may be needed for an assertive approach.
- To explore our own assertiveness in order to gain some awareness of our own strengths and needs.

### Key Points

- We can label various approaches to situations as aggressive, assertive, passive, or manipulative (see **Assertiveness Skills Notes** pp. 76-77).
- Generally an assertive approach is the most effective in the long term.
- Clarity, honesty, and openness are key factors in an assertive approach.
- Being assertive isn't necessarily easy - we may need support to use an assertive approach.

### Materials

- Flipchart and pens.
- As many copies of the **Assertiveness Skills Situation Cards** (pp. 73-75) copied onto card and cut out as appropriate for the group. Some situations need each person to have the same card, other situations require each person to take different roles.

### What to do

#### 1. Situation One

Split the group into groups of 2/3 participants.

- Give each participant a copy of the **Situation One** card.
- Give each group 5 minutes to consider their approaches to the situation.

#### Discuss the outcomes

- How would you respond to this situation? What other courses of action could there be?
- What is your priority in this situation? To do what has been arranged for you, or to stick to your original plans?
- Who's needs are important here?
- How can we look after our own needs and everyone else's? Is this possible to do? Is someone bound to feel hurt whatever course of action you take?
- Which of the various courses of action could be considered as aggressive, assertive, passive, or manipulative?

Brainstorm as a whole group

#### 'What is assertiveness?'

#### 2. Situation Two

Split the group into groups of 2/3 participants.

- Give each participant a copy of the **Situation Two** card.
- Give each group 5 minutes to consider what might be an assertive approach to the situation.

#### Discuss the outcomes

- Do you go or not?
- Is there a way to reach a compromise where your friends can go but you don't?
- Is it possible to meet everyone's needs in this situation?
- How easy would you find it to tell your friends of your decision?
- What might make it easier for you?

# Assertiveness Skills

## Assertiveness Skills

### 3. Situation Three

- Invite a couple of volunteers to take on the two roles.
- Ask which would like to take on the role of the advocate, and which the partner.
- Give the **Situation Three - Role A** card to the volunteer who will be the partner, and the **Situation Three - Role B** card to the volunteer who will be the advocate.
- Ask them to role-play the situation for a few minutes. Finish when it feels resolved, or if they are going round in circles.

### Discuss the outcomes

- Did Tony feel he got his message across. How did he think John felt about it?
- How **did** John feel about the news? How does Tony feel now?
- Did the outcome support the needs of both Tony and John?
- To what extent was it an assertive approach?
- What alternative approaches could we suggest?

*It may feel appropriate to offer the opportunity to the two volunteers to replay the situation, or for one or both to be replayed by a different volunteer. You will need to judge the feeling of the group. It is important that no-one is coerced into participating in the role-play.*

If the situation is replayed you can discuss the outcomes

- Did the situation feel easier this time?
- What was different about the approach?
- If you were still not feeling good about the situation, how would you seek support for yourself?

### 4. Situations Four and Five

- **Situation Four** is for three participants and **Situation Five** is for four.
- These situations offer the possibility of extended practice in advocating assertively in order to reinforce some of the points made in the earlier situations.
- You may not have time to explore these in one session but they are included here should your group wish to try them out in a different session.

### Handout Notes

Handout (p.76)

Assertiveness Skills



## Assertiveness Skills

### *Assertiveness Skills Situations*

#### Situation One

Your mother has phoned and left a message. She has organised a birthday meal for your granny and wants you to come. It is next weekend and you do not feel like going. You have had a hectic couple of weeks at work and you were planning to paint the kitchen and then have a couple of friends round for a drink.

What do you do?

#### Situation Two

You have arranged a camping weekend with three friends. They were relying on you to drive the van. You now realise that you do not really want to go - the weather forecast is very bad.

What do you do?

#### Situation Three - Role A

You are John. You live alone with your elderly parents. Your advocate Tony has promised to take you out for a drink after the photography class.

#### Situation Three - Role B

You are Tony. You go to a photography class with your partner John every week. You have promised to go for a drink afterwards. You have got a splitting headache and you want to go straight home to bed. Now you have got to break the news.

## **Assertiveness Skills**

### ***Assertiveness Skills Situations***

#### **Situation Four - Role A**

You are Tom, an advocate. You have been going out for a drink with Richard every Wednesday for a few weeks. Richard lives in a hostel. Each week he only brings a pound so you end up buying every round. You have asked him twice if he can bring some more money, as you are sure he has quite a lot banked with the hostel. You have just come to pick him up.

He is with a staff member (Dawn) and you want to check he is bringing enough money.

#### **Situation Four - Role B**

You are Dawn, a staff member at Langdown hostel. You are talking to Richard, who lives here. His advocate Tom has just come to pick him up to go for a drink.

#### **Situation Four - Role C**

You are Richard. You live in Langdown hostel. Every week you go out for a drink with your advocate Tom.

## Assertiveness Skills

### Assertiveness Skills Situations

#### Situation Five - Role A

You are Louise. You work in a small group house. Jan who lives there goes out with her advocate Ann. Ann has just arrived to pick Jan up. Margaret, who also lives in the house, has asked if she can go with them.

#### Situation Five - Role B

You are Margaret, you live in a small group house with Jan and two other women. Jan is going out with her advocate Ann tonight. You have asked Louise (who works in the house) if you can go along with them as you hardly ever go out in the evenings.

#### Situation Five - Role C

You are Jan. You live in a group house with Margaret and two other women, Your advocate Ann has just arrived to pick you up. You are going out to the pictures. Now Margaret has asked Louise (a staff member) if she can go - it is the first you have heard of it.

#### Situation Five - Role D

You are Ann. You have been going out with your partner Jan for a year. Tonight you have just arrived to pick her up from the group home where she lives to go to the pictures. Margaret who lives in the house has asked Louise (a staff member) if she can come along. You do not know Margaret and you think it might turn two friends going together into a group outing.

# Assertiveness Skills

## Assertiveness Skills Notes

### What is assertiveness?

Assertiveness is about treating yourself and other people with respect, and dealing with them 'on the level'. Being assertive means saying what you think and need and want, in a way that lets other people do the same. When I am assertive I am giving a message to other people - *'I'm OK, you're OK'*.

There are three other basic messages people often give through what they say and how they behave:

#### *'I'm OK, you're not OK'*

This is an aggressive message. This puts the other person down and makes it difficult for them to respond assertively.

#### *'I'm not OK, you're OK'*

This is a passive message. By giving the other person all the power and responsibility, I am opting out. I am not respecting myself and my own needs, and making it difficult for the other person to respect me.

#### *'I'm not OK, you're not OK'*

This is a form of manipulative message. I am saying I do not respect myself or you.

Depending on the context, and on the past relationship between people, it is, of course, possible to give a mixture of two or more of these messages. But these broad categories are useful in understanding how the way we communicate with other people is shaped by, and shapes, our self-image.

### People with learning disabilities

A person with learning disabilities may have received, *'you're not OK'* messages for much of his/her life. This can make it hard for them to initiate a straight pattern of communication. Manipulative, passive, and aggressive communication styles all make it easy for relationships with partners to become distorted. The advocate may keep all the power and make all the decisions, with the partner taking on a passive role. Or the advocate may become manipulative and put themselves down as well as their partner. So for example a partner may say, *'I'd like to go home later tonight because I went home early last week, but you're probably feeling tired'*. The advocate then says, *'I don't mind you staying later, it's just driving you home at the end of the evening, but you can stay late tonight because even though I am tired, I am on a holiday tomorrow'*.

Here, neither person has really got what they want, and they will probably not enjoy the rest of the evening. It is easy also for the advocate to reinforce negative messages in the way she/he talks to staff and to other people to give a message to her/his partner - *'we're OK, but you're not OK'*.

# Assertiveness Skills

## Assertiveness Skills Notes

Being assertive is difficult, and being assertive with someone who has little experience of being treated with respect is even harder.

### Why are we often not assertive?

Being assertive means putting your cards on the table. If the other person refuses to recognise what you think or need when you have been clear and open, you will feel rejected. Be prepared to pay that cost from time to time.

In our major institutions (school, work, etc.) individuals in powerful positions are often seen as more important people than others. This encourages unbalanced patterns of communication. We learn to talk down to people, talk up to people, or round people, rather than straight to them. If we are to value everyone in our society, we need to make the effort to unlearn such lessons.

### Some tips for being assertive

**Body Language** - Respect other people's space

- Stand tall
- Is your face saying what you are saying?
- Eye contact
- Be interesting not monotonous
- Adjust your volume control

**Setting the scene** - This is to help you be in control of the situation

- Choose the time and place
- Clarify what you want to say
- Decide what you would like from the situation

**Disclosing feelings** - Use 'I' statements, own your feelings

- Take responsibility for how you feel; avoid blaming others

**Being clear** - Use short, clear statements

- Avoid unnecessary padding

**Staying with it** - Stay with your statement

- Avoid getting hooked or side-tracked

**Empathising** - Acknowledge that you have heard what the other person has said

**Working for compromise** - This skill enables both parties needs to be met

- Assertiveness is not a matter of winning
- Compromise leaves both parties feeling good

# Negotiation Skills

## Negotiation Skills

🕒 Time Needed: 55-60 mins

### Aims

- To offer the experience of negotiating as an advocate.
- To consider what may be needed in an effective approach to negotiation.

