



Stage 1: Advocacy for Self

The Steps:



Step 1: Figure Out the Problem

Step Overview: To begin *Stage 1: Advocacy for Self*, students first learn to identify and describe various problems in their life that require help from others. Naming a problem is an important first step that leads to asking for a specific type of help that addresses their needs and wants.



Step 2: Get Attention of Helper

Step Overview: Step 2 focuses on how students get the attention of others and when attention is most necessary. Beginning broadly, students should identify ways to seek attention from adults in various contexts. It is important to support students in brainstorming ideas and examples from various areas of their life, so students can integrate the concept of appropriately seeking attention into their daily routines. Students also learn about the importance of identifying the many helpers in their life who can be supportive in various situations. If students need additional support with this is step refer to the *Access Valid & Reliable Resources*, which addresses identifying trusted adults in more depth.

Sub Skill(s):

- Identify helpers for a problem
- Get attention of helpers



Step 3: Ask For What I Need

Step Overview: Asking for what you need is the final step in learning to advocate for oneself. There are three important components that should be included when asking for what is needed. These components ensure that the helper understands the problem and is able to provide the support requested. The three components that support student development of asking for what is needed are: stating the problem, stating what is needed, and asking a specific question of the helper that will support solving the problem. Having students practice these three components through the use of the *Language of Health Literacy* is an effective way to build understanding and memory for this step of self advocacy.



Teaching Tips

- Use stories about individuals facing problems or obstacles to provide practice opportunities for students to identify problems.
- Prompt students to think about problems they can handle on their own and problems that require assistance.
- Be careful about how you define attention and attention seeking. The ways people gain attention, whether appropriate or inappropriate, can be cultural or a survival mechanism. When students suggest or demonstrate an inappropriate way to gain attention, debrief this with them to better understand what they are trying to do and refer them to support services as needed.
- Provide a variety of strategies students can use to get attention from helpers (e.g. raising their hand, calling for help, approaching someone in person).
- Allow students to share who they go to when they need help and why by asking them to draw pictures or bring photographs in to share with the class.
- Pair *Stage 1: Advocacy for Self* with *Access Valid & Reliable Resources* to reinforce identifying trusted adults.
- Pair *Stage 1: Advocacy for Self* with *Stage 1: Communication Techniques of Interpersonal Communication* to reinforce speaking strategies one needs when asking for help.

See *Teaching Progression* for suggested learning activities.