



Illinois Library Association

A large, stylized rainbow graphic composed of concentric, semi-circular bands in a gradient of colors from red to yellow to green. The rainbow is positioned in the upper right quadrant of the page.

**READY SET
ADVOCATE**

Library Advocacy Tool Kit



Advocacy Tool Kit

The Importance and Purpose of Library Advocacy

Advocacy simply means to actively support a cause. Libraries are our cause. Many people in the community recognize libraries are an important asset, but there are people who feel that technology has made library services obsolete, and the current economic situation sometimes makes their argument compelling. Library supporters must remind their neighbors, community leaders, and elected officials of the fact that libraries provide great learning opportunities, and excellent public service, and serve as invaluable contributors in their communities.

Advocacy is such an easy word, yet so complicated in the minds of many in the library community. Why is it that most library supporters, who themselves are strong community members, don't understand the importance of speaking out in support of their libraries?

This toolkit was created for you, the library supporter, so that you can learn to be a true library advocate. Your voice will make a difference, especially if it is heard at the right time and in the right place and by the right person. All elected officials want to know their constituents; they need to know the opinions and views of their constituents BEFORE they vote on a piece of legislation. Community members want to know how their tax dollars are being spent. You have the responsibility to tell them why libraries are vital and why spending tax dollars on libraries make for successful schools and communities. You can be that person to tell the important library story and make a difference.

This toolkit is a compilation of basic advocacy tools, and provides guidance on:

- Why be a library advocate?
- Building relationships
- Telling your library story/message
- Participating in advocacy events
- Communication tools