### Key Points

- Negotiation isn't easy! It can be difficult to find a solution which all parties are happy with.
- It's good to take an approach of exploring the options with the other person.
- Make sure you understand what is being said - say so if you don't.

### Materials

- Flipchart and pens
- Copies of **Negotiation Situation - Role A** (p.80) cards for half the group, and of **Role B** for half the group

### What to do

#### **1. Lend me £100?**

*Split the group into pairs*

- *Ask each pair to try the following negotiation for 3/4 minutes:*

Person A needs £100.

Person B has £100 that they could lend but they resist lending it to Person A.

#### **Discuss the outcomes**

- Did Person A get the £100?
- What approaches did they take?
- What reasons did Person B give for his/her resistance?
- Was there any attempt to reach a compromise situation? Did it work?
- How emotional did the negotiation get? Were you angry, frustrated, overjoyed, feeling blackmailed? What were you feeling?
- *Ask the pairs if they would like to try again, either in the same roles, or swapping roles.*
- Find out if it went any differently.

*Brainstorm as a group:*

**'What does negotiation require?'**

# Negotiation Skills

## Negotiation Skills

### 2. Negotiation Situation

- Split into either two or four groups so that each group has 3-5 participants.
- Give each of Group A a card with Role A on it, and each of Group B a card with Role B on it.
- (If you have two more groups give Group C the Role A cards, and Group D the Role B cards).
- Ask the groups to spend 5 minutes deciding on their approach to the negotiation based on the information they have.
- Ask for two groups with different roles to volunteer to start.
- Each of these two groups needs to send a spokesperson to the negotiating table to start the negotiations.
- If either spokesperson gets stuck, or if the rest of their group feel they are straying off the agreed line they can be called back to adjust their approach.
- The same spokesperson or a different spokesperson could then try (or even a different group if you have four groups).
- Finish when you have reached a solution, or complete deadlock!

### Discuss the outcomes

- How did the negotiation go? Did you get what you wanted?
- To what extent did you understand the other person's position? Who was right?
- Did anyone 'win' the negotiation?
- How did you come away feeling about the other side? And about yourself?
- What kind of follow-up might you do after the meeting?
- How would you monitor any changes agreed to?

### Handout Notes

Handout (p.81)  
Negotiation Skills

## **Negotiation Skills**

### ***Negotiation Skills Situations***

#### **Negotiation Situation - Role A**

Your partner, Mahesh, is living in a supported home where you sense the staff feel quite threatened by him having an advocate. Because of his history when he lived in a hospital, he has not been allowed to take responsibility for his own money. It is presently allocated to him on a daily basis by the duty manager. Your partner feels like this is treating him like a child. He wants full control of his money.

#### **Negotiation Situation - Role B**

You are the duty manager in a supported home. When one of your residents, Mahesh, lived in a hospital he used to spend all his money at once and then pester staff for money and cigarettes. His money is now held in the safe and is allocated to him on a daily basis by the duty manager.



# Negotiation Skills

## Negotiation Skills Notes

### Some of the things which negotiation may require?

- Listening
- Understanding the other person's point of view
- Not blackmailing
- Compromise - mutual gain
- Both parties have something to trade
- Both parties must have a solution
- Both parties must feel comfortable with the outcome
- Recognition of the other parties needs/situation
- Joint brainstorming
- Buying time
- Knowing how far you are prepared to go

### Some possible guidelines for negotiation

- Work towards a win-win situation
- Separate the person from the issue (it's not the character of the other person, but the facts of the situation that matter)
- 'I' statements (taking responsibility and avoiding blame)
- Be clear/specific on conflict and outcomes (make sure you both understand where the conflict is)
- Deal with one issue at a time
- Look and listen (eye contact)
- Understand (show understanding, say it, see their position, find common ground)
- Brainstorm creatively (approach it as if it is a joint task)
- Consider time and place
- Acknowledge and appreciate

# Safety and Protection

## Safety and Protection

🕒 Time Needed: 55-60 mins

### Aims

- To consider the ways in which we try to minimise risks to ourselves in our everyday lives.
- To establish what advocates may need from the advocacy agency in order to feel safe with their role.
- To consider appropriate courses of action where there is cause for concern.
- To bring to the attention of advocates the agency's Safety & Protection and Confidentiality policies.
- It may be the case that people who have a learning disability are less aware of potential dangers, or are less able to put in place those things which may minimise the risks. We therefore have a responsibility to empower and/or protect them
- Advocates need to know how they can access support and supervision from the agency.
- Any snippet of information which gives rise to a cause for concern must not be ignored. The appropriate person/agency must be informed (e.g. Advocacy Co-ordinator, Chair of Management Committee, Police and/or Social Services protection teams).
- Advocates must have a copy of and adhere to the agency's Safety & Protection Policy and Confidentiality Policy, including clear Emergency procedures
- Confidentiality must be breached where there is a cause for concern for someone's safety.

### Key Points

- Factors which can contribute to a sense of vulnerability include: isolation, lack of understanding of a situation, unfamiliarity of an environment, and lack of support from others.
- Information, honesty, openness, and support are key factors in creating a situation which feels safe for all.
- We can all feel vulnerable at times but there are things we can put in place to minimise risks. With support we can gain the confidence to cope with the unexpected.

### Materials

- Flipchart and pens.
- Paper and pens for small groups.
- A copy of each of the **Cause for Concern Scenario Sheets** (pp. 85-87) for each participant.

# Safety and Protection

## Safety and Protection

### What to do

#### 1. Safe and Vulnerable

Split the group into groups of 3/4 participants. Give each group a sheet of paper and a pen.

- Ask half of the small groups to consider the question: **“Thinking about your everyday lives, or situations where you may have felt vulnerable, what is it that makes us feel vulnerable?”**
- Ask the other half of the groups to consider the question: **“Thinking about your everyday lives, or situations where you may have felt vulnerable, what can we do to make ourselves feel safer?”**
- Give each group 5 minutes to consider and note down their ideas.

#### Discuss the outcomes

- First ask the ‘vulnerable’ groups to call out a few of their ideas.
- What are the common themes which arise?
- To what extent are they to do with other people or the environment; are some to do with ourselves?
- Next ask the ‘safe’ groups to call out a few of their ideas.
- Are there any common themes here?
- Are there things we can do for ourselves to minimise risks, or are we dependent on others to ensure our safety?
- To what extent can we overcome the ‘vulnerable’ factors with the ‘safe’ ones? To what extent are they opposites?

#### 2. Advocates’ Safety Needs

In the same small groups:

- Ask the groups to consider: **“What may you need from us (the advocacy agency) to help make you feel safer in your role as an advocate?”**
- Give each group 2/3 minutes to consider the question and note down a few ideas.

#### Discuss the outcomes

- Have we already put in place any of your requests? (e.g. information and training)
- Explain how you may be able to address each of their requests. If there are some you can’t address, explain why not and/or seek ways to address them!

#### 3. Cause for Concern Scenario One

In the same small groups:

- Give each person a copy of **Cause for Concern - Scenario One** (p. 85).
- Ask the groups to discuss the various options and decide which they might do and which they wouldn’t do, or to think of their own course of action to deal with the situation.

#### Discuss the outcomes

- What are the possible scenarios that would fit the snippet of information you have seen?
- Why wouldn’t you pursue the courses of action you’ve rejected?
- Under what circumstances might you intervene in this situation?

# Safety and Protection

## Safety and Protection

- *If all seems OK, why might it be dangerous to take no further action?*
- *What would be an appropriate course of action?*

### Scenario Two

*In the same small groups:*

- *Give each person a copy of **Cause for Concern - Scenario Two** (p.86).*
- *Ask the groups to discuss the various options and decide which they might do and which they wouldn't do, or to think of their own course of action to deal with the situation.*

### Discuss the outcomes

- *What are the possible scenarios that would fit the snippet of information you have seen?*
- *Why wouldn't you pursue the courses of action you've rejected?*
- *What might you need to be wary of should you decide to take action yourself?*
- *What would be an appropriate course of action?*

### Scenario Three

*In the same small groups:*

- *Give each person a copy of **Cause for Concern - Scenario Three** (p. 87).*
- *Ask the groups to discuss the various options and decide which they might do and which they wouldn't do, or to think of their own course of action to deal with the situation.*


### Discuss the outcomes

- *What are the possible scenarios that would fit the snippet of information you have seen?*
- *Why wouldn't you pursue the courses of action you've rejected?*
- *Under what circumstances would you need to break confidentiality?*
- *What could you do to maintain the trust in your relationship with your partner should you need to break confidentiality?*
- *What would be an appropriate course of action?*

### 4. Safety & Protection and Confidentiality Policies

- *Ensure each person has a copy of your Safety & Protection and Confidentiality policies. (See **Kith & Kids' Safety and Protection Policy** referenced below).*
- *Ensure each person has a list of relevant phone numbers:*
  - *Advocacy Co-ordinator*
  - *Chair of Management Committee*
  - *Local Police*
  - *Local Social Services Emergency Desk*
- *Talk through any important guidelines and/or procedures.*

### Handout Notes

 *Partners with disAbility* (p.61)  
**Safety and Protection Policy**

## Safety and Protection

### *Cause for Concern - Scenario One*

*On arriving at the residential home where your partner lives, you see a person push another person. You're not sure what's going on - is it play, anger, impatience . . . ?*

*What can and/or do you do?*

#### Suggestions

1. Check with the person who was pushed if they're OK. If the reply is yes, then no further action is necessary. If the reply is no, then comfort them until they feel better.
2. The people involved need to sort it out with their keyworker/manager. It's not my place to interfere as this could actually make the situation worse.
3. Take the 'pusher' to one side and tell them this is not on, and that the next time it happens it will have to be reported.
4. Don't jump to conclusions but just keep an eye on them for a while.
5. No real harm appears to have been done, so there's no need to make a fuss.
6. Alert someone to the situation who may be able to help.
7. Go up to the people involved and sort it out or make it stop.

