 **Advocacy – It Works!**

**You are an expert when it comes to your loved one.**

* You don’t need to be an expert in the topic
* The legislators work for YOU
* Legislators WANT to hear from you

**It is important to continually be educating yourself and the community, but you don’t need to know everything to advocate.**

* It’s common to feel afraid or apprehensive
* It’s not unusual to feel overwhelmed by the material
* It’s “ok” to not know everything and all the details
* Working in pairs or a small group is fine
* See MNFAC “Ways to Get Connected” handout
* Refer to MNFAC Facebook page for the latest information

**Advocating**

Effective Means of Communication

* Email
* Letter
* Phone call to the Assistant
* Meeting

Basic considerations & understanding

* Non-adversarial – the tone should be educating
* Use an engaging picture of your loved one to personalize your story
* Your story should be short (1page), personal, and include an action for the legislative person
  + 7 Things Your Letter Should Include:
    1. A picture
    2. Your name and complete address with zip code
    3. A little bit about who you and your child are
    4. What the issue or problem is
    5. Why it’s a problem. What happens
    6. The ask. What do you want them to do
    7. Thank them

**Follow-up**

* Always send a personal thank you by email or preferably a handwritten message. Include your address with zip code and email on all correspondence.