

ECE323 – Advocacy Assignment

Key Information

- Advocate about an issue related to society's responsibility to provide the best start for children and families [BKD1]
- 15% of total course grade
- Due Date: Week X
- Submission format – Electronic to the Dropbox (.pdf, .doc, web link, mp3, etc.) including the advocacy and a reference page

Learning Outcomes:

The following Course Learning Outcomes (CLO) and Elements of Performance (EOP) are evaluated in this assignment: [BKD2]

CLO #1 – Advocate for desired changes to services in support of children, families, and the early learning and care profession using knowledge of current research and social policy.

- EOP #1.1 Locate relevant evidence-informed research studies;
- EOP #1.2 Interpret research findings to determine the impact of social context and public policy on early childhood education, children, and families;
- EOP #1.2 Demonstrate the roles and responsibilities of government and citizens in a democracy

Expectations

For this assignment, you will become an advocate on behalf of children and families with the intent of maintaining, extending, creating, or improving services to; children and families or the Early Childhood Education field. Your focus can be national, provincial, or local. [BKD3]

Begin by identifying an issue or area of concern that you are passionate about [CE4]! Common topics relate to working conditions for RECEs, child abuse, limited services & waiting lists, topics related to children or families with special needs, etc. Review [CE5] the issues discussed in the first few weeks of class.

Once an issue has been identified (the **what**), determine:

- **Why** the issue is a concern (backed up with research);
- **How** the issue should be addressed. This is the **action** that should be taken to make a change (again, supported by research);
- **Who** needs to know and has the ability to make a change. Common target audiences for advocacy are:
 - Parents or the public;
 - Registered Early Childhood Educators currently providing services to children and families;
 - A committee or agency providing services to children and families;
 - The editor of a newspaper, magazine, or on-line media agency,
 - An elected member of the government (provincial or federal member of parliament);
 - A Minister of a relevant government portfolio (e.g. Minister of Children and Youth Services; Minister of Health);
 - A funder or company.

Deciding what needs to change and who might be able to make a difference will help you to determine your **Method** of advocacy. Common ways to advocate include:

- Letters;
- Posters;
- Social Media Campaigns;
- Videos; or
- Public Speaking, etc.^[CE6].

When advocating, it is important to be clear, concise, and informative. Remember to consider your “audience” and stakeholders. What information will make your audience want to take action! This is not a statement of opinion. It is an informed perspective, based on **research**.

For example, a letter should be no longer than one printed page, single spaced, using a letter format, with no spelling or grammatical errors. Posters should convey impact through images and very few words of phrases. Avoid jargon, and avoid whining or appearing to be self-serving.

Research Tips:

You will need to use relevant research findings about indicators and impacts on children’s development, families, and community. “Research” means empirical studies or evidence informed papers. You can use the library research tool, which can be accessed through the Mohawk College library online. When using research, properly reference your sources using APA guidelines. See the “Internet Citation Checklist” posted to eLearn for help. The research

findings will be reflected in your advocacy assignment. Include a reference page with your assignment.

For possible ideas and research support^[CE7], browse these websites:

- Canadian Child Care Federation – click on “Topics” <http://www.cccf-fcsge.ca/>
- www.childcarecanada.org - click on “CRRU Resources/Issue Files”
- www.childcareontario.org Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care – click on “Issues”
- www.stophitting.com – The Centre for Effective Discipline
- Addresses for Members of Parliament (federal) - www.canada.gc.ca
- Addresses for Members of the Ontario Legislature - www.ontla.on.ca

Rubric^[CE8]

Criteria	Exemplary (A) 5 points	Competent (B) 4 points	Developing (C) 3 points	Developing (D) 2.5 points	Unsatisfactory 0 points
Format: Method appropriate to issue; Professional appearance; No spelling or grammatical errors.	No errors, professional in appearance, appropriate method of communication for message and audience (letter, poster, etc.).	Requirements of assignment are met. Minor format changes would increase professional presentation.	2 spelling or grammatical errors detract from the message. Or an alternative method of communication would be more effective for message and audience.	3-4 spelling or grammatical errors detract from the message. Or method of communication not appropriate for message and audience.	Many errors; presentation lacks professional appearance.
Content: Clear, concise, & urgent purpose for advocacy.	Advocacy clearly & concisely identifies the What, why, & urgent action for the target audience.	Advocacy identifies the what, why, & action. Some adjustments to message would increase understanding by target audience.	What, why, <u>or</u> action needs clarity. Adjustments to message would increase understanding by target audience.	What, why, <u>and</u> action need clarity. Adjustments to message would increase understanding by target audience. (I.e. Too much information, difficult to understand.)	Concern not evident or change desired would be detrimental to children, families, or ECEs.
Evidence: Information to support issue is based on research; Correct APA credit to sources, including images.	3+ Quality sources used for support. Evidence conveys depth. No referencing errors.	3 Quality sources used for support. Evidence conveys depth. < 2 APA referencing errors.	2 quality sources used for supporting evidence. > 2 APA referencing errors	Lacks sufficient evidence to support position. Non APA credit to sources.	Evidence not included to support desired change.