## **Safety and Protection**

### ***Cause for Concern - Scenario Two***

*You meet up with your partner to go for a walk in the park. You notice she has bruises on her arm that were not there the last time you saw each other.*

*What can and/or do you do?*

#### **Suggestions**

- 1. Alert Social Services or the Police to this potential abuse.**
- 2. Phone their parents asking (in a diplomatic way) if they know anything about this.**
- 3. Alert your Advocacy Co-ordinator to the situation.**
- 4. Try to talk about it with your partner and gently probe as to how it happened.**
- 5. Take your partner to a private place and ask to see if there is bruising anywhere else, just to make sure nothing more serious is going on.**
- 6. Ask a first-aid person to have a look at the bruises and get treatment if necessary.**
- 7. Wait until your partner says something about it herself. Don't ask questions so as not to cause discomfort or embarrassment - no pressure.**

## Safety and Protection

### *Cause for Concern - Scenario Three*

*Over a cup of coffee your partner tells you:  
‘He hurt me, but we mustn’t tell anyone. I’m just telling  
you - don’t tell anyone else’*

*What can and/or do you do?*

#### Suggestions

1. Take it seriously and comfort your partner, acknowledging we all get hurt sometimes, but it’s not the end of the world. Don’t dwell on the negative.
2. Explain to your partner that unless they can say who hurt them, you can’t help.
3. Respect confidentiality - say that you will help and discretely investigate the situation yourself.
4. Having talked about it together, say you feel you have to tell someone who may be able to help. Name or point out the person you would talk to.
5. Ask who he is and how they hurt the member.
6. Breach confidentiality by telling a member of staff, but don’t tell the member you feel you have to do this, in order not to distress them unnecessarily.
7. Assure your partner you respect their confidentiality; empathise and show understanding of their worry.



## Information Gathering

### *I know a man (person!) who does*

🕒 Time Needed: 55-60 mins

#### Aims

- To offer the opportunity for advocates to research services in their local community.

#### Key Points

- There are many services provided in the community, both by local authorities, and the voluntary sector. It can be difficult, however, to find ones which meet the needs of your partner.
- Even having found appropriate services, the funding may not be available for your partner to access them.
- There may be some things which it may feel difficult to support with, and may raise difficult issues for advocates (e.g. finding a boyfriend). Advocates must use available support systems.
- Many issues can be addressed simply by advocates making service providers aware of what their partner wishes. They may not have known before.
- Services vary from area to area - it's important to research what is available in the area where partners live.

#### Materials

- A copy of each of the **I know a man (person!) who does** (p.89) for each participant.
- Access to a phone!

#### What to do

- Give each person a copy of **I know a man (person!) who does** (p.89) and ask participants to spend a week or two researching how they might go about supporting Joanna with her various needs.
- After a week or two, come back together and discuss the outcomes

#### *Discuss the outcomes*

- To what extent were you able to meet Joanna's needs?
- Which ones could you find instant solutions to?
- Were there any which you felt to be impossible?
- Which ones might need more sustained negotiation to obtain them? How would you go about this?
- Were there any which you might feel uncomfortable supporting your partner with? If so, what would you do?



## Information Gathering

### *I know a man (person!) who does*

Joanna is 33 and lives in a staffed group home in your local authority area with five other people. She needs a wheelchair to get about.

She wants:

- to make sure she is getting all the benefits she is entitled to
- to find a boyfriend
- to learn yoga
- to get an electric wheelchair
- to have a holiday without the staff from the group home
- to get a bath rail installed so she can use the bath herself
- to move into a flat of her own
- to get a job
- to find out about learning to drive
- to talk to someone in confidence about her mother, who is terminally ill
- to lose weight
- to go swimming in a public swimming pool
- to stop going to the Day Centre

*For each of these things can you advise Joanna who to contact, and where she would find them if she lived in your area?*

*I know a man (person!) who does*

## Final Thoughts

### *Some final thoughts for advocates*

- Get to know your partner, his/her environment, people in his/her life.
- Look at the world through your partner's eyes. Ask yourself, 'What if I or a member of my family had to live there, eat there, etc.?'
- Remember your loyalty is to your partner - not to her/his family, social worker, nor to the advocacy agency.
- Feel free to call the advocacy agency for assistance, to get information, to talk about a problem - and to share success!
- Plan to develop your relationship over time. Only personal knowledge gained over a period of months, or even years yields a true understanding of your partner, his/her situation, and the interactions and effects of the people involved in her/his life.
- As the relationship with your partner becomes established, ask to meet with another advocate so you can share and obtain suggestions that can enrich your own relationship, as well as that of the other advocate. This will help you to gain more perspective on advocacy as part of a movement to restore respect for each individual life.
- Recognise your own giftedness: the skills you develop naturally as spouses, parents, friends, workers, balances of the individual/family budget, and participants in church/community activities are valuable assets that each advocate brings to his/her relationship.
- Look into your own network of friends, and acquaintances for people who can advise/support you in your relationship and whose induction to your partner can potentially increase the number of people in his/her own network.
- Realise that sometimes an advocate cannot solve the problem for a partner, but being there and caring what happens to him/her is vitally important.

## Ongoing Training

### *Our Approach to Ongoing Training*

We identify training needs by talking and meeting with our advocates. We often notice themes which arise in such conversations which lead us to set up a training session to address the issue. Sometimes one or two advocates will contact us and ask for a specific bit of training. We will then consider whether we are able/it would be most effective for us to facilitate a training event, or whether we should contract an external facilitator. There are advantages and disadvantages of each:

Facilitating training ourselves:

- We have a good picture of the training needs and can develop a programme accordingly.
- We know our advocates and their particular strengths and needs.
- We know our advocates' partners.
- We have a particular style which might not suit all people.

Contracting an external facilitator:

- We will need to give them a good briefing as to what is needed.
- They may bring a new style with new energy.
- We will potentially learn some new ideas on both advocacy and training.
- Finding good facilitators is not always easy and can be expensive.

Often one training session will give rise to others. We will endeavour to follow the natural course of advocates' training needs.

# Negotiation Skills

## A One-Day Training

🕒 Time Needed: 6 hours

### Aims

- To explore skills, techniques and other requirements for effective negotiation.
- To enable advocates to 'try out' conversations, meetings etc. for negotiating advocacy issues.

### Programme

#### **10.00 Introduction**

✍️ Activities (p.21) Personal Questions

#### **10.30 Our Status and Rights as Advocates**

✍️ Activity (p.93) Advocates' Status and Rights

#### **11.15 Listening Skills**

✍️ Activity (p.95) Facts, Opinions, and Emotions

#### **12.00 Case Study - Preparation**

✍️ Activity (p.98) Case Study - Preparation

#### **12.45 LUNCH**

#### **1.30 Case Study - The Meeting**

✍️ Activity (p.100)

#### **3.00 Case Study - Follow-up**

✍️ Activity (p.102)

#### **3.30 Summary/Evaluation**

#### **3.45 FINISH**

# Negotiation Skills

## Advocate's Status and Rights

🕒 Time Needed: 40-45 mins

### Aims

- To reconsider the nature of the status and rights of an advocate after having had some experience of advocating.
- To clarify the basis on which an advocate has a right to advocate.

### Key Points

- An advocate (at the time of writing) has no legal right to represent or be consulted regarding their partner. They must develop positive relationships with all involved to establish their credibility and status, particularly where their partner is unable to consent to their involvement.
- Access to information or care professionals is not a right by law and must be negotiated.
- If a partner wishes to pursue a course of action which the advocate disagrees with, they must ensure the partner has all relevant information to make an informed choice. The advocate can state that they are unwilling to help the partner pursue that course of action whilst defending their right to choose.
- An advocate must break confidentiality if they feel their partner's safety is at risk. If possible they should encourage their partner to disclose their concerns themselves; if not they should at least let their partner know who they will disclose their concerns to.
- In Kith & Kids we feel the advocacy agency has some responsibility to ensure that advocates are not pursuing courses of action which may be detrimental to the partners' development. We would wish to raise such issues with advocates when we become aware of them.

### Materials

- Flipchart and pens
- One set of cards made from **Advocates' Status and Rights Cards** (p.94) for each small group of 3/4 participants.

