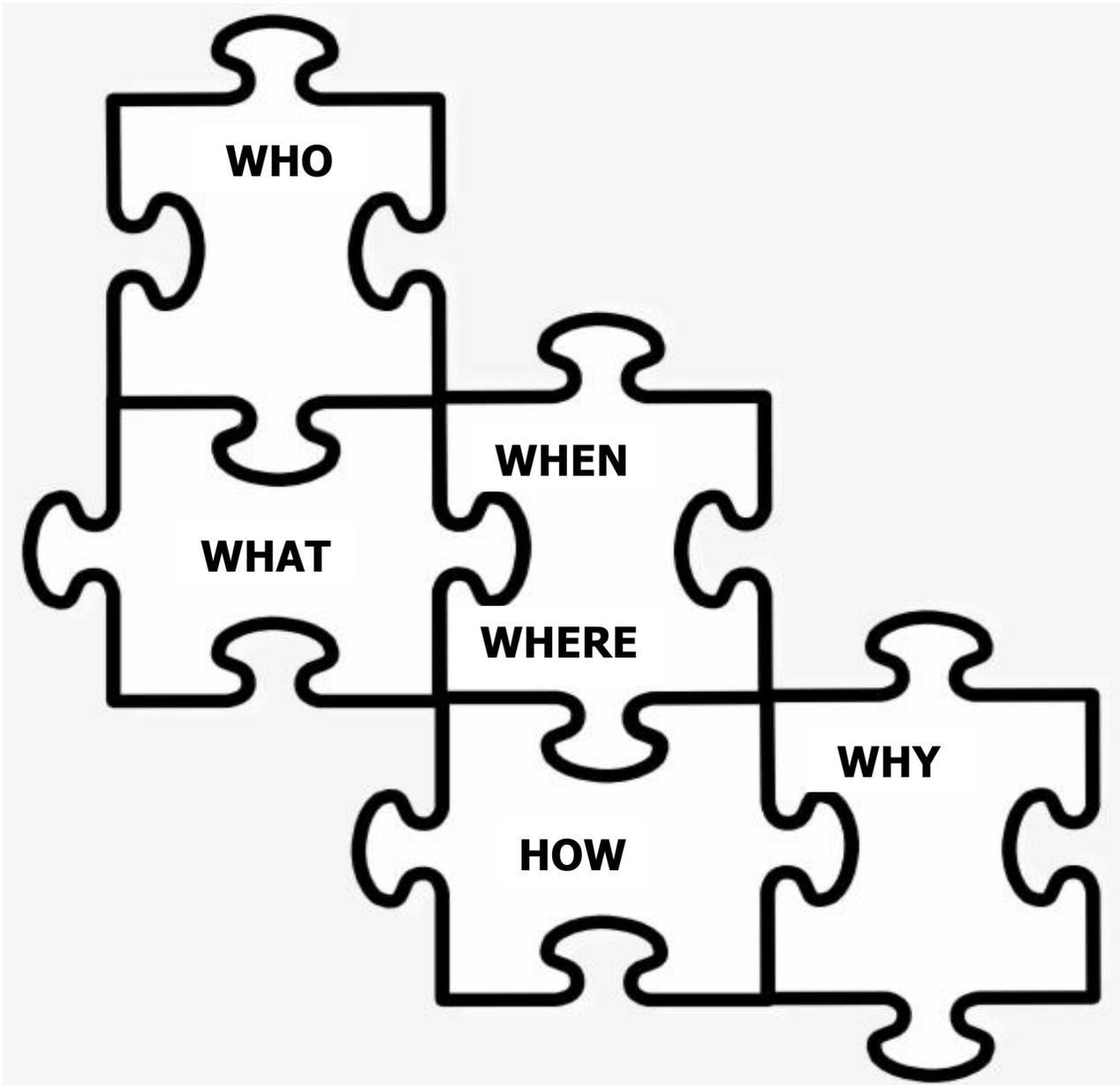


Pieces of the Self-Advocacy Puzzle

Self-Advocacy is like a puzzle, and the pieces of the puzzle are Who, What, When/Where, How, and Why.



The Alliance is proud to be an initiative of the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities

Who can you advocate or speak up and speak out for? You can advocate for yourself, for your friends, or for other people but the most important person to advocate for is yourself.

Who can you advocate or speak up and speak out to? You can advocate to lots of people – family, friends, teacher, doctor, counselor, pastor. You can even advocate to the person taking your order at a restaurant when you tell them what you want to eat!

What can you advocate or speak up and speak out for? You can advocate for a lot including things you want or don't want; things you need or don't need; your hopes, dreams, and goals; a different job or class; or if you are unhappy, being hurt, or feeling unsafe.

When and where can you advocate or speak up and speak out? You can advocate at home; at school; at your community day service; during IEP or person-centered planning meetings; in the community; at doctor's appointments; at the Capitol. You can advocate whenever you want and wherever you go!

Why should you advocate or speak up and speak out? It is good to ask for something you want or need or for something someone else may want or need; to put a stop to what you don't like or want; to get better services and supports; to show we are equal; and it is your right to speak up for yourself!

How can you advocate or speak up and speak out? Lots of ways! You can write down what you want to say; ask for a meeting; make a phone call; send an email; send a text. No matter how you communicate – speaking, sign language, using a communication device, pointing, or body language – you can speak up and speak out!

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