



# Preschool Parent Press

A publication brought to you by the exceptional children's assistance center

## Becoming Your Child's Best Advocate: *Strategies for Parents of Preschoolers*

Simply put, advocacy is speaking for another person or cause. Being an advocate helps you to make informed decisions for your child. Who is your child's best advocate? YOU! Why? Because, you know your child best. You know his or her developmental and medical history. You know your child's likes and dislikes. You know what makes him or her happy or sad. You know how to comfort and love your preschooler. You have a vision for your child's future. **"YOU"** are an expert on your child and are your child's **"Best"** advocate!

How can you become an even better advocate for your child? Start by knowing that you are an equal partner in your preschooler's development, medical care and education. The following will help you effectively advocate for your preschooler.

### Acquire Knowledge!

- Learn about your child's growth and development and what you can do to help your preschooler grow and learn.
- Ask questions when you talk to your child's preschool teacher, care provider or physician.
- If your child has a disability, make sure that you understand the disability and how it affects their learning.
- Know the laws, your rights and any services to support your child.

### Communicate Effectively!

- Develop positive partnerships with professionals and others in your child's life.
- Address any concerns that you might have as they come up and attack problems, not people!
- Keep the focus on your preschooler and always keep the lines of communication open.

### Keep Records!

- Keep all of your child's records organized and together in one place.
- Follow up any requests or conversations in writing and always keep a copy.
- Keep a log or list of phone calls to your child's school, doctor and service providers.

### Participate!

- Work with teachers and child care providers by actively listening in meetings, to nurture relationships and partnerships.
- Be prepared to share your thoughts, ideas, and dreams that you have for your child and family.
- Ask questions if there is something that you do not understand or need explained further. The only silly question is the one not asked!



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