

Self-Advocacy

“Learning to speak up on your behalf and ask for what you need. It is learning to take charge and be more independent.”

Connect with Mentees			Connect with Teachers and School Administrators	Connect with Parents and Caregivers
Involve Mentees in Making Decisions about their Future	Help Mentees Understand Their Learning Strengths and Needs	Model and Teach Appropriate Self-Advocacy Skills	Engage with the Mentee’s Education	Engage with the Mentee’s Family Life
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the mentee in developing their thoughts about what they want and why they want it. • Help the mentee to see decision-making as a process and not a onetime event. • Explain to the mentee that in some instances they have the right and responsibility to participate in the decision-making process. • Inform the mentee of the process for making, influencing and appealing decisions. • Support the mentee to identify the consequences of what they are asking for. • Work with the mentee to identify other support persons who can also help them. • Advise the mentee that it is okay to ask a support person to be present in decision making forums and help the young person decide who they would like to be present. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe thinking patterns and encourage students to talk about their thoughts. • Rephrase the mentee’s ideas to highlight their learning strengths and needs. • Support the mentee in focusing on their strengths, abilities and resources. • Assist the mentee in identifying what is important to them, what they do not want to change, and what they cannot give up. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role-play what the mentee wants to say. • Help the mentee anticipate how they might respond or what they might say if a person disagrees with them or does not see their point of view. • Help the mentee anticipate that they might be asked to compromise, which is part of responsible decision-making. • Model and coach to the mentee strategies to assist young people in care with effective self-advocacy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentors introduce themselves to the teacher early in the match. • Mentors ask the teacher for suggestions or feedback that can improve the quality of the match. • Mentors ask the teacher about class subjects/themes and show an interest in what the mentee is learning. • Mentors encourage mentee to introduce mentors to school staff. • Mentors look for ways to inform school about match activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentees are made aware of the opportunity to receive support in communicating with parents/caregivers. • Mentors listen for opportunities where advocacy is needed with parents/caregivers. • Mentors draw on the use of the following stakeholders to communicate with parents/caregivers when advocacy is needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ School liaisons ○ Principals ○ Teachers ○ Guidance counsellors ○ BBBS Agency Staff Members