

# Nothing About Us Without Us



**Centering the  
Movement Around  
Self-Advocates**

# History

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People with disabilities have historically had people around them making decisions that impact their lives. Other people have decided what they can do, what they need, and what they can have.



# Self-Advocacy Movement

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- In the 1960's the self-advocacy movement began in Sweden.
- The idea began to spread to Great Britain, Canada and the United States in 1972.
- In Oregon, a group called "People First" was formed because they felt that their disabilities were secondary to their being a person first and foremost. From there, the idea of self-advocacy spread across North America.



# What do we mean by “Self-Advocate”?

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- A self-advocate is someone who has the learned to speak-up for themselves and the things that are important to them. They can ask for what they need and want.



# Rights

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- Self-advocates are aware of their rights and responsibilities. They make the choices and decisions that affect their lives.





# Authentic Involvement

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Authentic involvement of self-advocates requires that you include them in meaningful ways. You need to set an environment where they:

- Are allowed to make decisions
- Have the opportunity to learn leadership skills
- Can see change and progress as a result of their contributions
- Have ownership and control in decision-making processes
- Are respected, valued and trusted and their voices are heard and valued

# Self-Advocate Panel



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