


The ROI of Advocacy


What it is and how to get it!



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May 4, 2023

1

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Describe Advocacy in one Word

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2

What is Advocacy?

Telling your story

Publicly supporting or suggesting an idea

Influencing the formulation and implementation of programs and policies

Act of standing up for others

3



4

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In your opinion how committed is your Y to advocacy work?

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5

Barriers to making Advocacy a Priority



6



7

ROI
Premise

1. Organizations increasingly face pressures from customers, employees, community members, and government bodies to take positions on a wide range of social, political, and other policy issues. The speed and variety of which is ever increasing.
2. This is coupled with the reality of needing to advance an organization's own advocacy agenda.
3. There is no one-size-fits-all approach for addressing this. Organization size, industry, regulatory context, staff experience, historical perspective, geographic location, and organizational values all play a part in developing an advocacy approach.
4. Lack of confidence in advocacy abilities or confusion on how to advocate is a common theme. However, it is necessary to further policy agendas, manage political risk, and navigate social change.

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Advocacy ROI 8

8

Why Advocate?

- Advance the YMCA's mission through policy improvements
- Build personal relationships with policy makers
- Tie the YMCA to broad issue topics – when policy makers think about “x” policy, their next thought should be “the YMCAs can help with that”
- Be better representatives for your communities “in the room”
- Keep policy makers focused on the things that matter
- Integrate into larger collaborative efforts with other organizations
- . . . because if you don't, someone else will



9

Public Issues

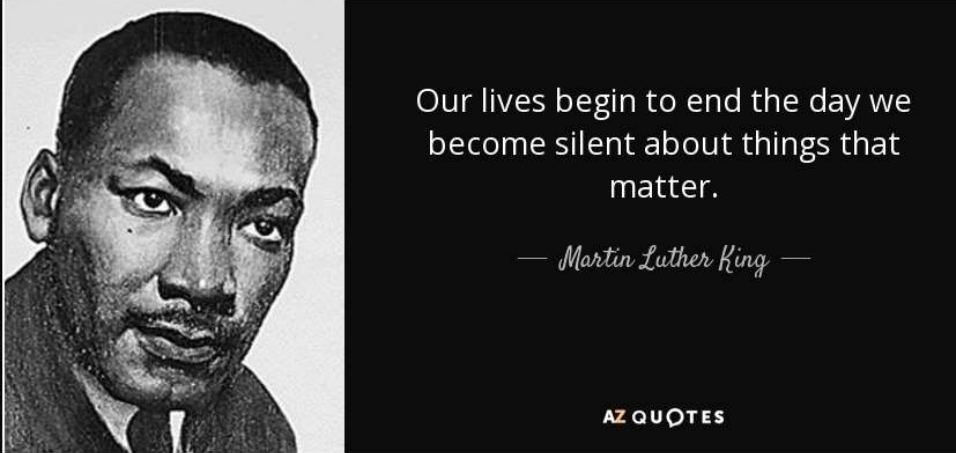
In just the past couple years, there has been a growing increase in issues that fall at the intersection of government and interest group initiatives.

| | | |
|---|----------------------------------|--|
| Reproductive rights and privacy | LGBTQ+ issues | Gun rights & gun reform |
| Public health & safety | Diversity, equity, and inclusion | Climate change and sustainability |
| Education issues (book banning, parental rights, curriculum disputes) | Criminal justice reform | COVID-19 regulation/ vaccine hesitancy |
| Voting rights | Election law/administration | Political giving |



10

The Why



Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.

— Martin Luther King —

AZ QUOTES

11



12



ROI of Advocacy

- Lafayette Family YMCA: New Facility/Outreach = \$32 million
- Crossroads Family YMCA: 2 New Facilities = \$30 million
- Miami County YMCA: New Facility = \$3.7 million
- Muncie Family YMCA: New Facility = \$2 million
- Randolph County YMCA: New Childcare Ctr: = \$1.7 million

13

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What level of government can have the greatest impact on the Y's financial sustainability?

