

## DISABILITY RIGHTS AND ADVOCACY

### Choice and Control:

- ADA
- Olmstead
- Self Determination
- Self Advocacy

### People First:

- Expert Speaker's Bureau
- People First Language
- People First of Georgia

### Safety and Civil Rights:

- Civil Rights / OCR
- Community Safety
- Children Maltreatment
- Safe and Able

## Self-advocacy

Self-advocacy is a political movement started by men and women with disabilities to make changes in laws, policies, and attitudes needed to guarantee all people their human rights. Self-advocacy is about people with disability speaking for themselves and working together to make change their own lives and to change the way that disability services are provided.



IHDD/UCEDD believes that people with disabilities should be included in the design, management, and implementation of all disability programs because they are the experts. Programs, policies, and initiatives that do not include the input of self-advocates are destined to be flawed - regardless of the good intentions and skill of the professionals who designed them. IHDD/UCEDD provides training and logistical supports to people with disabilities and their families so that they can help themselves and each other to become better self-advocates. IHDD/UCEDD also provides training and technical assistance to other organizations and agencies so they can learn how to support self-advocacy and include self-advocates in their programs.

The first self-advocacy group for people with developmental disabilities was started in Oregon in 1974. Eight men and women living in a group home started getting together to talk about what it was like to be a person with a disability. They were all tired of only being seen as "disabled." One person shouted, "We are people, first!" The group decided that should be their name. There are now self-advocacy organizations in almost every state and many other countries. Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) is the national organization in the United States.

People First of Georgia, Inc., is the largest self-advocacy organization for people with disabilities in Georgia. IHDD/UCEDD provided the office space and logistical support for People First of Georgia when they started in 1991. The self-advocacy movement has grown a great deal since then. They now have 30 chapters and over 600 members across Georgia.

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