

## ADVOCACY PROCESSES & TOOLS

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## THE GOAL OF THIS SEMINAR IS .....

- To empower you to get what you need by using the right advocacy “tools.”
- To empower you to become an effective advocate in order to address the needs of the brain injury community.



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## WHAT ARE THE TOOLS?

### **Individual Advocacy**

- Know how to develop a persuasive case.
- Know Who Your State And Federal Representatives Are And How To Contact Them

### **Systems Advocacy**

- Join the Legislative Network
- Testifying Before Committees
- Building Coalitions and Relationships

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## ADVOCACY ... AN OVERVIEW

- What is advocacy?
- Why advocate?
- Who can advocate?
- To whom do you advocate?
- When do you advocate?
- **How do you advocate?**



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## INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY

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## Tool: Know How to Develop a Persuasive Case

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## How do you develop a persuasive case?

- Most importantly – have **compelling stories**.
- There is a **logical and emotional angle** to developing a persuasive case.
- Stories + Logical Argument = **Persuasive Case**



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## 7-Step Format of a Persuasive Argument

- Develop a key message that is short and succinct.
- State problem or issue.
- Support with facts.
- State position.
- Explain why the position is the right one to take.
- Ask the lawmaker to act in such a way that is favorable to the position you are advocating.
- Explain how their action will impact the problem or issue.

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## More Tips On Developing A Persuasive Case

- Generally, a personal letter (or e-mail) is most effective.
- A legislator sometimes brings the most moving stories with him or her when it is time to debate or vote on a bill.
- A phone call can have a greater impact than a non-personalized form letter (or e-mail).

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### More tips (cont'd)

- Pick the most comfortable method **FOR YOU.**
- *When speaking with legislators and/or aides, be honest and think of yourself as an educator, guide, or counselor.*

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### **Tool: Know Who Your State AND Federal Representatives Are And How To Contact Them**

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### Determining Who Your State Representatives Are

- Determine who your state legislators are by visiting <http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/districts/municipalities.asp>
- Locate the name of your municipality in the index.
- Click "District (whatever number applies to your town)."
- For more detailed information, including e-mail address, about a particular legislator, simply click on the respective legislator's name.

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## Determining Who Your Federal Representatives Are.

- Visit <http://capwiz.com/bia/home/>
- Scroll to "Elected Officials."  
Type in your zip code and click "Go."
  - Click on "Info" for detailed information, which includes mailing address. To send an e-mail message, click "Send Message" then "Compose Your Own Letter." (NOTE: The "Compose Your Own Letter" step is not necessary when e-mailing the President.

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## SYSTEMS ADVOCACY

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## Tool: The Legislative Network



- The Legislative Network is a group of brain injury advocates and people interested in brain injury issues.
- Members receive current public policy information related to brain injury.

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## Tool: Testifying Before Committees

- Preparation – Preparation – Preparation.
- Well-organized, succinct testimony.
- Compelling story and/or person.
- **Respect.**



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- Get on the Committee Agenda.
- Prepare for critical questions.
- Figure out how you are going **to respond to** critical questions. Practice responding.

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## Tool: Building Coalitions and Relationships

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## Coalitions Are Important

- They maximize the power of individuals and groups through joint action.
- Develop a broad base of support and a stronger voice.
- Mobilize more talents, resources, and approaches to influence an issue than any single organization could achieve alone.

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## INDIVIDUAL & SYSTEMS ADVOCACY

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**Tool: Interacting Effectively  
With Lawmakers** (Is pertinent  
to both individual and systems  
advocacy)

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## The Three Stages



- Before the meeting.
- During the meeting.
- After the meeting.

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## Before the Meeting

- **Plan** visit carefully by knowing precisely what your advocacy goal is.
- **Arrange** a specific time and place for the meeting.
- **Know your material** and be able to present it succinctly.

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## During the Meeting

- Be **succinct**. Do not ramble.
- Ask if they have any **questions**.
- **Illustrate** with examples.
- **Illustrate why** the lawmaker should make this a priority.
- **Listen** for additional needs.
- Define **next steps**.

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## After the Meeting

- Send a “**Thank you**” correspondence.
- Address any **questions or concerns** the lawmaker had with your presentation.
- Report back to lawmaker.

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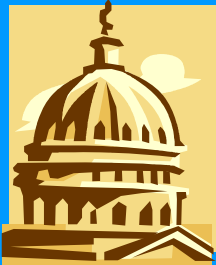
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## The New Jersey Legislature



- Understanding **the legislative process** in New Jersey is critical to knowing **WHEN** to advocate.
- There are specific times when advocacy should be used.

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## Visit BIANJ's Website

- Visit BIANJ's **public policy page** at <http://www.bianj.org/web.html> and click on “Public Policy.”



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## You Will Find...

- Analysis of issues of importance to the brain injury community.
- Legislation of interest to the Brain Injury Association of New Jersey.
- Legislative successes.
- Helpful hints while contacting legislators.
- Upcoming public events.
- Directions as to how you can get involved.
- ..... And more.

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## TOOL 2: KNOW THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

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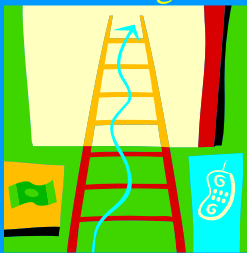
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## Advocacy Techniques Can Be Used at Various Steps of the Legislative Process



- In **Step 1**..... A need for the brain injury can be defined. An advocate(s) can **approach a lawmaker** and ask him / her to sponsor a bill to address this need.

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.....and.....



- In **Step 5** ..... When the bill is scheduled for **consideration by a committee**, advocate(s) can attend the meeting and convey why a bill should become law.

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....and....



- In **Step 8** ..... When the bill is **scheduled for a house vote**, advocates can contact all members of the house and encourage him/her to support a bill.

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**The Maze Is The Same.**



- This **same process** can be used when the other house considers the bill.
- The **maze** is basically structured the same way in both houses.

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## Your almost there ....

- When a bill reaches Step 10, an advocate(s) can contact the Governor's office to encourage a particular position.
- This could be the last step before your advocacy goal is realized.



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## TOOL 7: STUDY SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGNS

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What has made other advocacy campaigns successful?

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## Elements

- **Attaching yourself to other organizations** (I.e. coalitions). Examples include the Coalition to Preserve Personal Injury Protection.
- **Persistence** (I.e. Brain Injury Research Act)
- **Compelling need** (I.e. Smart Gun Technology).
- **Things outside your control** (I.e. .08% BAC).

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## More Elements

- **Taking initiative** -- Contact your representatives and ask for a meeting.
- **Taking advantage** -- Of any opportunity to promote the issue.

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## ..... more elements .....

- Have a humanitarian angle.
- An economic angle.
- Testify before the appropriate Senate and General Assembly Committees.
- Connect to lawmakers in leadership positions.
- Grassroots organizing (I.e. Legislative Network).
- Compelling stories.
- Contact the media.
- PROMOTE! .

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## Case Study: The Traumatic Brain Injury Medicaid Waiver

- Very compelling need.
- Saves the State of New Jersey money.
- Met with legislative leadership.
- Met with members of the Senate Budget & Appropriations Committee.
- Met with members of the General Assembly Budget Committee.
- Met with Chairs of these committees.
- Powerful testifiers.
- Makes humanitarian, healthcare and economic sense.

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