

ADVOCACY

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

**Did you know
that health care
professionals are
natural advocates?**

be
heard!

It's true and here's why:

You put a human face to the statistics

You care for children every day who are affected by the environments in which they live. When you tell your story, you make the issue of children's health tangible to people in a way that fact sheets or statistics alone cannot.

You have credibility

By the nature of your profession, education, and training, people in your community respect and trust you.

You have influence

Because you instill trust in others and add credibility to your cause, your investment in the community can inspire others to do likewise.

Your patients are depending on you

Children cannot vote. They need your help to tell their story.

You have passion

Advocacy allows you to dig deeper into your interests and touches on why you originally became a health care professional.

You have relevant skills

Health care professionals already have the skill set of an advocate. The same skills you use every day to establish trust, develop relationships, and provide solutions to your patients can be applied to your community advocacy work.

Research is on your side

The issues you care about are backed by research.

You are not alone

Through advocacy, you can join other health care professionals, school personnel, youth organizers, agricultural groups and others, who, through their efforts and community partnerships, are making children's health a priority and working to eradicate childhood obesity.

MaineHealth

LET'S GO!

5-2-1-0

continued

If you are interested in doing more to support Let's Go!'s advocacy efforts or are looking for support for your own cause related to healthy eating and active living, please contact us at info@letsgo.org.

There are many opportunities for your office team to advocate for healthy eating and physical activity in your community (schools, child care programs, faith based organizations, etc.), and at the state and national level for policy change.

Try one:

- Get more involved with your parent/teacher organization
- Become a school physician
- Present at a Let's Go! school board or city council meeting
- Testify at a state legislative hearing

Consider this:

Think about where you spend your time or are a member of a board or committee and whether there are ways to model healthy behaviors.

If you are interested in learning more about advocacy, the *Be Our Voice* campaign is a great place to start! *Be Our Voice* encourages health care professionals to be advocates for children in the fight against childhood obesity so the collective voice is heard by legislators who make and enforce rules and regulations that affect children's health. To learn more, go to: <http://obesity.nichq.org/resources>