

Advocacy 101

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On Public Policy

“The set of decisions that we make as a society about how we will care for one another, our communities, and the land.”

--Marcia Avner, MN Council of Nonprofits

On Politics

- “Those who are too smart to engage in politics are punished by being governed by those who are dumber.”

-- Plato

Advocacy

- What is it?
- Why is it important?
- How is it different from lobbying?

Advocacy vs. lobbying

- Advocacy: the general promotion of an idea or cause through education, outreach, and grassroots organizing.
- Lobbying: asking an elected official to take a particular position or vote a certain way on a specific piece of legislation or rule.

Non-Profit? You CAN Lobby!

Electoral Politics vs. Lobbying

Electoral Politics - NP's can engage in nonpartisan election-related activity.

- Issue Advocacy
- Voter Registration and Get-Out-The-Vote Activities
- Voter Education
- Candidate Education
- Individual Advocacy

Non-Profit? You CAN Lobby!

Electoral Politics vs. Lobbying

Lobbying -

- Must be an “insubstantial part” of overall activities.
- Difference between GRASSROOTS LOBBYING and DIRECT LOBBYING

Grassroots Organizing

Key Components

- Involving community members—e.g. professionals, youth, parents or those affected by the issue.
- Getting the message to those who can affect change—policy makers, media.
- Motivating others to have a self-interest in the issue.

Grassroots Organizing

Getting Started

- What issue or topic would benefit from a coordinated effort of support and advocacy?
- What is currently going on in your state, county, city, and/or community around this issue?
- What other organizations, groups or individuals support your position on this issue?
- What organizations, groups or individuals oppose your position on this issue?

Grassroots Organizing

- Is there an existing coalition that supports this issue? Have you or another organization tried to form a coalition around this issue?
- What are the challenges or barriers to forming a coalition?
- What is your organizations' capacity (staff, resources, funding etc.) to coordinate a coalition?
- What national organizations can provided technical assistance and resources?

Avenues for Advocacy

- Contact an elected official
- Hold a press conference
- Host a rally
- Provide testimony at public hearings
- Hold an “awareness” event

Contacting elected officials

- Write
- Email
- Call
- Visit face-to-face
- Invite them to do a site visit at your organization/program.

Defining your message

- Key questions:
 - What is the problem?
 - What *specifically* do you want to have happen/change?
 - Who decides?
 - How will you persuade them?

Refining your message

- Who is your target audience?
- What do you know about them?
- What do they know about you?
- What do they know about your issue?

Making your case

- Know the facts: use current data to discuss your issue.
- Tell stories: Stories are powerful and persuasive!

Making your case *cont.*

- Use positive language: give people something to be FOR, not against.
- Be mindful of timing: pay attention to current news events, lawmakers' schedules, etc.

Use Research to Support Your Issue

- Comprehensive sexuality education programs that discuss both abstinence and contraception, including condoms, do not increase sexual activity among teens; rather, such programs often delay first intercourse, reduce the frequency of sex, and reduce the number of sexual partners.¹

¹Kirby D. Emerging answers: research findings on programs to reduce teen pregnancy. Washington, D.C.: National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. 2001.

Use Research to Support Your Issue

- Research shows that adolescents are less likely to access health services without the guarantee of confidentiality.²
- Eighty percent of unmarried adolescent females would not seek care if their parents had to be told.³

²Ford CA and English A. Limiting confidentiality of adolescent health services, what are the risks? [Editorial] JAMA. 2002; 288:752-753.

³Council of Scientific Affairs, American Medical Association. Confidential health services for adolescents. JAMA. 1993;269:1420-1424.

Adolescent health issues

- Minor's right to consent for health care
- Comprehensive Sex Education
- Family planning funding
- Adolescent parent services

Activity Strategy

- Take your piece of legislation that relates to youth or pick one that is near and dear to your heart.
- Create an advocacy strategy to address your issue.
- Share with the larger group

Sexuality Education for Life – Minnesota Coalition

- **Sexuality Education for Life – Minnesota** is a coalition of educational, religious, health, social service, and advocacy organizations, as well as concerned individuals that promotes lifelong healthy sexuality by advocating for policies on comprehensive sexuality education and access to confidential health care services.


Sexuality Education for Life - Minnesota - Microsoft Internet Explorer

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Address <http://www.sexedforlife.org/>

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Sexuality Education for Life
MINNESOTA



Sexuality Education for Life—Minnesota

Mission

We are a coalition of educational, religious, health, social service, and advocacy organizations, as well as concerned individuals that promotes lifelong healthy sexuality by advocating for policies on **comprehensive sexuality education** and access to **confidential health care services**.

Read our **key values**.
General information in **PDF** format.

Now is the time to meet with your legislators!

The 2006 MN State Legislature is just around the corner. Now is the perfect time to meet with your state representative and senator and talk with them about supporting the health of young people by providing comprehensive sexuality education in the classroom and upholding the minors' consent law that guarantees confidential health care. **Find out who represents you**.

For talking points and handouts go to our **comprehensive sexuality education** and **minors' consent law** pages. Also, legislators are more likely to be reading the letters to the editor in the local papers, so make your voice heard! For a list of community papers in Minnesota go to our **Action & Advocacy**

Sex Ed for Life is coordinated by the Minnesota AIDS Project (**MAP**) and the Minnesota Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy, Prevention and Parenting (**MOAPPP**).

Contact Us

MOAPPP
651-644-1447 ext.12

MAP
612-373-9162

Internet

Start | SexEdForLifeCoaliton | Sexuality Education fo... | 9:37 AM

Sexuality Education for Life- Minnesota Activities

To support coalition members' advocacy efforts

- **Advocacy Skills Trainings**

Capitol labs, Capitol days

- **Educational Trainings**

Local and national speakers on the issues

- **Updated Resources and Research**

Fact sheets, E-Newsletter

- **Timely Legislative Information**

E-Action alerts

For More Information

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