

# Building the Self-Advocacy Skills of Youth with Disabilities

Requirements as stated in the 2015 Application Package for Parent Centers

Webinar Handout  
**Center for Parent Information & Resources**  
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As you know, supporting youth with disabilities in becoming effective self-advocates is one of the current priorities of Parent Centers. What, exactly, does that mean, and what does it involve?

The best place to start is by looking at **what's required** by OSEP, as stated in its 2015 Application Package. We've reproduced that information below.

## Recognizing the Value of Your Support to Date

"...PTIs have helped youth with disabilities have high expectations for themselves, understand their rights and responsibilities, and learn self-advocacy skills. PTIs have been valuable partners to Federal, State, and local agencies, providing expertise on how to better support families and youth with disabilities so that they can effectively and efficiently access IDEA services.

The PTIs to be funded through this priority will build on the strong history of the program by helping youth become effective self-advocates..."  
*(page A-9 of the RFP)*

## Just to Be Clear

**What are Parent Centers required to know and do...**

**... as part of increasing the self-advocacy skills of youth with disabilities?**

This handout provides the verbatim language used in the 2015 Application Package for 328M programs—Parent Training and Information Centers, at:  
<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/oseppic/2015-328m.doc>

## The Current Mission

"At a minimum, the PTIs must:

(a) increase parents' capacity to help their children with disabilities improve their early learning, school-aged, and postsecondary outcomes; and

**(b) increase youth with disabilities' capacity to be effective self-advocates."**

*(page A-10 of the RFP)*



## What do your center *need to know* to build the self-advocacy skills of youth with disabilities?

When your center responded to OSEP's Request for Proposal (RFP), you were required to describe *how* your proposed project would address the needs of youth within your State, region of your State, or area that is served by your center.



**The RFP said...** ►

## What does "building" the self-advocacy skills of youth with disabilities *involve*?

Your center's proposal also needed to describe *how* your project would increase the self-advocacy capacities of youth within your State, region of your State, or area that is served by your center. In the words of the RFP:

**"(5) Provide high-quality services that increase youth with disabilities' capacity to be effective self-advocates. To meet this requirement, the applicant must include information as to *how the services will*—**

**(i) Increase the knowledge of youth with disabilities about—**

...and  
**(ii) Increase the capacity of youth with disabilities to advocate for themselves, including communicating effectively and working in partnership with providers..."**  
*(pp. A-14 and A-15 of the RFP)*

- The nature of their disabilities, including their strengths, and of their academic, behavioral, and developmental challenges;
- The importance of having high expectations for themselves and how to meet those expectations;
- The resources available to support their success in secondary and postsecondary education and employment and full participation in their communities;
- IDEA, section 504, ADA, and other legislation and policies that affect people with disabilities;
- Their rights and responsibilities while receiving services under IDEA and after transitioning to post-school programs, services, and employment;
- How they can participate on IEP Teams; and
- Supported decisionmaking necessary to transition to adult life...

**"(2) Address the needs of youth with disabilities for high-quality services that increase their capacity to be effective self-advocates. To meet this requirement, the applicant must—**

**(i) Present appropriate information on the needs of youth with disabilities, including underserved youth, incarcerated youth, youth in foster care, and youth with limited English proficiency;**

**(ii) Demonstrate knowledge of best practices in providing training and information to youth with disabilities;**

**(iii) Demonstrate knowledge of current evidence-based education practices and policy initiatives in self-advocacy; and**

**(iv) Demonstrate knowledge of how to work with appropriate partners serving youth with disabilities, including State and local agencies, other nonprofits, and Independent Living Centers that are providing assistance such as postsecondary education options, employment training, and supports." (page A-11 of the RFP)**