



Tips for Effective Advocacy

Advocacy is one of the key roles of a Friends of the Library group. Here are tips on how to effectively advocate for libraries within your community:

- ❖ Be vigilant.
- ❖ Involve demographics whose voices are less likely to be heard, especially children.
- ❖ Build a reputation for credibility. Do your research and be accurate.
- ❖ Be vocal about your cause at all times – not just when it is threatened.
- ❖ Start with a legislator you know and keep in touch.
- ❖ Work in all legislative levels – federal, provincial, and municipal.
- ❖ Get to know library staff.
- ❖ Gain the confidence and support of the Library CEO.
- ❖ Be personal. Use charm to help make your case.
- ❖ Stick to the issue.
- ❖ Seal the deal. Know what you want and ask for a commitment.
- ❖ Find advocacy partners. Use social media to connect with groups that are similar to yours.

Oftentimes, advocacy initiatives will involve pushing back against legislation that could negatively impact libraries. To effectively do this, Friends should adhere to **the ABC's of Playing Politics**:

- ❖ **Analyze** community assets and challenges.
- ❖ **Build** a membership base, indicating strength.
- ❖ **Choose** issues that you can win:
 - Immediate
 - Specific
 - Realizable
- ❖ **Develop** partnerships with groups in the cultural, health, social, and economic sectors.
- ❖ **Enhance** relationships with local media.