

Advocacy Tools & Resources

Goal: This unit will provide information about various advocacy tools and resources that may inform your efforts to advocate for individuals and promote social change. Advocacy is a cornerstone of the social work profession.

A. Tools of Advocacy

1. Research the Issue
2. Messaging
3. Planning and Acting
4. Getting Noticed
5. Contacting Elected Officials

B. Scheduling a Lobby Visit

1. Scheduling a Lobby Visit

C. Directory of United States Political Advocacy Groups by Issue

1. Directory of United States Political Advocacy Groups by Issue

D. Sample Advocacy Toolkits

1. [A Comprehensive List of Resources for Organizing from the Mid-west Academy \(Reading List\)](#)
2. [Advocacy Strategy: The Fundamentals from the NP Action](#)
3. [Tools for Organizing from Citizen Works](#) – This is a “Do-It-Yourself Organizing” tool that can be used as a guide for the ins and outs of grassroots organizing.
4. [Tools for Organizing from Wellstone Action](#) – Whether it’s organizing a voter registration effort in your community, talking with voters about issues that matter to you, volunteering on a political or issue campaign, working with a non-profit, or running for office ... it’s time to organize, mobilize and build power for change.
5. [Organizing Tool Box from New Organizing Institute Leadership](#) is taking the responsibility for enabling others to achieve purpose in the face of uncertainty. Taking the first step to empowering our communities requires that we challenge ourselves and others to make THE CHOICE to organize in the face of this uncertainty. This lesson introduces you to the craft of organizing as it relates to the major movements in U.S. history and provides a framework for re-shaping our ideas about leadership.

Resources:

The following are organizations working on advocacy and social change that can be helpful resources to both practitioners and clients. We do not endorse these organizations. However, we have compiled them as sample resources and also they can be used as models for organizing and advocacy.

A. Education

1. [Advocates for Children](#) – AFC promotes access to the best education New York can provide for all students, especially students of color and students from low-income backgrounds. We use uniquely integrated strategies to advance systemic reform, empower families and communities, and advocate for the educational rights of individual students.
2. [Alliance for Quality Education of New York](#) – AQE believes it will take fair funding and smarter spending to support better schools and give every child in New York State a quality education from pre-K to high school graduation. Truly statewide, AQE has active community-based education coalitions in Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, the Capital District (Albany), New York City and Long Island.
3. [Campaign for Fiscal Equity](#) – The Campaign for Fiscal Equity, Inc. (CFE), a non-profit organization, leads the effort to protect and promote the constitutional right to the opportunity for a sound basic education for all New York's public school students.
4. [Class Size Matters Campaign](#) – Class Size Matters is a non-profit organization that advocates for class size reduction in NYC's public schools and the nation as a whole.
5. [Educational Priorities Panel](#) – The goal of the Educational Priorities Panel is to improve the quality of public education for New York City's children so that there is no longer a performance gap between city schools and those in the rest of the state.
6. [New York State Alternative Education Association](#) – NYSAEA's mission is to link various individuals and organizations to influence the formation of regional, state and national policy and procedure to be supportive to alternatives in education.
7. [Public Education Network](#) – Public Education Network (PEN) is a national association of local education funds (LEFs) and individuals working to advance public school reform in low-income communities across our country.
8. [Statewide School Finance Consortium](#) – The Statewide School Finance Consortium (SSFC) is an organization of nearly 360 New York State public school districts whose mission is to bring equity to the distribution of New York State educational aid.
9. [The After School Corporation](#) – TASC's vision is that kids from all backgrounds will have access to world class schools that prepare them for careers, challenges and opportunities we can't even imagine.

B. Child Welfare

1. [Child Welfare Organizing Project \(CWOP\)](#) – Through organized client involvement and collective advocacy both inside and independent of the system, the Child Welfare Organizing Project will change/transform the quality of services provided to New York City families through the New York City child welfare system.
2. [Citizen's Committee for New York](#) – CCC's approach to child advocacy is fact-based and combines the best features of public policy advocacy with a tradition of citizen activism.
3. [RISE](#) – Rise trains parents to write about their experiences with the child welfare system in order to support parents and parent advocacy and guide child welfare practitioners and policymakers in becoming more responsive to the families and communities they serve.

