Tips for Supporting Self Advocates to Access Technology

SARU

Self Advocacy Resource Unit

About this Resource

Self Advocacy is about people with disability speaking up for their rights.
Self Advocates work to make sure that people with disability have the same rights, choices and opportunities as people without disability.

Access to digital technology is a human right. Article 9 of the *Convention of Human Rights of Persons with Disabilites* says that people with disability have a right to access communication technologies and the internet on an equal basis with others.

These tips were developed with Self Advocates.

Tech Tips

☑ 1. Ask the Self Advocate about their access needs

- Find out if the Self Advocate needs additional support to use a device or learn new skills.

- It is important to work at the Self Advocates pace, using strategies and technology that works best for them.

☑ 2. Be person centred

- Make sure your support is what the Self Advocate says is best for them

- Ask the person if a face-to-face meeting is best or would they prefer support online or over the phone?

- Try screen sharing technology such as Zoom. Always check that the Self Advocate is happy to share their screen.

- Try making short instructional videos. This is good when the person wants to try something themselves first.

☑ 3. Be calm, patient and kind

- Learning new things can be challenging and stressful.

- Technology can be frustrating, when you are calm and patient it helps others to stay calm.

☑ 4. Ask the Self Advocate about their tech history

- What devices have they used before?

- What devices do they use at the moment?

- What do they use their device for?

5. Get them to show you what they can do

- Don't make assumptions about a person's digital literacy.

- Ask them things like "can you show me how you open your emails?"

- This will help you to understand their current skill level.

6. Find out what words or terms they use to describe how they do things

This will make sure you are talking about the same thing. For example, some people call the Google email menu the "pancake stack" and some people call it the "options drop down menu".

7. Find out what the person is interested in and focus activities on these interests

- If the person likes cooking, try an internet search for recipes.

- Games can be a great way to help people feel confident using technology.

8. Focus on one strategy at a time and celebrate success

- Do not try to teach too many things at the same time

- Celebrate every small success.

9. Check understanding and follow up

- Get the person to demonstrate their new skills. For example, if you are teaching how to schedule a zoom meeting, get the person to schedule your next meeting.

- Create a learning summary resource in an accessible format. It could be Plain English, Easy English or a video.

- Check in with the person at a later date to find out how they are going with their new skills.

10. Brush up on your own tech skills

- Before you meet with a Self Advocate make sure you are confident to support their learning. You can do an internet search to find out more information. There are lots of instructional videos on YouTube that can support you to feel confident when supporting others.

SARU

Self Advocacy Resource Unit

247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne

ph: (03) 9639 6856