

## Be an Advocate! Sounding a Voice for Pennsylvania's Children and Youth

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### PSAYDN Mission

PSAYDN promotes sustainable, high-quality Out-of-School Time youth development programs through advocacy and capacity building to enhance the welfare of Pennsylvania's children, youth and families.



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### PSAYDN Vision

PSAYDN's vision is that all children and youth deserve access to high-quality Out-of-School Time programs that promote positive youth development and support the successful transition to adulthood.



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## PSAYDN Goals

### Connecting People

Create a sustainable structure of statewide, regional and local partnerships, particularly school-community partnerships, focused on supporting policy development at all levels.

### Creating Opportunity

Support the development and growth of statewide policies that will secure the resources that are needed to sustain new and existing Out-of-School Time programs.

### Changing Lives

Support statewide systems to ensure programs are of high quality.

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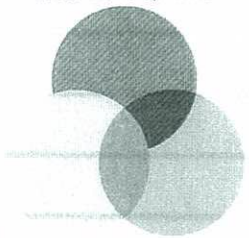
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## Afterschool Field

Youth Development



School-Linked  
& School-Based

School-age  
Child Care

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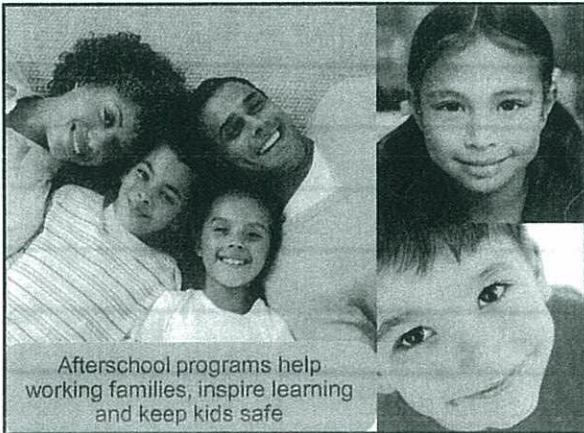
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Afterschool programs help  
working families, inspire learning  
and keep kids safe

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### What is advocacy?

- Advocacy
  - Speaking out on issues of concern to the public or specific groups
- Public policy advocacy
  - Speaking out to influence public policy or the laws, regulations, funding priorities, programs and actions of government

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### Legislative Advocacy

- The goal of legislative advocacy is to develop awareness and commitment among policymakers to change statute
- Examples include:
  - Providing draft legislation to be introduced, commenting on legislation
  - Face-to-face meetings
  - Asking your legislator to support or oppose legislation

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### Legislative Advocacy

- For your purposes today, the goal of legislative advocacy is to:
  - Demonstrate the importance of family engagement to your legislators; thereby laying the groundwork to build relationships with them

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### Why advocacy is important

- The bottom line: *Your voice has power*
- Lawmakers respond to their constituents
- They must detect broad support in their own back yards before they'll support an issue
- Silence from constituents creates indifference in the Capitol – the result being lawmakers listen to someone else
- You are an expert about the benefits of family engagement in their legislative district

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### The Networking Web

Who are individuals that:

- You personally know
- Your staff know
- Your board members know
- Your program parents know
- Your neighbors, family, and friends know

BRAINSTORM with a neighbor  
WRITE down your connections

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### Techniques to engage your policymakers

Face-to-face meetings

- Arrange to meet lawmakers in their Harrisburg or district office
- Present information on the importance of family engagement
- Demonstrate diverse support from your community

Local events

- Invite lawmakers to local events (ex. *Lights on Afterschool*)
- Take photos for newsletters

Award

- Honor your legislator with an award during an event

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## PSAYDN Advocacy Toolkit Tools

- Templates
- Messaging
- Resources




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### Meeting Preparation

- Define your objective for the meeting – What do you want to accomplish?
  - If you have never met with your legislator before, your first meeting is a "meet and greet"
  - Your objective to familiarize them with you, your organization and your issues
- Assume the meeting will be brief – usually no more than 15 minutes

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### Meeting Preparation

- Prepare talking points tailored to your objective.
  - Talking points should include as many as three key messages related to your issue– order them by priority
  - Share data related to the issue that supports your position

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