



# TRAUMA-INFORMED ADVOCACY SERIES

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## About the Series & Introduction to Advocacy



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# PREDICTIONS, ACKNOWLEDGMENTS, & DISCLAIMERS (PADS)

- Each module is created based on the understanding that viewers have varying levels of exposure to and experience with the content explored.
- Advocacy likely looks different based on a variety of audience and advocate factors. (e.g., personal values and priorities, key interest/issue areas, time, constituency to which one belongs, localized conditions and needs, etc.)
- There are many roles individuals and groups can play to participate in and advance the movement beyond visiting and speaking directly with elected officials. We strive to present a variety of ways to advocate to learn more about what fits for you.
- There may be some information you would like to learn about that is not yet a part of this series. Please indicate this when you complete your feedback form so we can take your input into consideration in our future work!
- Quotes from various are interwoven throughout this presentation to capture themes explored. This does not indicate endorsement of the individuals quoted.
- Please visit our website for further resources, tools, reflective practice and skill-building exercises, and for the full list of references used to inform the creation of and content included in this series.

# CONSIDER: SENSITIVE CONTENT AHEAD

This series will include references to sensitive topics, including discussions related to trauma and adversity, that may be experienced as challenging to engage with.

We encourage you to care for your safety and wellbeing as you move through this series.



# WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT IN THIS MODULE

series background  
& information



what is advocacy  
definition & examples



key terms to  
know for this series



factors that influence  
advocacy engagement



# WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

activities related to securing, defending, and championing the rights of individuals, groups, or communities using direct action, empowerment, or other means with the intention to advance meaningful change



# KEY TERMS TO KEEP IN MIND

- **Policies** - rules that tell us which actions we may and may not take
- **Public Policy** - a system of actions (e.g., laws, regulatory measures, funding priorities, etc.) promulgated by a governmental entity or its representatives that impact people
- **Social Policy** - a subset of public policy concerned with the ways that society meets human needs for security, education, work, health, shelter, and other aspects that enhance wellbeing
- **Policy Advocacy** - informing, briefing, advising, and/or influencing decision-makers in relation to an issue
- **Policy Measure** - a legislative vehicle (i.e., a bill or resolution)
- **Policy Tool/Instrument** - method/technique through which governing authorities work toward a policy goal



## SOME WAYS TO ADVOCATE

- submit an Op-Ed for publication in a local/state/national media outlet
- contact elected officials by email, phone, and/or meeting in person
- prepare and distribute a policy brief to legislators' staff members
- use social media to inform network and gain support for change
- champion changes in organizational/local/state/federal policies
- attend and make public comment during a town board meeting
  - devise talking points for a group's legislative alert networks
  - hold/attend rallies, town halls, & other community events
  - media outreach and engagement (digital and traditional)
  - give expert testimony before an elected body
  - provide expertise and technical assistance
  - organize and mobilize in your community
  - construct language for model legislation
  - write a white paper report on an issue

- educate/inform policymakers
- voter education efforts
- support public dialogues
- circulate a sign-on letter
- build public/political will
- build/support a coalition
- create model programs
- participate in a Hill Day
- convene stakeholders
- build capacity
- share stories

