



Families Serving Families

*In partnership  
to better serve you*



Independent Child Advocate Services, Inc.  
A promise of hope ....

## ASSERTIVENESS IS ... ASSERTIVENESS IS NOT ...

### **Assertiveness is:**

- \* Expressing your needs clearly and directly.
- \* Expressing your ideas without feeling guilty or intimidated.
- \* Sticking up for what you believe your child needs -- even though professionals may not agree.
- \* Knowing your rights and how to get them.
- \* Documenting what your child needs and all facts pertaining to his/her case.
- \* Collaborating with service providers and treating them like partners.
- \* Effective communication.
- \* Conveying your feelings of self-confidence when you communicate with others.
- \* Advocating effectively on your own behalf.
- \* Self-reliance and independence.
- \* Persisting until you get all the services your child needs.
- \* Analyzing a problem and pinpointing the area of responsibility before you act.
- \* Agitating to get necessary legislation passed and implemented.
- \* Organizing for change.
- \* Having a positive attitude at all times
- \* Being strong when others are weak
- \* Joining others who are organizing for change.
- \* Taking pride in your accomplishments.
- \* Encouraging your child to have dreams and develop the skills to make those dreams come true.

### **Assertiveness is not:**

- \* Beating around the bush before stating your needs.
- \* Feeling too guilty or afraid to express your needs.
- \* Agreeing with professionals -- no matter how you feel -- because "professionals know what is best."
- \* Ignorance about your rights.
- \* Leaving everything to others because "they know how to do these things."
- \* Accepting inappropriate or inadequate services for your child because it's easier to let professionals handle things.
- \* Ineffective communication.
- \* Begging for what is legitimately yours by law.
- \* Abdicating to others your right to advocate on behalf of your own child.
- \* Reliance and dependence on others.
- \* Giving up when you run into red tape.
- \* Acting precipitously before you get all the facts.

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- \* Letting the politicians "take care of laws and all that political stuff."
- \* Accepting the status quo because "nothing can be done"
- \* Giving in to defeat.
- \* Being swayed by others who have a "no win" attitude.
- \* Acting "only" on behalf of your own child.
- \* Being uncomfortable about your accomplishments.
- \* Discouraging your child from having dreams.

How to Get Services by Being Assertive by Charlotte Des Jardins published by Family Resource Center on Disabilities, Chicago, IL 1993