### What to do

#### **Diamond-ranking**

*Split the group into small groups of 3/4 participants.*

- Give each group a set of Advocate's Status and Rights Cards.
- Ask the groups to discuss which they agree with, which they don't, and which they half agree with.
- Groups should place the cards on a table (or the floor): those they agree with at the top, those they disagree with at the bottom, those they half-agree with halfway. The cards don't need to be placed in a strict order - just to give a sense of how much the group agree with them.
- Once groups have decided where to place their cards, ask them to have a walk around and look at the other group's decisions.

#### **Discuss the outcomes**

- Which cards do different groups disagree on? Which are the controversial ones?
- What rights/authority does an advocate have?
- Where do you stand if you disagree with your partner's wishes?
- Under what circumstances might you break confidentiality?
- How can you get access to the information and people you need to address issues with/for your partner?

## Negotiation Skills

### *Advocates' Status and Rights Cards*

An advocate can break the right to confidentiality of their partner

An advocate has the right to demand services for their partner

An advocate should take up any issue of concern, even if their partner does not want them to

An advocate has the right to disagree with their partner's wishes

An advocate has the right to raise any issue which they or their partner are worried or concerned about

An advocate can arrange to see care staff without their partner knowing

An advocate has the right to be heard more than their partner's parents

An advocate has the right to all the information which parents receive

The reason an advocate attends review meetings is to be able to interpret them for their partner

An advocate should always be consulted before decisions are made which affect their partner

Where conflicts arise with care staff an advocate should support the views of their partner's parents

An advocate has the right to communicate with their partner's social worker at any time

## Negotiation Skills

### Listening Skills - Facts, Opinions, and Emotions

🕒 Time Needed: 40-45 mins

#### Aims

- To consider what it may be important to listen out for when in conversations regarding an advocate's role.
- To practice distinguishing between facts, opinions, and emotions in a conversation.
- To explore how emotions may affect negotiation and how to work with this.

#### Key Points

- It's important to establish clarity within a conversation as to what are facts, opinions, and emotions.
- Where vague statements of fact are made they need to be noted and clarification sought.
- If opinions are stated as facts, the facts themselves need to be established.
- Opinions can be helpful in determining a person's view of and approach to a situation.
- Emotions are often not stated but can be inferred from both oral and body language.
- It may be helpful and/or necessary to state the emotions you perceive being expressed, including your own!
- It's important to recognise and acknowledge how people are feeling, but not to allow emotions to distract you from the goals of your negotiations.

#### Materials

- Flipchart and pens
- One copy of **Facts, Opinions, and Emotions - The Script** (pp.96-97) for each participant.

#### What to do

- Give each participant a copy of **Facts, Opinions, and Emotions - The Script** (pp.96-97).
- Ask for three volunteers to read through the script to the whole group.
- Split the group into small groups of 3/4 participants.
- Ask the groups to look through the script to find the facts, opinions, and emotions being expressed. Give them 10 minutes or so.

#### Discuss the outcomes

- Clarify where the facts, opinions, and emotions are in the script.
- Are there any vague statements, or opinions expressed as facts?
- If some of the facts are vague, what would you have done to clarify them?
- Does anyone clearly state how they're feeling about the topic of conversation. If not, how can we get a sense of how people feel? Would we check out our instincts during this conversation, or on some other way, or at all?
- What do we need to hear in meetings/conversations related to our advocacy role?
- How can we help ourselves to listen out for those things?
- When we know what is being said is being coloured by emotion, how can we work with it?

## Negotiation Skills

### Facts, Opinions, and Emotions - The Script

*Sarah is 22 and lives in a residential home for people who have a learning disability in an Inner London Borough. She goes home to her mother, Maureen, each weekend to stay Saturday night. Sarah's advocate, Gillian, would like to be able to see Sarah at the weekend so they can go out to the seaside for the day, or just go for a walk in the park, also because Gillian doesn't seem to have much time during the week.*

**Sarah, Gillian, and Maureen have the following conversation:**

**Maureen:** Hello, Gillian. How are you? I'm exhausted, I've had Sarah home all weekend and she doesn't stop.

**Gillian:** I'm sorry to hear that. What did you do for the weekend?

**Sarah:** We just stayed in and watched lots of TV.

**Gillian:** I quite like doing that sometimes, especially if there's a good film on or something. I do like to get out for the day, though.

**Maureen:** She looks forward to coming home at weekends. We like to spend time together.

**Sarah:** What did you do this weekend, Gillian?

**Gillian:** Saturday morning I did my shopping and tidied my flat. Then I went to watch the rugby. In the evening I went to a comedy club with my friends Pria and Stephen.

**Sarah:** What's a comedy club?

**Gillian:** They're usually in a pub and they have a few comedians come on stage and tell jokes for a couple of hours. They're really good fun. Although some of the comedians aren't that good.

**Sarah:** I'd like to come with you.

**Maureen:** But you'd miss Casualty on the telly. You know how you look forward to that. Besides, those pubs are really noisy and smoky.

**Gillian:** Well, they're not all noisy and smoky. I know one just down the road which is pretty big. You can usually get a seat.

**Maureen:** Maybe, but Sarah goes out and socialises during the week. She enjoys going out in the evening.

**Gillian:** What do you do during the week, Sarah?

**Sarah:** I go to my clubs.

**Maureen:** She goes to the Opportunity Club on Mondays, the Gateway Club on Tuesdays, Wednesdays are free, although she usually likes to go trampolining with her friend Catherine from the centre. Thursdays she spends at home with me - The X-Files is on TV, and Fridays she goes to the disco at the centre.



## Negotiation Skills

### *Facts, Opinions, and Emotions - The Script*

- Gillian:* You sound really busy, Sarah. Which is your favourite evening?
- Maureen:* I don't think she enjoys the Opportunity Club - she always comes home in a really bad mood.
- Gillian:* Sarah mentioned to me once that she likes the Opportunity Club, but there's one member of staff who always tells her off.
- Maureen:* Is that right, Sarah? Who tells you off?
- Sarah:* George does. I don't like him.
- Gillian:* Would you like me to come with you sometime; maybe I could meet George and have a chat with him?
- Sarah:* Do they have Comedy Clubs on Mondays?
- Gillian:* Yes, they do have a few. We'd have to find out where. Would you like to go to one?
- Maureen:* You couldn't miss the Opportunity Club, Sarah. You've been going to that for years.
- Gillian:* Maybe Sarah could come with me one Saturday night?
- Sarah:* Yes, then I wouldn't miss my friends at the Opportunity Club.
- Maureen:* Well, I don't know. I'd have to think about that - see if there's a free Saturday night.
- Gillian:* You know, we could make a day of it. You could come with me to buy some shopping for our lunch. In the afternoon we could go to the park, or have a wander round Covent Garden. Then we could go to a comedy club in the evening.
- Maureen:* But that would be a whole day out. Sarah would get very tired. I like to see her at the weekend - I don't see her very much!
- Sarah:* I've never been to Covent Garden, mum. Catherine said it's great!
- Maureen:* I don't want to spend the whole day on my own, can't I come with you?
- Gillian:* Maybe you could have a chat with Sarah and let me know what you think next time I see you. I think Sarah would really enjoy spending her Saturday with me, just for a change. I know I'd really like it.
- Maureen:* OK, we'll have to think about it, won't we Sarah?
- Sarah:* Yes, mum.

# Negotiation Skills

## Case Study - Preparation

🕒 Time Needed: 25-30 mins

### Aims

- To practice picking out facts and advocacy issues from written communication.
- To consider the range of courses of action when you become aware of an issue.
- To explore what may be helpful when planning negotiation.

### Key Points

- It's important to establish clarity as to the facts you are being informed about and the time-frame in which you are being informed.
- There may be further information you need before commencing your negotiations.
- There are a number of ways of making contact with people you need to negotiate with: phoning, faxing, e-mailing, sending a letter/report, visiting, calling/attending a meeting.
- We need to be very clear what the issues are we are trying to negotiate on.
- We need to be very clear what outcome(s) we are looking to establish. Consider the ideal solution for your partner, but also a fall back position should you not be able to establish the ideal.
- The issues and desired outcomes will form part of the decision as to who you would ask to attend a meeting.

### Materials

- Flipchart and pens
- One copy of **Case Study - Preparation** (p.99) for each participant.

### What to do

- Give each participant a copy of **Case Study - Preparation** (p.99).
- Split the group into small groups of 3/4 participants.
- Ask the groups to look through the letter and consider:  
**'What would you need to find out?'**  
**'What are the issues?'**  
**'What would your ideal and fallback outcomes be for your negotiation?'**  
**'If you decide to call a meeting - who would you invite?'**
- Give the groups 10 minutes to consider the letter.

### Discuss the outcomes

- What are the facts?
- What else do you need to find out before holding a meeting? How can you find these things out?
- What are the issues you would wish to concentrate on in your negotiation?
- What do you need as a bare minimum outcome from your negotiation? What would be the ideal for your partner?
- If you decide to call a meeting, when would you try to call this for, and who would you ask to attend?
- How would you go about calling a meeting?
- What would you be saying to your partner?

# Negotiation Skills

## Case Study - Preparation

As Frankie's advocate(s) you receive the following letter:

Skopshire Social Services  
Dead End Lane  
Drown  
Skopshire  
SK7 4TF  
2001

Thu 24th Jan

**Re: Ms. Frankie Gates, Welcome Care Ltd., Everlasting Lane, Skopshire**

Dear Advocate,

I am writing to you in respect of Ms. Frankie Gates change of behaviour towards our staff member Mr. Norman Mailer.

