

Tried and True Tips for Being an Effective Advocate for your Child

Be informed. Learn as much as you can about the system. Know your rights **and** responsibilities. Know what you **CAN** ask for and what you **CAN'T**. Know who to ask.

Be Prepared. Take necessary information with you. Take paper and pen/pencil and your calendar. Have thoughts, concerns, and questions written down.

BE confident. Believe in yourself and your knowledge of your child. Prepare yourself mentally (before the meeting, listen to mood music, take a walk, whatever works for YOU). Wear dark "power-colours" (black, red, purple, dark-blue). Take your own coffee cup or beverage (pop, tea or water).

Take someone with you ...to take notes, to help you make a point or to provide moral support.

Arrive early so you can sit where YOU want.

Use good communication skills. Speak up, as tactfully as possible. Listen to the ideas of others. Give facts to support your point of view. "I would like for _____ to do _____ for the following reasons..." (List them).

Share your dreams for your child.

Ask questions!

For more information or tips please contact Lorraine Donald, NONA Child Development Centre Family Support Social Worker at family.support@nona-cdc.com or phone 549-1281, extension 215.