

10 Ways to Help Your Child Practice Self-Advocacy

As soon as your child is capable, allow them to take responsibility for these situations:

1. Make their own appointments with dentist, doctors, veterinarians. Provide details like phone numbers and available times you can drive them.
2. Make a list of questions to ask the dentist or doctor before their appointments.
3. Include your child in parent/teacher conferences. Discuss their needs for learning before the conference. Support your child while they ask for what they need. But DO NOT talk for them.
4. If your child is having a problem with a coach, teacher, or counselor, have them role play with you. Before they address the person, have them practice with you being the person they need to address.
5. Order for themselves at restaurants, encourage politeness before they order.
6. Fill out their own paper work i.e. field trip forms, doctor's questionnaires.
7. Write their own invitations and thank you notes.
8. Have them write down questions that shows can and interest in adults, for example, their friends parents, your friends, teachers, coaches, etc.:
 - How is your day going?
 - Is there anything I can do to help?
 - How was you weekend?
9. Purchase things with their own money. Let them return items if needed.
10. Register for an events such as a soccer tournament.

Note: On many of these you want to stay close in proximity to your child in case they need you and so your child feels your support. Try to let your child handle them as much as possible. A great motto is:

Do it for them.

Do it with them.

Let them do it.

Remember your job is to work yourself out of your job!

Once your child has completed, ask them how they feel to help solidify the good feelings they have about themselves.