

Be a GREAT Advocate!

DO:

1. **DO be informed.** Read up on your issue & get informed on different perspectives and opinions.
2. **DO know who you're talking to.** What's the background of the person who you are talking to? Are they usually swayed by facts or personal stories? Use this information to decide what to share with her or him.
3. **DO be friendly, but firm and confident.** Confidence and friendliness will get you far, especially with adults!
4. **DO be concise.** The more simple and clear your position can be explained the better chance you have to get people to listen to you and support your cause.
5. **DO be Specific.** Know exactly what you want this person to do and make sure that by the end of the meeting, they know what you want. Also, have a written summary of your key points to guide you.
6. **DO be honest.** Don't exaggerate to make a point or answer a question if you're not sure of the facts. There are pros and cons of every issue, stick to the facts.
7. **DO give personal examples.** They will remember these. Personal examples put the issues in memorable, human terms. They work great!
8. **DO practice.** Try explaining your position to friends, teachers and family before your meeting.
9. **DO ask for a commitment to action.** Asking for a commitment to an action. This makes certain that you will get a commitment. If you don't ask, you probably won't.
10. **DO follow up with a thank you note.** Include a summary of the meeting and a reminder about their commitment to action.

DON'T:

1. **DON'T make threats or argue.** If it's clear that the person will not support you, just give the facts and ask him/her to consider your viewpoint.
2. **DON'T guess.** Offer to follow-up rather than risk giving bad information.
3. **DON'T underestimate your own value.** **YOU** are an expert on your life and youth issues. Stay strong and know that what you have to say is no less and no more important than anyone else. You deserve to be heard!