For the past 4 weeks it has become increasingly obvious to the Manager of the staff team at her home that she is not happy. She has become morose, refuses to do anything around the home, and more often than not remains in her room for hours on end usually languishing in her bed.

This is so directly opposite to the person she was that after careful consideration and discussion with all concerned I have decided that she is needing to be moved.

Since I have not had time to identify a new place, temporarily she will be moving to Short Spell Mansions, the local respite hostel, on Monday. I am informing Ms. Frankie gates today of the decision and am writing to let you know incase you need to make contact with her in which case you will know where to get hold of her. I would suggest that if you want to make contact by phone when she is there you phone between the hours of 2 to 4pm as that is the time when staff can answer the phone, and/or visit between the hours of 6 to 8pm as those are the visiting hours of the hostel.

Yours sincerely,

Letty Gross  
Social Worker

## Negotiation Skills

### Case Study - The Meeting

🕒 Time Needed: 80-90 mins

#### Aims

- To offer the opportunity to 'try-out' negotiating during a case meeting.
- To identify and observe negotiation skills in use.

#### Key Points

- Different people will have different skills and use different techniques. Do what you feel comfortable with.
- If there's anything said which you don't understand, ask for clarification.
- It can be good to establish in your own mind exactly who everyone is and what responsibilities they have.
- If your partner is present at the meeting, remember to make sure they have their say and are heard in as much as they are able. They may also need emotional support if the meeting becomes very contentious, or they are hearing things about themselves for the first time.
- Don't panic if you don't succeed in getting your ideal outcome - you can still pursue it afterwards, perhaps in a different way.
- Seek support for yourself after the meeting - use the support systems of the advocacy agency.

#### Materials

- Paper and pens for each participant.

#### What to do

- *As a group, come to an agreement from the preparation stage as to which people have been invited to the meeting.*
- *Establish which participants will take which roles. It can sometimes be helpful for more than one person to take on a particular role - they can swop, or work as a team (see **A Word about Role-Plays** [p.9]).*
- *Offer 5/10 minutes for participants to consider their roles and how they might approach them.*
- *Establish who will be chairing the meeting.*
- *Hold the meeting. Try to be as realistic as possible - it can be tempting to over-play a role (although this can also be useful to emphasise a point!).*
- *Try not to get overly serious during the role-play - it's supposed to be enjoyable as well as an informative experience.*
- *You will need to feel the right time to end the meeting. There may be a natural end when some kind of agreement has been reached. If this doesn't look like it is going to happen you may need to end the meeting prematurely - perhaps offer each participant a final statement. Remember this is just an exercise and much will already have been learnt from the experience.*
- *If participants have not clearly come out of their roles you may need to do an activity to ensure this happens (see **A Word about Role-Plays** [p.9]).*

## Negotiation Skills

### *Case Study - The Meeting*

***Discuss the outcomes***

- To what extent did the advocates achieve their goals? If their ideal outcome wasn't achieved, what/who prevented them from doing so? In hindsight, could they have done anything about this?
- To what extent did the facts of the situation become clearer during the course of the meeting?
- Were there any opinions offered as fact? What was done about this?
- How did everyone feel in their roles? To what extent were participants able to pick up the emotions that were being expressed - and work with them?
- What negotiating skills did we see the advocate(s) using? How about the other participants - were they negotiating - if so, how?
- What negotiating skills did we see the advocate(s) using? How about the other participants - were they negotiating - if so, how?

## Negotiation Skills

### Case Study - Follow-Up

🕒 Time Needed: 15-20 mins

#### Aims

- To identify useful strategies after a case meeting to monitor decisions made and/or to continue working towards the goals with/for partners.

#### Key Points

- Write-up your notes of the meeting as soon as you can afterwards. Note particularly any decisions which were made and who was to take action on them, and in what time-scales.
- You may wish to send or fax a copy of your notes to appropriate people who were (or weren't at the meeting. Alternatively, you may like to write to state your understanding of the decisions taken, with a statement that you will assume these to be agreed unless you hear otherwise within a certain time period.
- You may feel the need to phone people who agreed to take action a few days after the meeting to see how they are progressing and/or to remind them that you are waiting.
- Persistence is essential. If others feel you are not really bothered whether or not they are taking action, they will have less reason to do so!

#### Materials

- Flipchart and pens.

#### What to do

- *As a whole group brainstorm ideas on 'What, if anything, do we need to do to ensure action is taken on decisions made?'*

#### *Discuss the outcomes*

- Would any of the ideas feel difficult to do? Why? How could we overcome the difficulties?
- Is there a line between encouraging people to take action, and pestering them?
- What if people consistently fail to do what they have agreed to? What courses of action can we then take?
- What if people very quickly do what they have agreed - in what ways could we acknowledge this? Is this necessary?
- Is there a point at which you cease to pursue your goals? How do you decide? How might this feel?

#### Handout Notes

📄 Handout (p.103)

**Practical Negotiating Tips**

# Negotiation Skills

## Practical Negotiating Tips

Some pointers for getting what you want out of meetings  
(Adapted from an Action 19+ Information Pack)

### Preparation

- Have the aims and goals in your head - do your homework
- Know what you want; what issues you want to address.
- What would be your preferred outcome?
- Make a list of points you need to make.

### Practical Tips

- Dress smart. Look efficient and prepared.
- Have in your head that your partner has a right to the services.
- Make sure you maintain eye contact - don't be intimidated.
- Remember your body language. Be positive in your actions. Try not to lose concentration, be aware.
- Try not to be side-tracked.

### At the Meeting

- Try and set the tone at the start of the meeting.
- Use courtesy and appear to be reasonable!
- State clearly what you want.
- Be calm, clear, concise, determined, persistent, and consistent - go for what you want!

### Red Herrings and Disruptions

- It's possible that you may feel patronised or even browbeaten or manipulated. The meeting could be interrupted e.g. phones will ring, people walk in and out of the room, interrupt the meeting with questions etc.

- Don't fall into the trap of reacting badly e.g. aggressively, emotionally, neurotically, passively. Counteract any patronising behaviour positively.
- Don't hesitate to interrupt by saying, 'Excuse me, I didn't quite catch that. Could you repeat it so that I have got it clear'.

### Dripping Tap Techniques

- If you get no response, just repeat your requests.
- A suitable punch-line might be, 'You have told me what you haven't got; no money, no resources, no staff, no nothing - so what can you offer us?'
- If you think you have the answer, which if you have done your homework properly, you may have a carefully prepared and costed plan, you can present this as an answer to the problem. If you get a negative reply, ask if you can leave it with them.
- Sometimes you can find your own solution - go for it. Make your suggestions feasible.

### Follow Up

- After a couple of days have passed, write a letter of thanks to the relevant people at the meeting, thanking them for their time.
- State clearly and objectively any agreements that were made; any promises made, and certainly any decisions that were reached. This includes action by yourself and others.
- You can assume that these agreements hold unless you hear otherwise from others at the meeting.



# Being Blocked and Feeling Powerless

## Blocked from all Directions!

🕒 Time Needed: 2-3 hours

### Aim

- To explore the experience of being blocked in negotiations.

### Key Points

- Advocates may be blocked from a number of directions at once. It's important to identify from where the blocks actually arise and to deal with them separately.
- Advocating can be challenging and frustrating. It's essential that support/supervision systems are in place and advocates are encouraged to use them.
- It is often the thought of coming into conflict with others that holds advocates back from pursuing their goals with/for their partner. Advocates need to be supported through supervision to explore how they may work with conflict.
- Advocates need to be supported to remain clear about their independent role. (See ✍️ Activity [p.93] **Advocates' Status and Rights**).

### Materials

- Flipchart and pens
- One copy of **Being from all Directions! - Scenario** (p.105) for each participant.

### What to do

#### Part 1

- Give each participant a copy of **Being from all Directions! - Scenario** (p.105).
- As a whole group look through the scenario.

- In groups of 3/4 participants spend 5 minutes or so discussing what their approach might be.
- As a whole group discuss the various approaches and come to a consensus as to what to try.

#### Discuss the outcomes

- Where are the various blocks to progress?
- Would you deal with blocks from parents differently to blocks from professionals?
- How might you be feeling about the situation at this point?
- How might you be feeling about your own involvement as an advocate in this situation?
- What are the outcomes you're looking for from this situation? How might you go about achieving them?

#### Part 2

- Role-play any initial phone or other conversations needed, or write appropriate letters to set up a meeting (see **A Word about Role-Plays** [p.9]).
- Role-play a meeting of those involved in the situation.

#### Discuss the outcomes

- To what extent are the blocks still present?
- What were you feeling during the meeting? How are you feeling at the end of it?
- What might you do as follow-up to pursue your goals?
- What might you do to support yourself after such a meeting?



## Being Blocked and Feeling Powerless

### *Blocked from all Directions! - Scenario*

You are advocates partnering a 32 year-old woman, Pria, who has a learning disability. Pria has lived in a residential home with 5 other residents (both men and women) for 3½ years.

Pria seems to be a little confused because she is told one thing by her care staff, and another by her parents. For example, her care staff tell her it's OK to get the bus into the local town on her own in the evenings, her parents tell her she must always go with someone else. Her state of confusion, along with other signs leads you to believe that she is emotionally insecure.

