

WHAT ARE SOME CONCRETE WAYS THAT I CAN WORK ADVOCACY INTO MY PROFESSIONAL SETTING?

Advocacy can quickly and easily fit into the work you are doing every day. Consider some of the following ways to integrate advocacy into your professional setting:

SET THE HOME PAGE OF YOUR WEB SITE TO YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER'S WEB SITE

This can allow you to quickly learn what's going on in your community, who's active, and who's making the decisions.

WRITE A QUICK OP-ED OR LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER

If you see an article in your local paper that interests you or that reflects what you are seeing with your patients every day, consider writing a brief letter to your newspaper about the importance of this issue to children's health. Check with the AAP for sample letters or op-eds already crafted by other chapters on popular issues, and adapt to the unique characteristics of your community, if appropriate.

RESPOND TO ACTION ALERTS FROM YOUR CHAPTER, THE AAP, OR A COALITION YOU ARE PART OF

Many advocacy groups, including the AAP, have electronic action alerts. Consider signing up to receive action alerts from groups whose issues match your interests. It usually takes just a few minutes to take action electronically.

MAKE IT EASY TO CALL YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS WHEN YOU HAVE A FEW FREE MINUTES

Program the phone numbers of your community leaders or state and federal public officials into your cell phones. That way, their numbers are always ready to dial whenever you receive an action alert and have time available in your schedule or have a crucial issue to raise with them.

TALK TO OTHER PEDIATRICIANS, PHYSICIANS, OTHER HEALTH CARE CLINICIANS, AND PARENTS

Remember that as a pediatrician, you have a lot of credibility. Take a few minutes to talk to colleagues and others you work with about the importance of the issue you are involved in, and let them know how they can support the issue themselves.

INVITE COMMUNITY LEADERS OR DECISION-MAKERS TO TOUR YOUR PROFESSIONAL SETTING

Invite community leaders and elected officials to spend some time visiting your professional setting. This can give them a chance to see the children, families, and issues that you care about firsthand.

TEACH ADVOCACY WITHIN YOUR RESIDENCY PROGRAMS

Talk to residents about the importance of advocacy, or teach them advocacy skills through grand rounds or noon conferences.