

Advocacy Assignment

What are you passionate about? What topics do you care about? What health issues are important to you?

Advocacy is arguing in favor of something that is important to you, such as a cause, idea, or policy. Advocacy occurs when a person engages in dialogue about an issue they care about. It can occur in many forms - - speaking out, letter writing, protesting, voting, and even wearing a t-shirt that makes a statement. A person can offer their opinion and suggestions for how to improve something to the people who are in control, for example to policy or decision makers.

For this assignment you will conduct research to find a topic you would like to advocate for. A list of at least 10 talking points will be developed based on the research conducted. These talking points or bullets of research that you have found will be used to support your letter. The research will be used in the body of your letter.

Based on the list of talking points/research a letter will be written to advocate for your health issue.

Expectations:

- Talking Points that are made up of researched facts to support your letter. Be sure to include the Reference List in APA format. Use at least 3 **valid references** from the past five years.
 - Advocacy Letter
 - Spelling/Structure/Adherence to instructions
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- Upload to Dropbox-Advocacy Assignment

Samples:

TALKING POINTS

Advocating for: Restore \$20,000,000 in funding for the Community Challenge Grants program, which has had enormous success and has played a major role in reducing the teen birth rate in California.

TALKING POINTS/FACTS (Based on Research) You must use the library research sites

- The Community Challenge Grant program (CCG), administered by the Teen Pregnancy Prevention division of the Office of Family Planning, is one of the most successful prevention programs in the state. Data and evaluation results indicate a major impact on teen pregnancy rates, making it the lowest teen pregnancy rate California has seen in decades. Great progress has been made but much more work on these issues remains (Office of Family Planning [OFP], 2011).
- At least 50% of teen mothers do not finish high school. Eliminating CCG teen pregnancy prevention funding will increase the dropout rate, leading to a less prepared workforce and a poorer education system (Brunner, 2012).
- Cutting dollars for teen pregnancy prevention does not save money. For every dollar spent on teen pregnancy prevention, California saves \$3.75 dollars on intervention, such as health care for pregnant teens and their babies and public assistance to support families of teen parents. This figure does not include social costs, such as the cost of a less prepared workforce due to parenting teens not completing high school, societal problems related to teen parenting such as academic challenges for children born to teen parents, and dealing with delinquency, which is higher among children of teen parents (Johnson, 2013).
- Teen pregnancy rates in California and the US are still unacceptably high, and we need to maintain a strong focus on this issue to ensure that all California teens have the opportunity to complete their education and attain their goals (Brunner, 2012).
- California has been the leader in the Nation when it comes to teen pregnancy prevention, largely because of the flexible, community-oriented approach taken in the past by the Office of Family Planning. Community Challenge Grants fund programs that are tailored to a community, allowing for maximum effectiveness (OFP, 2011).
- Programs funded by the Community Challenge Grant program include many after-school and leadership development programs. Because of this, their elimination would also effect crime rates, high school drop-out rates, and more (OFP, 2011).

- Loss of these services will derail a decade of hard work resulting in higher teen birth rates! Creating more fatherless households is not going to improve California's recession (OFP, 2011).

- The United States has the highest rates of teen pregnancy and births in the western industrialized world. Teen pregnancy costs the United States at least \$7 billion annually (CDC, 2013).

- Nearly four in ten young women become pregnant at least once before they reach the age of 20—nearly one million a year. Eight in ten of these pregnancies are unintended and 79 percent are to unmarried teens (Johnson, 2013).

- The teen birth rate has declined slowly but steadily from 1991 to 2000 with an overall decline of 22 percent for those aged 15 to 19. These recent declines reverse the 24-percent rise in the teenage birth rate from 1986 to 1991.

- The largest decline since 1991 by race was for black women. The birth rate for black teens aged 15 to 19 fell 31 percent between 1991 to 2000.
- Hispanic teen birth rates declined 12 percent between 1994 and 2000. The rates of both Hispanics and blacks, however, remain higher than for other groups. Hispanic teens now have the highest teenage birth rates.
- Most teenagers giving birth before 1980 were married whereas most teens giving birth today are unmarried.

- The younger a teenaged girl is when she has sex for the first time, the more likely she is to have had unwanted or non-voluntary sex. Close to four in ten girls who had first intercourse at 13 or 14 report it was either non-voluntary or unwanted (Brunner, 2012).

References:

APA Format

Date

Legislators Name

Dear [Legislator's Name];

I am writing to vehemently oppose the proposed cuts to the Community Challenge Grant program. While I understand that California is in a dire situation with the budget, I believe that eliminating this program is fiscally and morally unsound. The teen birth rate in California is at an all-time low, thanks to programs like the Community Challenge Grant, among others. Cutting these programs now would undo over a decade work of progress and send California back to where it was in 1991, as the state with the highest birth rate in the country.

[Insert program-specific information here]

The budget cannot be balanced solely on the backs of low-income children and families, and Republicans and Democrats alike must assume their responsibility to do what's best for ALL Californians. We cannot allow partisan bickering and childish ploys to decimate this great state, which has so long been considered a leader in the effort to reduce teen births—both first births and second births. The Community Challenge Grant funds programs that provide sex education in schools, after-school leadership development programs, male involvement programs and other creative, community-driven programs. It has been very successful, serving over 100,000 youths per year. Participants have shown a reduction in risky sexual behaviors and an increase in contraceptive use, including condoms and birth control. It works.

[Insert anecdotal information here. Include stories of individual youth who have benefitted where

possible.]

Supporting these programs is a win-win for everyone; teens have more opportunity if they delay parenting or a second birth. They are more likely to complete high school, more likely to go on to college or a vocational school, and more likely to have a good job. Children born to teen parents are more likely to suffer health, academic, and economic challenges, so providing support to help prevent teen pregnancy as well as support to these vulnerable young families is critical to improving the health and well-being of all Californians. Please do not throw our young people's future away. Eliminating the Community Challenge Grants program is a short-sighted and ineffective way to balance our budget.

Sincerely,

[Your name. If you can, include your agency and title. If you can't do that because of agency policy, write the letter as a constituent]

(SIGN)

Your Name

Health Science Student, CSULB.

	Excellent more than meets expectations	Good, meets most expectations	Meets some expectations	Points
Advocacy Letter				
Topic	3	2	1	
Person Advocating to	3	2	1	
Advocacy Points	3	2	1	
Talking Points				
Researched points	3	2	1	
10 Talking Points	3	2	1	
Reference List	3	2	1	
Advocating for listed:				
Spelling, grammar, proper letter structure	3	2	1	
Total Points (21)				

Advocacy Assignment Rubric