You feel that she would benefit from weekly sessions with a counsellor to support her with the causes of her present emotional difficulties. You are aware that she has at various times during the recent, and not so recent, past suffered abuse, and think that this may be at the root.

The Community Learning Disabilities Team have offered her a half hour of art therapy each week, alongside two other members of her day centre. This has been running for six months now and Pria clearly enjoys using the various types of paint and other materials - she says she is happy with the sessions. You haven't noticed any change in her emotional state - she still appears confused, and she seems to be telling different people different things.

Her parents feel Pria is lucky to have been offered the art therapy and get anxious when you talk to them about how you think Pria is feeling, and whether or not the therapy is having any effect. They have said to you in the past that they are wary of saying anything to Pria's care staff because they might take it out on Pria. They are reluctant to discuss anything with staff which may lead them into confrontation.

As Pria's advocates you feel you need to do something to make sure her emotional needs are being supported.

What do you do?

**Blocked from all Directions! - Scenario**

# Being Blocked and Feeling Powerless

## Top Ten Excuses

🕒 Time Needed: 30-40 mins

### Aim

- To offer a light-hearted look at ways in which advocates can feel blocked.
- To offer some practical tips as to how to respond to 'unblock' the situation.
- To enable advocates to share their examples of how they have felt blocked.

### Key Points

- Much of the blocking used by care providers is done as a result of inadequate funding: staff are not trained, valued, or paid sufficiently well and are consequently often overworked in conditions with few permanent staff.
- Whilst acknowledging the care providers' difficulties, it's still important for advocates to be persistent in pursuing their goals with/for their partner - their needs exist whether or not there is funding to address them!
- It can be helpful to use a 'let's work together' approach, or to ask 'open' questions regarding how the needs will be met.
- Anger arising out of advocates' frustration can be helpful if directed calmly at people who are actually able to make decisions. Often those who have direct contact with your partner are not in a position of authority (or do not have access to the funding) to change anything (e.g. social workers).

### Materials

- Flipchart and pens
- One copy of **The Top Ten Excuses - and how to deal with them!** (pp.107-108) for each participant.

### What to do

- Give each participant a copy of **The Top Ten Excuses - and how to deal with them!** (pp. 107-108).
- In pairs spend 10 minutes or so discussing what their approach might be for each excuse.
- As a whole group discuss the various approaches and come to a consensus as to what may be effective approaches to try.

### Discuss the outcomes

- Many of the excuses can appear to very reasonable, but what might be the cause of the difficulties care providers experience?
- How might it feel to the care provider if you simply or ignore or dismiss their excuse? Is there a way of acknowledging their difficulty but remaining focused on your goal?
- How difficult is it to avoid losing your temper in this situations? How could we use/direct our anger more effectively?
- Have you heard these excuses, or similar ones used? What did you do?

## Excuses, Excuses!

### *The Top Ten Excuses - and how to deal with them!*

***Take a look at these oft-used excuses for not being able to deal with your request. Choose the response which most closely matches what you might say or do - or would you do something else completely?***

***1. "I have to look after the interests of all eight residents, not just your partner."***

- a) I understand that but at the moment we're discussing my partner.
- b) So in the end you don't look after anyone's interests.
- c) Maybe you should let your manager know you can't cope with the workload.

***2. "We're really short-staffed at the moment; one is on holiday, and two are off sick. We've got four agency staff in."***

- a) You should pay your staff more, then they might stay.
- b) It seems to me you're not able to meet my partner's needs at the moment. What do you suggest?
- c) Why don't you get more agency staff in?

***3. "It isn't fair on the other residents if we provide this for one person."***

- a) I'm not aware of the needs of the other residents but do know that my partner needs this item.
- b) My partner needs it more than the other residents.
- c) Then provide it for the others as well.

***4. "There really isn't enough money - we are on a standstill budget."***

- a) We agree that this is something my partner needs, what would you suggest?
- b) Are you saying that social services are not providing enough funds for my partner?
- c) Perhaps we could look together at how the funding for my partner is spent?

***5. "I'm afraid the person who is responsible for that is away for three weeks."***

- a) Are you saying we can't do anything for three weeks?
- b) Who has taken on that responsibility while they are away?
- c) I'm concerned that three weeks may be too long to wait for this to happen. Why can't you do something?

## Excuses, Excuses!

### *The Top Ten Excuses - and how to deal with them!*

**6. “That area of our work is currently being re-organised.”**

- a) You’re always re-organising! How am I going to get what my partner needs?
- b) I see. I should imagine that will take some time. I wonder if you might be able to help me by working out a way ahead together?
- c) Who is the manager with overall responsibility for that area of work? I want to contact them.

**8. “I’m sorry I haven’t seen your letter - the post in this area has been a bit upset recently.”**

- a) Hmm, that always seems to happen when something important needs to be done.
- b) Oh . . . I haven’t got a copy with me but this is what we’re needing.
- c) OK - I’ll put another one in the post to you.

**6. “The person in that post has left and we’re in the process of recruiting.”**

- a) Oh no, it took ages to recruit them last time. Does that mean we can’t do anything until then?
- b) Who has taken on the responsibility for the job while you’re recruiting?
- c) Is there anyone else in your organisation who might be able to help us?

**9. “Oh, I’m so busy - too many things to do at once.”**

- a) Yes, yes, I’m busy too. Let’s get on with it.
- b) We all seem to be working harder nowadays, don’t we. But since we’re together let’s discuss this issue for a while.
- c) I think we would need about an hour to discuss this issue - can we arrange a date when we can give it that time?

**10. What’s the best excuse you’ve heard? What did you do/say?**

# Relationships with Parents

## *Building Positive Relationships with Parents*

🕒 Time Needed: 6 hours

### Aims

- To explore the relationships between advocates, partners, and their parents.
- To consider how/why a breakdown of the relationship between advocates and parents may occur.
- To explore strategies for building positive relationships with parents.

### Programme

#### **10.00 Introduction**

#### **10.15 The Nature of the Parent/Advocate Relationship**

Activity (p.110) Extended Relationship Brainstorm

#### **11.15 Parents' Concerns**

Activity (p.113) Scenarios for Relating to Parents

#### **12.00 Advocates' Scenarios - Preparation**

Activity (p.115) Our Own Experiences - Part 1

#### **12.30 LUNCH**

#### **1.30 Advocates' Scenarios - The Experience**

Activity (p.115) Our Own Experiences - Part 2

#### **3.45 Summary/Evaluation**

#### **4.00 FINISH**

## Relationships with Parents

### Extended Relationship Brainstorm

🕒 Time Needed: 60 mins

#### Aim

- To explore the histories and agendas parents and advocates bring to their relationship.
- To explore the benefits of building a positive relationship with parents.
- To consider the potential pitfalls and how to get over these.

#### Key Points

- It's important for advocates to consider the histories, agendas and feelings of parents. Similarly, it's important for advocates to be aware of their own agendas, and their personal feelings on issues about which they are advocating.
- There are many benefits of advocates having a positive relationship with parents - indeed it may hinder their ability to advocate effectively if they don't have one. This doesn't mean that they must always agree with parents, rather that they should feel able to discuss their areas of disagreement.
- There are a number of tasks which can be done to build and maintain positive relationships: e.g. communicate regularly, acknowledge and try to understand the others' point of view and feelings, be open and honest with each other.

#### Materials

- Flipchart and pens
- One copy of **Notes from a Brainstorm on Parent/Advocate Relationships** (p.111) for each participant as a handout.

#### What to do

- *For each of the questions on **Notes from a Brainstorm on Parent/Advocate Relationships** (p.111):*
  - *allow participants 3/4 minutes in pairs to discuss their ideas*
  - *collate on the flipchart and discuss the ideas for around 5 minutes per question*

#### Discuss the outcomes

- Encourage participants to consider their own life experience as sons/daughters/parents/advocates when looking at each question.
- To what extent do we think your partners' parents would offer similar answers?
- At this stage of the day, what strategies do you feel you have to overcome some of the difficulties?