C. Housing

Local

1. [Metropolitan Council on Housing](#) – Met Council, founded in 1959, is a membership organization dedicated to preserving and expanding New York City's supply of decent, affordable housing.
2. [Tenants and Neighbors](#) – Our core program is to help tenants living in affordable housing that is at risk of being converted to market rate or luxury housing take action to preserve the long-term affordability of their homes.
3. [Tenants PAC](#) – Tenants PAC supports candidates for political office in New York who are strong supporters of tenants' rights. For more organizations, listed by borough, please visit [Housing Court Answers](#).

National

4. [The National Housing Law Project](#) – For over 40 years, NHLP has been dedicated to advancing housing justice for the poor by using the power of the law to increase and preserve the supply of decent affordable housing, to improve existing housing conditions, including physical conditions and management practices, to expand and enforce low-income tenants' and homeowners' rights, and to increase opportunities for racial and ethnic minorities.

5. [The National Low Income Housing Coalition](#) – The National Low Income Housing Coalition is dedicated solely to achieving socially just public policy that assures people with the lowest incomes in the United States have affordable and decent homes.

6. [The Sargent Shriver Center on Poverty Law](#) – The Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law provides national leadership in identifying, developing, and supporting creative and collaborative approaches to achieve social and economic justice for low-income people and communities.

D. Food Insecurity and Hunger

1. [Grow NYC](#) – GrowNYC is a hands-on non-profit which improves New York City's quality of life through environmental programs that transform communities block by block and empower all New Yorkers to secure a clean and healthy environment for future generations.

2. [Hunger Action Network of New York State](#) – The Hunger Action Network of New York State is a statewide anti-hunger coalition that combines grassroots organizing at the local level with state level research, education and advocacy to address the root causes of hunger, including poverty.

3. [Just Food](#) – Just Food has been the leader in connecting local farms to NYC neighborhoods and communities since 1995.

4. [The New York City Coalition Against Hunger](#) – The coalition works not only to meet immediate food needs but also to enact innovative solutions to help society move “beyond the soup kitchen” to ensure economic and food self-sufficiency for all Americans.

E. Consumer Protection

1. [Consumer Action](#) – Through multilingual financial education materials, community outreach, and grassroots “make your voice heard” advocacy, Consumer Action empowers underrepresented consumers nationwide to assert their rights in the marketplace and financially prosper.

2. [The National Organization for Consumer Advocates](#) – NACA's mission shall be to promote justice for all consumers by maintaining a forum for communication, networking, and information sharing among consumer advocates across the

country, particularly regarding legal issues, and by serving as a voice for its members and consumers in the ongoing struggle to curb unfair or abusive business practices that affect consumers.

F. Economic Justice

Local

1. [Citizen's Action for New York](#) – Citizen Action of New York is a grassroots membership organization taking on big issues that are at the center of transforming American society.
2. [Citizen's Committee for New York](#) – Citizens Committee for New York City stimulates and supports self-help and civic action to improve the quality of life in New York City and its neighborhoods.
3. [Citizen's Union](#) – Citizens Union of the City of New York is an independent, nonpartisan, civic organization of members who promote good government and advance political reform in the city and state of New York.

National

4. [The Center for Social and Economic Justice](#) – CESJ is a non-profit educational center, think tank and social action catalyst. We are dedicated to a free enterprise approach to economic and social justice for all, through equal opportunities to capital ownership for every person.
5. [Social Policy: Organizing for Social and Economic Justice](#) – For over 30 years, Social Policy has served as a key site for intellectual exchange among progressive academics and activists from across the United States and beyond, including: Frances Fox Piven, Jonathan Kozol, Noam Chomsky, Marian Wright Edelman, Ivan Illich, Stanley Aronowitz, Michael Lerner, Gloria Steinem, and many more.
6. [United for a Fair Economy](#) – UFE raises awareness that concentrated wealth and power undermine the economy, corrupt democracy, deepen the racial divide, and tear communities apart. We support and help build social movements for greater equality.

G. Socially Responsible Investing

1. [Calvert Investing](#) – As a leader in sustainable and responsible investing socially responsible investing (SRI), Calvert offers a range of SRI strategies.
2. [Social Funds](#) – The largest personal finance site devoted to socially responsible investing.
3. [The Forum for Sustainable and Responsible Investing](#) – US SIF and its members advance investment practices that consider environmental, social and corporate governance criteria to generate long-term competitive financial returns and positive societal impact.