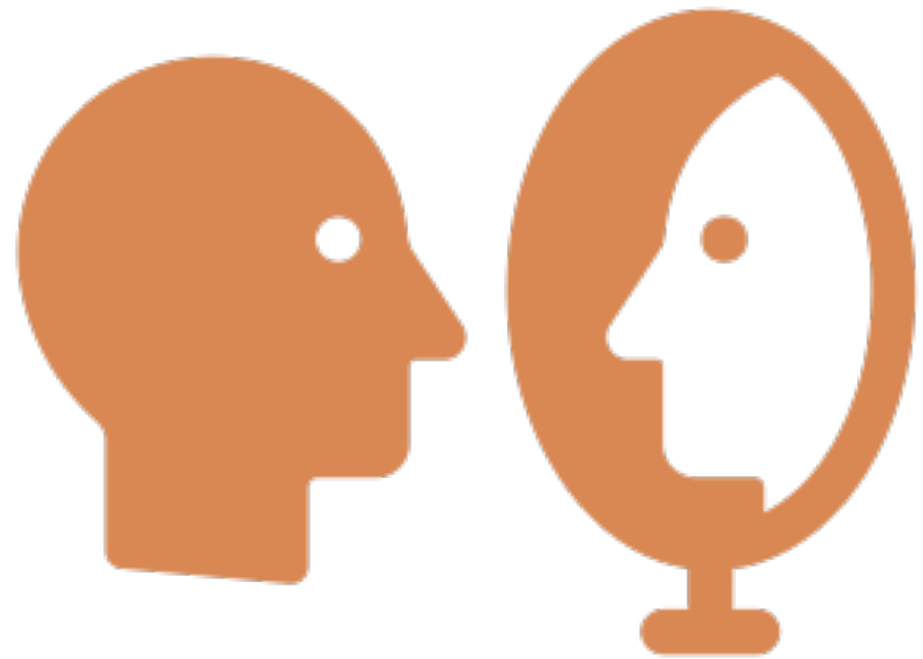


# REFLECTION POINT:

How have you already engaged in advocacy?

What advocacy activities that you have not yet tried interest you most?

From your perspective, what are compelling reasons to engage in policy advocacy (or not)?





# COMMON REASONS PEOPLE CHOOSE TO ADVOCATE

- Connect with others who share your interests/values/policy priorities
- Hold a belief in the importance of civic participation and collective action
- Derive a sense of meaning from working toward the world you want to see
- See the need for change based on personal, professional, or other experiences
- Drawn to doing work that matters to oneself, the community, and the larger world
- Desire to play a role in shaping understanding, practices, and discourse on wellbeing
- Appreciate opportunities to illuminate individual and collective power, voice, and leadership



(SOME)  
REASONS PEOPLE  
STAY INVOLVED

they feel **listened to**/that their **ideas are supported/respected**

they see their effort **making a difference**

their **participation is acknowledged as meaningful** (e.g., recognition at meetings)

their **individual strengths** are recognized while **differences are respected/diversity is embraced**

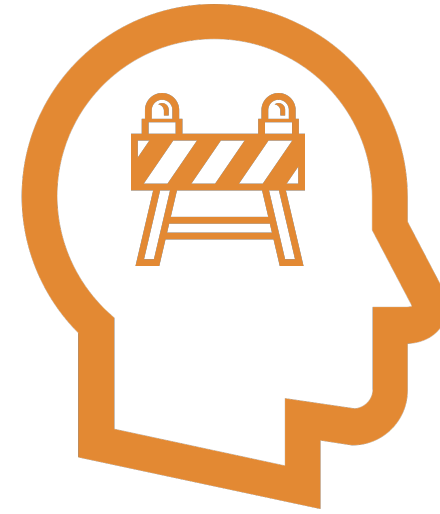
when possible, they are **compensated** for their time, expertise, and expenses incurred

they are given **clear and transparent information** about how their input and contributions fit in

# COMMON REASONS FOR **NOT** ADVOCATING



**low sense of  
confidence/competence**



**felt sense of powerlessness  
to advance change**



**don't know  
where to start**



**time limitations**



**dislike of or  
disinterest in politics**



**lack of trust in/prior harm  
from systems/institutions**



**focused on making  
change in other ways**



**perceived lack of  
support/solidarity**

# ADVOCACY VS. LOBBYING: WHAT'S POSSIBLE



Artwork by Wendy Sittner for Visualize Health Equity

# LOBBYING BASICS

**What is lobbying?** an attempt to influence government decision-making

## Elements of Direct Lobbying

- A **communication** to a member of a legislative body/government official or staff thereof involved in formulating legislation
- that **reflects a view**
- on **specific legislation**

## Elements of Grassroots Lobbying

- A **communication to the public** (e.g., speeches, ads, tweets, op-eds, etc.)
- that **reflects a view**
- on **specific legislation**, *and*
- includes a **call to action**