#### Handout Notes

📄 Handout (pp.111-112)

**Notes from a Brainstorm on Parent/Advocate Relationships**

## Relationships with Parents

### *Notes from a Brainstorm on Parent/Advocate Relationships*

#### ***What is your brief as an advocate?***

- representing your perception of your partner's needs
- spokesperson sort of thing (if they can't do this on their own)
- finding out your partner's needs
- focus on your partner's needs in the face of other agendas

#### ***What are you trying to achieve when building your relationship with your partner?***

- line of communication to find out needs
- build a degree of confidence: two-way
- friendship
- trust
- understanding
- a feeling of security

#### ***What has been the relationship/role of the parents with their son/daughter before your involvement?***

- guidance
- lurve
- advocate
- carers
- provide acceptance/understanding
- educators
- provide material necessities
- overall responsibility for their son/daughter

#### ***What may parents be feeling/thinking when they first meet you?***

- will we be able to let go/allow others to make decisions?
- can I trust this person?
- loss of their previous role
- why do you want to do this?
- pleased that someone is taking an interest
- guilt
- anxious

#### ***What is the value in having a relationship with parents that allows you both to feel comfortable to talk and discuss?***

- builds trust by getting to know each other
- potential allies
- good source of advice to each other
- makes it easier to discuss issues (particularly where there is a potential area of conflict)
- helps you get to know your partner quickly
- to understand their history/background
- aids/hinders the relationship between you and your partner



## Relationships with Parents

### Notes from a Brainstorm on Parent/Advocate Relationships

***What might prevent you from having a relationship that allows you both to feel comfortable to talk and discuss?***

- differing views
- age gap
- how they perceive you
- attitude towards advocacy
- prejudices
- fear of conflict
- inflexibility of either
- afraid to hurt
- infrequent contact
- lack of confidence in ability/knowledge/skills
- lack of power

***At this stage, what do you think you could do to get over these?***

- assertiveness training
- develop self-belief
- find compromises
- get facts/no assumptions
- talk, talk, talk . . . listen, listen, listen . . .
- watch language
- acknowledge differences
- respect different opinions
- develop respect/your role:
  - be aware of your image
  - how to change this
  - challenging prejudices (yours & theirs)
- be open-minded
- self-awareness
- feeling safe with each other
- clarity of your role
- be honest about feelings - where, when, diplomacy
- understanding everyone's rights
- find places to talk (supervision)
- be honest if you know you're likely to hurt someone/own it
- spending quality time together - phoning regularly
- develop knowledge
- be honest with yourself:
  - find a safe place
  - acknowledge
- define your relationship
- gaining confidence



# Relationships with Parents

## Scenarios for Relating to Parents

🕒 Time Needed: 40-45 mins

### Aim

- To explore the need to pick up on parents feelings and to work positively with them.

### Key Points

- Parents may hold views which advocates find difficult to understand and/or disagree with.
- It's important for advocates to hold onto the needs and wishes of their partner, even where this may bring them into conflict with parents.
- Having built a relationship of trust with parents can support discussion on sensitive issues.
- It's important for advocates not to get defensive, even if they feel they are being attacked. Try to look calmly at the issues, and stand your ground while acknowledging the parents views and feelings - be assertive!

### Materials

- Flipchart and pens
- One copy of **Scenarios for Relating to Parents** (pp.113-114) for each participant.

### What to do

- Split into groups of 3/4 participants.
- For each of the scenarios on **Scenarios for Relating to Parents** (pp.113-114):
- ask each small group to spend 5 minutes or so discussing **'What are the issues here?' and 'What would you do/say?'**
- After each scenario discuss the outcomes as a whole group.

### Discuss the outcomes

- What might the parents views be based on?
- If your partner has clearly expressed his/her wishes to you, should you just ignore the parents views. If not, how could you proceed?
- If you feel you are being unjustifiably attacked, how could you respond?
- Would have been anything that you could have done before these situations occurred to have pre-empted them, or mitigated the effects?

## Relationships with Parents

### *Scenarios for Relating to Parents*

#### *Pub Scenario*

You have arranged with Mary, your partner, to spend an evening at her local pub. She has never been to one and asked you to take her.

Her parents, on realising where you are going, have asked you to find an alternative activity. They are opposed to her being in “that environment”.

*What do you do?*

#### *Arriving Late*

Through no fault of yours, you arrive 45 mins late at your partner’s home to pick her up. You are greeted by an angry parent who tells you, whilst keeping you on the doorstep, that her daughter does not want to see you, that you have let her daughter down and completely ruined her evening.

*What do you do?*

# Relationships with Parents

## Our Own Experiences

🕒 Time Needed: 25-30 mins

### Part 1 - Aim

- To offer the opportunity for advocates to consider and clarify current issues with parents.

### Key Points

- It can be helpful for advocates to share their experiences and difficulties. Others may come up with solutions which they hadn't considered.
- Describing and writing down the issue can help to clarify it for ourselves.

### Materials

- Paper and pens for each participant.
- A 'hat' to put the finished scenarios in.

### What to do

- Ask each person to jot down any situations/issues relating to parents which they'd like to be able to discuss.
- Encourage them to try to describe them like the ones you've just done.
- Put them in the 'hat' to ensure that they remain anonymous (participants may wish to 'own' their situations at a later stage but shouldn't be forced to do so).

### Part 2 - Aim

- To offer the opportunity for advocates to have their issues with parents explored.

### Key Points

- As an advocate it can be more difficult to work with parents than with care providers - the boundaries are less clear.
- It is important to present a 'united front' with parents to care providers. 'Divide and rule' can be used as a tactic against you.
- Openness, honesty, and trust are important in relationships with

parents; these need to be built through regular contact.

- It's important to try to recognise parents' (and our own) agendas in our discussions with them.

### Materials

- The 'hat' and scenarios from *Part 1* of this activity.
- If participants have felt unable to offer any scenarios you may like to use ones written by Kith & Kids' advocates (see **Scenarios for Relating to Parents - from Advocates** [pp.116-117]).

### What to do

- For each scenario drawn out of the 'hat', decide how you would like to work with them: discuss them as a whole group or in pairs first, or set up a role-play (see **A Word about Role-Plays** [p.9]).
- You may like to have different pairs looking at different scenarios and then come back together as a group at the end. See how your group feels about the various options.

### Discuss the outcomes

- To what extent were the advocates in the scenarios able to pick up the parents' agendas, and how did they work with them?
- Was it difficult standing up to the parents? What made it difficult - how could this be overcome?
- How could the advocates have done anything differently?
- Revisit the responses to **Q6 of Extended Relationship Brainstorm** (p.110) on those things which might prevent us from building a positive relationship with parents. Are we any clearer now?

## Relationships with Parents

### *Scenarios for Relating to Parents - from Advocates*

#### *Advocates' Scenario One*

I am aware that a young man I am involved with needs to leave the day school he is at (it is operating negatively for him). The only school that could offer him growth, and meet his potential, is a residential school. It is 200 miles from his family.

His parents agree but they are procrastinating. I have an understanding of their difficulties and fears.

My difficulty is now confronting the reality, that they are holding him, and his growth etc. back.

He is 14/15 years old.

I have had gentle exploration with them. The first step is them needing to visit the school. They have set up two occasions to do this and cancelled each time . . .

#### *Advocates' Scenario Two*

At a review those present are: the manager of the home, the keyworker, the social worker, the parents, your friend, and yourself.

Towards the end of the review, which has highlighted how successful the placement is, the social worker announces that, unfortunately, the funding is being withdrawn and your friend, her client, is to be rehoused back in her borough.

The manager and the keyworker is drawn in by the social worker who is outlining her plans and discussing the structure of the process for the move. The parents cut in aggressively, stating that she cannot do this to her daughter. Your partner is sitting quietly, looking slightly bewildered.

*What do you do?*

## Relationships with Parents

### *Scenarios for Relating to Parents - from Advocates*

#### *Advocates' Scenario Three*

Your partner Jane, who is 32 years old, likes to talk about her birthday. You've noticed this when you go out with her; it starts just a few weeks after she's had her birthday and continues all year round. She mostly tells you what she'd like as a present. She also talks about it to her parents who become very frustrated with her 'constantly going on about it'. They've enlisted the help of Jane's keyworker, and a nurse from the Learning Disabilities Team, and have tried lots of things to get her to stop.

As a final desperate measure her parents have told Jane that they are now too old and money is so tight that they can't get her any more presents.

You feel concerned:

- a) that Jane will never get any more birthday presents - we all like to receive them
- b) that Jane will get confused if her parents *do* give her a present for her birthday next year.

*What are the issues?  
What do you do?*

#### *Advocates' Scenario Four*

You have arranged an 'evening-in' with your friend at her house as you are aware that sometimes she likes to just stay in and 'hang-out'. She has her own living room downstairs where you will spend most of the evening. Her mother has her own living room upstairs.

Throughout the evening her mother pops in and out to see if you need anything/everything is OK, and sometimes just to chat. When she is there your friends mood changes and she becomes quite visibly agitated. Her mother acknowledges this and says on a number of occasions, 'Oh, she doesn't like me being here', but makes no movement to leave/stop popping in.

*What do you do?*

# Miscellaneous Advocacy Scenarios

## Scenarios for Discussion

🕒 Time Needed: Varies

### Aims

- To explore authentic advocacy situations which have arisen for people who have a learning disability.
- To enable advocates the opportunity to consider the range of possible courses of action when dealing with advocacy issues.
- To enable advocates to 'try out' the necessary conversations, meetings etc. for dealing with advocacy issues.

### What to do

- *The scenarios are based on real-life situations which have arisen in Kith & Kids.*
- *We have used these, and similar scenarios in structured training sessions, and also in less formal support/supervision sessions.*
- *You could use them for discussion, to practice letter-writing or phone calls, or as the basis for role-play activities. (See **A Word about Role-Plays** [p.9]).*

### Materials

- Flipchart and pens.
- Paper and pens for participants
- A copy of each of the **Scenarios for Discussion Sheets** (pp. 119-125) for each participant.

## Miscellaneous Advocacy Scenarios

### *Scenarios for Discussion - One*

You are an advocate partnering a woman in her early thirties who has learning disabilities.

A few months ago she fell and broke her leg quite badly. She's now walking again but the last time she had an appointment at the hospital they said she should still take it easy and should go back in six months time.

