



Indiana Association for Infant & Toddler Mental Health

Advocacy means learning and speaking out about social policy issues that affect the health and well-being of infants, toddlers, and their families—being a “voice for babies”. Parents and early intervention providers often advocate for individual children when they work hard to make sure the child is getting the most appropriate services, including mental health services. They can also learn how to advocate for **ALL** children at the local community, state, and national levels. **First Steps Mental health providers** can serve as resources to families and early intervention providers about the policy issues that affect access to and delivery of mental health services to young children.

“Who, me?” Ways that you can be an advocate for young children:

- * Write a letter to the editor or an opinion editorial (OP-ED) for the local newspaper about a childcare funding issue.
- * Attend an Article 7 training so you can be an informed decision-maker during a transition IEP (see www.INF2F.org & www.aboutspecialkids.org).
- * Join a local disability-specific support group to stay updated on local issues.
- * Stay informed about pending Indiana state legislature that affects social policy and services for infants, toddlers and their families.
- * Join a national policy advocacy group like Zero to Three Policy Center or Family Voices to stay up to date with national policy debates.
- * **Take the next step to being an advocate-- learn how to speak up and out about issues about which you feel passionate! Your voice will make a difference in the lives of infants and toddlers.**

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Learn More :

www.zerotothree.org/policy
www.FamilyVoices.org
www.frameworksinstitute.org
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