 **Advocacy 101**

1. **You are the expert when it comes to your loved one.**
	* Don’t need to be an expert in the topic, just an expert in your child
	* The legislators work for YOU
2. **It is important to continually educate yourself and the community, but you don’t need to know everything to advocate.**
	* It’s common to feel some fear or apprehensiveness
	* It’s not unusual to feel overwhelmed by the complexities
	* It’s ok to not know everything and all the details
	* Working in pairs or a small group is even better
	* See MNFAC “Ways to Get Connected” handout
	* MNFAC Facebook page minnesota families and advocates coalition- mnfac for the latest information. Our new website is [www.mnfac.org](http://www.mnfac.org)
3. **Advocating**

Effective Means of Communication

* + Email
	+ Letter
	+ Phone Call
	+ Face to face meeting

 Basic considerations & understanding

* Non-adversarial – the tone should be educating
* Use an engaging picture of your loved one to personalize your story
* Your story should be short, personal, and include an action for the legislative person

Follow-up

* Always send a personal thank-you by email or preferable a handwritten message. Include your email on all correspondence.