She is pretty disappointed because it seems she can't take part in her two passions in life - football and bowling. Her parents are particularly worried that she might fall and hurt her leg again.

Since she seems to be walking OK you think she could do some bowling; you also wonder how she is going to get fit again to play football.

*What do you need to check out?*

## Miscellaneous Advocacy Scenarios

### *Scenarios for Discussion - Two*

You are an advocate partnering a young woman who has complex epilepsy and most likely learning disabilities also. She doesn't use speech.

The staff at the group home where she lives have noticed over the last few months that her behaviour has changed and now presents a number of difficulties to them.

They have said they need to do a complete assessment of her needs.

The only assessment centre in the country which could look at her needs have said they cannot take her as they can't deal with her behaviour.

The home have started hinting that they will have to ask her to leave - they will only agree to allow her to stay if an assessment is done, and then they are given appropriate support in dealing with her by the professionals concerned.

*What can you suggest?*



## **Miscellaneous Advocacy Scenarios**

### ***Scenarios for Discussion - Three***

**You are an advocate partnering a fairly capable young woman in her early 20s.**

**It has been drawn to your attention that she is sleeping with a number of strangers who she picks up from the local area.**

**She presents herself to those around her in an overtly sexual way.**

**When her actions are explored and discussed with her she becomes indignant and says it's her affair and enjoys what she's doing.**

**You're unsure if she is able to bear children.**

***What would you do?***

## Miscellaneous Advocacy Scenarios

### *Scenarios for Discussion - Four*

Paul is 43 years old, has no spoken language, needs support with toileting and dressing. He is able to feed himself and knows what and who he likes and dislikes.

He has a full daytime service from Monday to Friday which he seems to enjoy. On Saturdays and Sundays he is left to his own devices, as are the other 9 people he shares his home with.

During the week he does not manifest antisocial behaviour, but at the weekends he often does, e.g. he may throw things across the room suddenly without warning, or he may rush out into the garden and throw earth all over the place, indiscriminately. He may, on the other hand, decide to lay flat out in the middle of the small lounge floor and refuse to move in spite of being asked.

The staff are at a loss as to what to do. They have tried isolating him by taking him for walks, getting him to be in his room, clearing the room of the other residents if they feel he may erupt etc. They are now saying that he takes up too much time; they cannot spare staff for all the waking hours to attend to Paul. They are also stating that the behaviour is accelerating. The inference is that if Paul does not conform he will lose his right to his home.

You have known Paul for 10 years. You became involved with him when he lived in hospital and supported him with his move to this home in the community 5 years ago. It took him three years to settle. With help, understanding, and support he was able to acquire the skills to settle and enjoy living in a home instead of a hospital. This is unlike some of his friends who moved with him, who at varying times have had to move back, the last one being Tony who moved back six months ago. Despite all these changes going on around him, or bearing these changes in mind, it made Paul's ability to cope admirable. Now it is looking as though he may be next.

*How would you proceed?*

## Miscellaneous Advocacy Scenarios

### *Scenarios for Discussion - Five*

Mary is 26 years old and has lived with her five housemates, three men and two women, for the past 7 years. You have known her for four years.

You were introduced to her with the idea of becoming her advocate because she is unable to be assertive around her own needs and wishes. She is an able person around everyday living skills, can be trusted to go out locally and buy daily necessities provided she has a shopping list. She is unable to say no and yes when she needs to for her own good; sometimes this can land her in difficulties.

Over the past month you have become increasingly aware that Mary's clothes are looking less and less like hers. They don't fit properly, the colours of the different articles she wears together often clash, making her extremely conspicuous etc. this is so out of character for Mary - she has always taken care over her appearance.

When you gently tried to sound her out she became agitated, did not want to engage and asked you to leave her alone. You are concerned.

- a. You know that this is not normal behaviour.
- b. You are aware how people outside her home are viewing her. Whereas before she was just another person walking down the street, she is now markedly noticeable and you can see this by the disdainful looks she is attracting.
- c. You feel that the welcoming, fun and trustworthy relationship you had with her is changing. She is often making excuses either not to see you and/or not to engage in doing things.

*How do you proceed?*

## Miscellaneous Advocacy Scenarios

### Scenarios for Discussion - Six

*For Dave (manager of Sarah's home) and Jackie (manager of Sarah's day centre)*

Sarah is 24, has a learning disability, and lives in a residential home with 5 other residents.

Her day care is a combination of days at the local resource centre, and adult education classes. It is co-ordinated by the home manager, Dave, and the manager of the resource centre, Jackie.

You are Dave and Jackie.

Sarah has recently had an assessment done of her day care needs and you have planned a very active programme for her including: swimming, computers, art, relaxation, independent living (a women's group and a cookery class) and shopping trips.

You are at a meeting with Sarah's advocate(s) and her mum (Joy) which is to look at the assessment and the various day care sessions Sarah does. You're pleased that you've planned an exciting, active programme for her which aims to support her wish to live independently; you've included lots of practical sessions offering her the skills needed to live on her own.

*For Sarah's advocates, and her mum (Joy)*

Sarah is 24, has a learning disability, and lives in a residential home with 5 other residents.

Her day care is a combination of days at the local resource centre, and adult education classes. It is co-ordinated by the home manager, Dave, and the manager of the resource centre, Jackie.

Sarah has recently had an assessment done of her day care needs and you are aware that her programme seems very full but you are concerned that her emotional needs aren't being fully supported.

You know that she has sometimes gets angry with other members of the day centre, and that she has had a number of boyfriends at the day centre in the year or so she has been attending.

You are Sarah's advocate(s) at a meeting with Dave, Jackie, and Sarah's mum (Joy), which is looking at the assessment and the various day care sessions Sarah does.

You need to get your point about Sarah's need for emotional support across.

# Miscellaneous Advocacy Scenarios

## Scenarios for Discussion - Seven

### *For Greg's advocate(s)*

Greg is 29 and has a learning disability along with cerebral palsy which slightly affects the way he walks. He lives in a residential home with 4 other residents and has a keyworker (Jane),

You are Greg's advocate(s) and recently when you've seen him he has been complaining of having a bad back when he gets up in the morning. You are concerned that he has a medical problem.

You've had a quick chat with his keyworker and have written to the home manager (Mira) to suggest that his back needs to be checked out by his physiotherapist. Mira called you back and said that she thought that it would probably be a good idea and could you come in to meet with Greg and her to explain it to him and check he feels OK about talking to the physio.

### *For Mira, the home manager*

Greg is 29 and has a learning disability along with cerebral palsy which slightly affects the way he walks. He lives in a residential home with 4 other residents and has a keyworker (Jane),

You are Mira, the manager of Greg's home. You had received a letter from Greg's advocate(s) suggesting that Greg's back needs to be checked out by his physiotherapist because he has complained to him/them that his back hurts when he gets up in the mornings. You thought this was probably a good idea and suggested to the advocate(s) that they come and meet with you and Greg to explain it to him and check he feels OK about talking to the physio.

In between this conversation and the meeting you speak to Greg's keyworker and his physio and between you have decided that Greg just needs a new bed. So ...

At the meeting you explain to Greg that you all were concerned that his back was hurting and wanted to do something about it. You've had a chat with his keyworker (Jane) who mentioned that his bed is quite old and soft and that you are going to get him a new bed which will solve the problem. You phoned his physio just to see what she thought and she agreed that's probably all it is. How does that sound, Greg?

## Resources

### Organisations, Books etc.

#### Kith & Kids

##### **'Partners with disAbility'**

A comprehensive training manual offering a refreshing insight into working in partnership with people who have a learning and/or physical disability. The manual contains training materials which may be used as a companion to this *Advocacy Training Pack*.

##### The **'Partners with disAbility'**

Training Manual costs £15 + P&P.

To order, please contact Kith & Kids using the details on the back cover.

#### **Advocacy Across London**

Advocacy Across London (AAL) is a resource agency for London's advocacy sector. AAL has been established to support existing advocacy groups and help develop new ones.

Lorrimore Square  
PO Box 31856  
London SE17 3XR

020 7820 7868  
info.aal@btopenworld.com  
www.advocacyacrosslondon.co.uk

#### **Citizen Advocacy Information and Training (CAIT)**

CAIT is the national resource agency for citizen advocacy

162 Lee Valley Technopark  
Ashley Road  
London N17 9LN  
020 8880 4545

cait@teleregion.co.uk  
www.citizenadvocacy.org.uk

#### **The Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA)**

Provides information, advice and support to local advocacy organisations: undertakes training on advocacy and related issues; ensures the 'voice' of the advocacy movement is heard at a national level.

138 Slateford Road  
Edinburgh  
EH14 1LR

0131 455 8183  
enquiry@siaa.org.uk  
www.siaa.org.uk

#### **British Institute of Learning Disabilities**

A not-for-profit organisation with charitable status, which exists to improve the quality of life of all people with a learning disability. BILD provides information, publications and training and consultancy services for organisations and individuals.

Campion House  
Green Street  
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**Notes**

*Your Notes*

*Your Notes*

***As part of our outreach work we wanted to be able to disseminate our experiences of running an Advocacy Project and felt it might be supportive to others to have easy access to ready-to-use training workshops and materials.***

***These are those training workshops and materials!***

Kith & Kids  
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