



Special Education Advocacy

Models of Advocacy

Models of advocacy vary in the way that the advocacy is provided, and whether the advocate is a paid worker or a volunteer.

Families Collective Advocacy

SEAC is a collective advocacy group that advises the Board of Education on matters relating to Special Education. This is where a group of service users campaign on their own behalf, or on behalf of others, to resolve an issue that affects them collectively. Collective advocacy is a useful way of representing service users' opinions to a statutory body (for example) in order to resolve a local issue and bring about change.

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" O J T I O B X C F Individual SEAC members have volunteered their services to act as Advocates to parents/guardians of students with special needs.

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Students are encouraged, where possible, to feel comfortable with and understand their individual learning needs in order to communicate those needs to school staff and ensure that their needs are met. Parents can encourage students to learn about their disability, to understand their own personal learning needs, and to practice speaking up for himself or herself at school. Parents can help students to learn to be assertive while maintaining a respectful attitude.

Parent Advocacy

When students are not ready or are unable to communicate their own needs, for a variety of reasons, parents act on behalf of their children to ensure that their learning needs are being addressed by the school. Parents are encouraged to be active in their child's education, communicating with the school about the day to day challenges and successes that their child encounters. When all parties involved in a student's education have knowledge and understanding of a child's strengths and needs, the best possible educational experience can be achieved. Parents are a valuable source of education for teachers as parents have "expert information" about their child.

Professional Advocacy

Involves a paid worker with specific knowledge of systems and services who supports a number of clients. SEAC does not provide professional advocacy services.

More Information

www.lakeheadschoools.ca

(807) 625-5126