



Advocacy: Getting Started

Advocacy is a broad term used to describe various activities that support a cause or bring about positive change. Lions and Leos advocate by raising **awareness** for the causes they care about, **educating** club and community members on important issues, increasing accessibility to services and creating **positive** change. Lions and Leos listen to the needs of their communities and use their voices to speak out on behalf of the people they serve.

1 Identify your cause

What change do you want to create?

Whether it's expanding mental health support for youth or helping your community prepare for natural disasters, begin by identifying a cause that matters to your club or neighborhood.

2 Learn and take action

While anecdotal evidence is important when talking about an issue, you also want to ensure your claims are based on facts. Obtain accurate, high-quality information from evidence-based sources, experts and others who have current facts and figures about the issues. Understand the history and factors that caused the problem. Based on what you have learned, propose actions to create change.

3 Understand your audience

Chances are, you will address more than one audience when advocating. Who are the people in your community with the ability to make a difference? Target audiences may be the city government, local schools, elected officials, general community members, or universities. Find what motivates your particular audience and try to frame your message towards that. You might present more facts and figures, express the monetary value in your proposed solution, or emphasize personal stories depending on the audience.

4 Determine the mode of advocacy

Advocacy can take many forms, so take some time to determine what methods will work best for your club, and the causes you care about. Advocacy can look like:

- **Community Organizing:** Mobilize people in your community by starting a petition, organizing a town hall, or facilitating a workshop.
- **Educational Outreach:** Partner with experts to host or participate in educational events (panels, webinars, film screenings) to raise awareness and dispel misconceptions.
- **Email and Letter-Writing:** Coordinate efforts to contact elected officials, media outlets, or corporate entities to advocate for change.
- **Meeting with Elected Officials:** Schedule appointments with representatives to discuss issues and suggest actions.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Use social media, posters, press releases and other channels to increase public understanding of an important issue.

Start with service conducive to your club and your strengths. Check out the [Advocacy Project Starters](#) resource to get started.

Large-scale advocacy events take time, planning and dedication.
Check out our [Advocacy Day Planners](#) to aid in the process.
• [Advocacy Day](#) • [Social Media Campaign](#) • [Community Summit](#)