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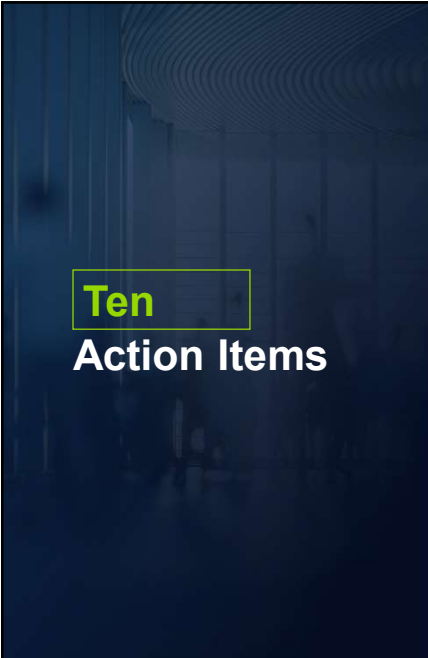
14



How do you get it?

- Time
- Persistence
- Commitment


15



Ten Action Items

1. Identify your advocacy team
2. Make sure you know Ceann and are in tune with her work
3. Identify your elected representatives
4. Find opportunities to get to know your elected representatives
5. Identify issues facing your elected representatives, then work with Ceann to see how the YMCAs might be able to help
6. Keep a pulse on your local community – what do they want/need, and how can the YMCAs help?
7. Understand potential political pitfalls and traps – Ceann and I can help!
8. Learn all you can about legislative process at all levels of government – procedure is what makes laws
9. Constantly evaluate political risks involved in social issues
10. Embrace advocacy – the need for it is growing by the day

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Advocacy ROI  16

16



Indiana Alliance of YMCAs Tools/Events

- Advocacy Toolkit
- Advocacy Champions
- 3 Levels of Advocacy
- Advocacy of Excellence Certification
- 30 Days of Advocacy-August 21st – September 19th
- State House Day-March 2025
- National Advocacy Day-February 2024

17

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Who is the best person to lead advocacy efforts for your Y?

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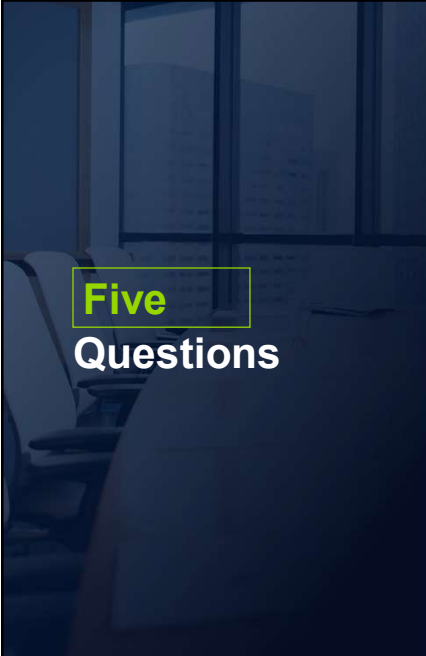
18

- Board Members Tell the Story Better
- Proactive vs. Reactive
- Viewed as Partners at the Table and not Intruders
- Gives Board a High-Level Purpose beyond Fundraising
- Adds Value to the Board's Work
- Embeds Advocacy in the Culture of the Board
- Community Focus-Outward vs. Inward
- Builds Coalitions
- Deepens Relationships in our Eco-System
- Provides Intentional Work

Why the board?




19



Five
Questions

1. What public issues do you think present the most significant short- and medium-term opportunities?
2. What public issues do you think present the most significant short- and medium-term risks?
3. What infrastructure do you have in place to engage in advocacy? What do you not have but need?
4. Do you have a plan for local, state, AND federal advocacy?
5. What mechanisms do you have in place to ensure that responses to urgent public issues are consistent with long term organizational interests, goals, and strategies?

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Advocacy ROI  20

20




Your
Advocacy
Action
Steps

21

Questions & Answers

advocacy
to change “what is”
into “what should be”




22



23

Thank you



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24