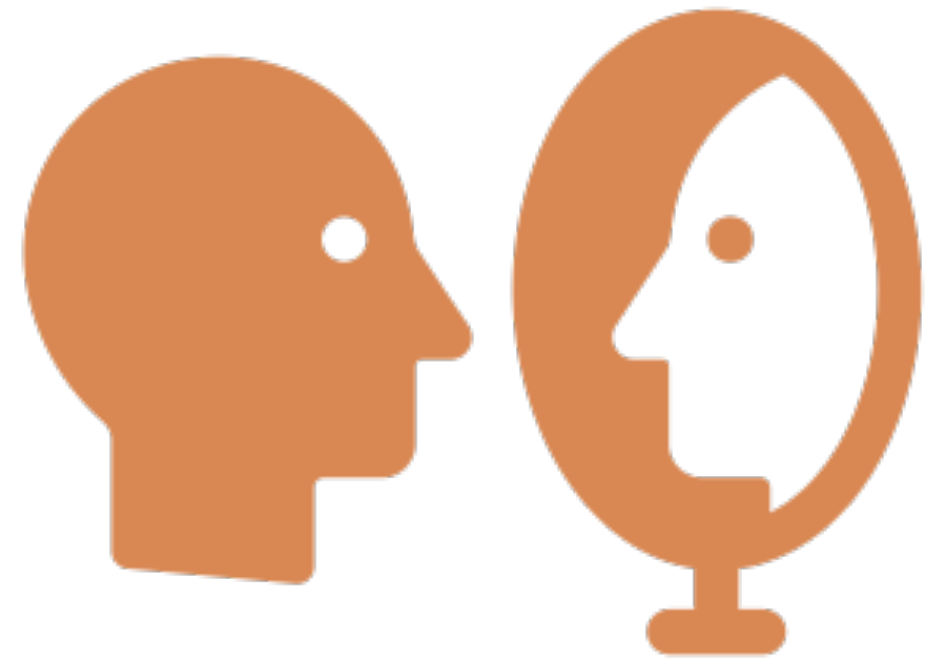
your organization/agency may have specific ethics restrictions or rules to which you are bound

# GRASSROOTS LOBBYING: DEFINING “CALLS TO ACTION”



- Asks audience to contact legislators
  - ✦ *e.g., “Call Senator X and tell her to vote ‘yes’ on...”*
- Identifies the audience’s legislative representative
- Provides contact information for a legislator
- Identifies a legislator as neutral on or opposed to the legislation
- Provides a vehicle for contacting a legislator
  - ✦ *e.g., form email, petition, etc.*
- Identifies a legislator as a member of the committee that will vote on the legislation

<b>Education</b> 	<b>Advocacy</b> 	<b>Lobbying</b> 
<p>Meeting with an elected official to educate them about the principles of NEAR science and how trauma-informed approaches can help.</p>	<p>Meeting with an elected official to advocate for the importance of incorporating a trauma-informed lens into policymaking.</p>	<p>Meeting with an elected official to urge them to vote for a bill to provide trauma-informed emergency to address the pandemics facing our society.</p>
<p>Preparing infographics and other educational materials connecting the social determinants of health to Adverse Childhood Experiences and Adverse Community Environments.</p>	<p>Preparing materials that tell success stories related to implementing an approach that centers resilience and is trauma-informed to improve individual/family/community outcomes.</p>	<p>Preparing and emailing a “call to action” including information on the merits of a trauma-informed approach and containing messaging for or against a specific mental health-related bill.</p>
<p>Tweeting statistics about the impacts of ACEs/trauma and outlining evidence demonstrating how trauma-informed programs can build resilience.</p>	<p>Tweeting to urge support for additional funding to be directed toward programs that address trauma and build resilience along with descriptions of how additional resources can assist local governments to prevent and ACEs.</p>	<p>Tweeting a message @ an elected official urging them to vote against budget cuts for specific programs that reduce trauma and re-traumatization.</p>



# REFLECTION POINT:

What motivated you to engage with this series?

What are your best hopes for engaging with this series?



# SERIES STRUCTURE

1. About the Series and Introduction to Advocacy
2. The Processes of Policymaking and Legislative Action
3. Identifying and Preparing to Engage with Advocacy Targets
4. Building Power and Momentum to Advance Trauma-Informed Change
5. Building and Sustaining Relationships with Policymakers
6. Storytelling for Advocacy
7. Meeting the Moment with a Trauma-Informed Approach
8. Modeling the Model in Trauma-Informed Advocacy



“

None of us alone can save the nation or the world.  
**But each of us can make a positive difference if  
we commit ourselves to do so.**

”

— **Cornel West**  
*Race Matters, 1994*