

"...Everyone has been so welcoming and encouraging, and my son's eyes show me he follows everything that happens at Self-Advocacy.

The meetings are a wonderful opportunity for him to socialize with peers and demonstrate that anyone with a disability can be an advocate. Come and find out for yourself!"

- Proud Parent of a Self-Advocacy Member

How Can I Get Involved with Self-Advocacy?

If you are over 16 and an eligible client of the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), you are welcome to come to a meeting and join. If you are not a client of DDA, and still want to get involved, contact Jessika to find out how.

When are the meetings?

- Self-Advocacy meets 10 months out of the year, at The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center at 2602 McLeod Road, Bellingham.
- Self-Advocacy is also available to come to your school, organization, or agency for a workshop.
- Starting 2018, Self-Advocacy will also have satellite meetings around Whatcom County.

For more information, and the current schedule, visit arcwhatcom.org, or contact The Arc's Self-Advocacy Coordinator, Jessika Houston: jessikah@arcwhatcom.org or (360) 715-0170, ext. 304.



"To me, self-advocacy is like a learning curve. It gives me a sense of perspective and clarity..."
-Laura, Self-Advocacy Member

"I feel happy, and excited, and proud and great!"
-Amy, Self-Advocacy Member

"I feel strong!"
-Jim, Self-Advocacy Member

Self-Advocacy is sponsored by The Arc of Whatcom County with funding from the Whatcom County Developmental Disabilities Program.

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Achieve with us.®

SELF-ADVOCACY

A Program of
The Arc of Whatcom County



"Be Strong.

Be Proud. Be Heard."


The Arc®
Whatcom County

ADVOCACY. ACCEPTANCE. LEADERSHIP. COMMUNITY. EMPOWERMENT.

What is the Self- Advocacy Program?

Self-Advocacy is a program of The Arc of Whatcom County for adults with developmental disabilities. Self-advocacy members are encouraged to develop and practice skills to become strong self-advocates.

Self-advocates are people with disabilities who speak up for themselves and others. They can express themselves with spoken words, sign language, language boards and in other ways unique to themselves.



What are the goals of Self-Advocacy?

- Learning valuable communication and advocacy skills
- Gaining the tools and confidence to express personal needs and build healthy relationships
- Getting involved with the community
- Identify and work to strengthen needs in community
- Members are also able to meet one on one to discuss goals, concerns, challenges and strengths.

How do we take action and raise awareness in our community?

Members have opportunities to plan and volunteer in community projects to help build relationships, practice skills and increase awareness and respect of individuals with disabilities.

Projects have included:

- Collecting donations for the Food Bank
- Distributing The Arc's Smiles of Life calendars
- Volunteering at The Arc's community events
- Legislative Advocacy
- Group projects to create awareness about Self-Advocacy & Ableism through video, poetry, music & other means.

Check out our website:

www.arcwhatcom.org/wp/programs/self-advocacy/

Check out our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/WhatcomCountySelfAdvocacy/

Do I need specific skills to join?

You do not need to have any special skills to join the group, just a desire to learn how to be your own best advocate.

Each meeting is tailored to the specific needs and goals of its attendees. Meetings create a safe environment for learning and growth, and help participants identify and address their questions, concerns and issues. Using a combination of interactive techniques that recognize everyone's unique experiences, we focus on developing practical strategies for helping each person get their needs acknowledged by others.

ALL ABILITIES WELCOME!



**We all have the right to
Be Strong, Be Proud,
& Be Heard!**