

BEING AN EFFECTIVE ADVOCATE IN ABOUT AN HOUR A MONTH

Contrary to what people think, advocacy is doable and it doesn't require a lot of time. Consider the following ways that you can effectively incorporate advocacy into your already busy schedule:

IN LESS THAN 1 HOUR PER MONTH

- Vote.
- Call, e-mail, or write a letter to your decision-makers on behalf of a children's health issue that is important to you.
- Contribute to a political campaign or a nonprofit advocacy organization that focuses on children's health issues.
- Provide information in your professional setting on community resources that you can refer patients to.
- Sign up for 1 or 2 e-mail lists that focus on children's issues.
- Patronize businesses that donate a percentage of their profits to children's health issues.

IN ABOUT 1 HOUR PER MONTH

- Cultivate long-term relationships with a public official or other decision-maker in your community.
- Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper.
- Talk to other pediatricians, health care clinicians, and parents that you come into contact with about the advocacy issues you care about. Encourage them to get involved as well.
- Submit an article on an advocacy issue you care about to your chapter or school's newsletter or Web site.
- Meet with a decision-maker at your place of work or in the community.
- Attend community forums and events sponsored by decision-makers or children's health and safety groups in your area.

IN MORE THAN 1 HOUR PER MONTH

- Testify before the state legislature or participate in community forums.
- Set up an advocacy booth or display in your professional setting that explains the issue you care about and gives people information and resources for getting involved.
- Serve as a spokesperson for a local issue or community-based organization.
- Volunteer as a board member of a children's health organization working on advocacy in your community.
- Apply for community advocacy grants.
- Become a member or chairperson of your chapter's government affairs committee.