



PARENT AGREEMENT
Marla Michalak - Youth Advocate
ADVOCACY AGREEMENT

Illinois
Valley
Center for
Independent
Living
Youth
Services
Program

As the IVCIL Youth Advocate, I believe that you are your child's first and best advocate. I will assist in advocating at your child's IEP or other school meeting in the following ways:

- I will act as a mediator between family and school
- I will explain, clarify or ask questions for family or school when I perceive there is confusion, misunderstanding or a communication barrier with the other party
- I will make sure the parental concerns agenda is covered if I'm provided a copy
- I will bring up points for the IDEA law and the Illinois Special Education School Codes, to be sure they are followed
- I will step in to speak for the parent if they are having a hard time being understood, too emotional to speak for themselves or to ask for a break when emotions are running high
- I will take notes to record items of special interest
- I will act as a team member of the IEP team, along with the parents.

It is always my goal to communicate in a cooperative, non-threatening, non-aggressive manner, however assertive when necessary. I believe this style of advocacy works best to bring about a collaborative, successful, respectful relationship within the IEP team. As the old adage goes - you get more bees with honey than vinegar.

I do not support communicating in an aggressive, threatening or verbally abusive manner (bad language). This would include reading a letter or making statements that would tear down or attack the character of school personnel. Disagreements can be addressed in a way that would be objective, by just giving details of incidents, rather than opinions of a person's performance.

By your signature below you agree to the above mentioned statements.

Parent/Guardian signature

Consumer signature (12 & older)

Date

Youth Advocate Signature