

# Listening



## How to Listen

When someone is talking, there is another very important task to be done by those who are **not talking**.

The task is to listen.

Listening means paying attention to the other person when they are speaking and trying to understand what they are saying.

It also means trying to understand what someone is 'saying' to you if they are using drawings or sign language — or any of the other ways of communicating.

## HOW TO LISTEN

Ways of showing people that you are listening are:

- by looking at the person who is speaking
- by not turning your head away, or moving away, while they are speaking
- by not fidgeting or starting to do something else
- by giving them signs that you agree or don't agree with them - for example, nodding your head, or saying 'yes'
- or by asking questions about what the person is saying — for example, "Can you tell me more about that please?"

# What Do We Do?



## What Do Self Advocates Do?

Self advocacy can involve:

- talking
- taking action
- learning
- having social activities

At the beginning, most groups spend a lot of time talking.

That may seem like a waste of time to some people. Especially if they have joined a group because they want to change things.

But talking together is important. You will need time together to sort out your ideas about self advocacy.

Also, many people aren't used to talking about themselves in groups of other people and about important matters.

## SO DON'T RUSH THINGS

Don't worry, if the group doesn't start doing things right away.

It's important to really get to know each other well and to get your ideas right from the start.

If you have decided to have an advisor for the group, you will also want to spend time getting to know him or her.