

# ACCESSIBLE RESEARCH SUMMARY

## Sibling Disability Advocacy

There are two types of advocacy: case advocacy and cause advocacy. Case advocacy focuses on a particular individual's needs. Cause advocacy leads to change for a group of individuals — such as all individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

Parents of individuals with IDD involved in advocacy often participate in both case and cause advocacy. Although siblings play important roles in supporting their brothers and sisters with IDD, less is known about how siblings advocate. To examine sibling advocacy, this study held focus groups (i.e., small group discussions) with siblings of individuals with IDD from urban and rural areas. Below are the findings.

### How siblings defined advocacy:

- Providing support for their brothers and sisters with IDD
- Giving a voice to their brother or sister
- Educating others about individuals with IDD
- Participating in activism for systemic change

### How siblings participated in advocacy:

- Engaging their brothers and sisters with IDD in everyday activities
- Securing services for their brothers and sisters
- Starting or joining disability organizations
- Advocating for legislative change
- Educating others about IDD

### Siblings' reasons for advocacy:

- Love for their brothers and sisters with IDD
- Identify as advocates
- Their brothers and sisters with IDD need services
- A desire to create change

Siblings are an important resource for disability advocacy and activism. However, to be more effective in advocacy, siblings would benefit from more knowledge of service systems and rights. They would also benefit from more opportunities for networking with other siblings and peer supports.



Burke, M.M., Arnold, C.K., & Owen, A. (2015). Sibling advocacy: Perspectives about advocacy from siblings of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. *Inclusion*, 3(3), 162-175.