

“Prioritizing and reinforcing the value of independence and decision making as part of the transition-planning process”...is important to “successful transition to adult medical care” (AAP 2011).

Self-advocacy is the ability to share your likes, dislikes or goals with others. Some people refer to self-advocacy as speaking up for yourself. Basically it is all the same thing. Learning to talk about your ideas or your point of view is a self-advocacy skill!

For some people speaking up is easier than others. Some of us are naturally outgoing and some are shy. The good news is self-advocacy is a skill that can be learned. Like building any skill, self-advocacy takes practice.

Building self-advocacy skills starts with realizing your questions and opinions are important. As you move into young adult-

hood, take time to think about what you like and don't like. Envision the future you want!

Practice self-advocacy skills by talking to people you already know. You might feel awkward taking the lead at first, but with practice it gets easier. At medical appointments or meetings with school counselors think of your questions before the meeting. Practice with a parent or friend before the meeting if needed.

Taking the time to build self-advocacy skills can help you achieve your goals. There are great resources on self-advocacy available online. Check out the Skill Building web links.



Action ideas:

SKILL-BUILDING

- ⇒ Take time to envision your future
- ⇒ Think about your likes and dislikes
- ⇒ Bring your questions when meeting with your health care providers
- ⇒ Skills take practice, take it one step at a time

Self-Advocacy Resources:

- ⇒ www.fvkasa.org
- ⇒ www.selfadvocacyonline.org
- ⇒ www.thearc.org

Resources:

Supporting the Healthcare Transition from Adolescence to Adulthood in the Medical Home. July 2011. Pediatrics (AAP)

Best Practices in Managing Transition to Adulthood for Adolescents With Congenital Heart Disease: The Transition Process and Medical and Psychosocial Issues. 2011, American Heart Association.

Self Advocacy. 2014. Pola-Money G, McAuliffe S, Romeo A. Medical Home Portal. <http://www.medicalhomeportal.org/living-with-child/navigating-transitions-with-your-child/transition-to-adulthood/self-advocacy>