

ID

Course: **101:**
Self-Advocacy
Basics
Session: **5b**

Time

45 minutes

Key words/concepts

- legal
- illegal
- legal right
- judge
- ruling



Title

You Be the Judge

Description

Read aloud a series of scenarios describing a situation. Self-advocates take turns deciding if something's illegal, why and how to fix it.

Objectives

- Participants begin to discern when disability rights are being violated and how to change the situations to make them legal.



Materials provided

Legal Issue Cards
Disability Laws Posters
(from Session 5a)

Materials needed

Judge props: e.g. long
black robe, gavel, etc.

Skills

- The skill of noticing how the rights laws do or don't make a difference in common situations

Directions

1. Opening Comments:

Begin with a review of the Disability Laws Posters. Who can tell me one of the three three disability rights laws? Read review posters, as necessary.

2. Explain the activity.

Say, "We're going to play a game. Imagine that you are a judge in court. Someone will tell you about something that happened. And you have to decide if a disability law was broken. Was it illegal? If it sounds illegal, you pound the hammer and call out illegal, then try to explain why as best you can."

3. Begin play.

Find two volunteers (judge and reader). Reader chooses and reads aloud one of the Legal Issue Cards. Judge considers, then rules: may or may not find something illegal.

4. Compare:

After the ruling, invite others to comment right or wrong. Also compare the judges' responses with the "answers" on the back of the card. NOTE: Don't be too concerned that participants get the specific law that makes something a right or exactly how to fix the problem. Rather, try to focus on positive change. They should just get the general idea that laws give people with disabilities basic rights to education, work and community inclusion, and to notice when something seems wrong.

more



Resources

Olmstead Decision: This 1999 ruling by the Supreme Court says that it is a violation of the ADA to segregate people based on disability. It is causing many states to work hard on helping people with disabilities live and work out in the community.

Reflective questions

Do you have to be assertive to get your rights?

How do these three disability laws compare with your values? Is equality for people something important to you?

If we find out that we're not getting our rights, what can we do about it?

Directions/continued

5. Continue, letting each participant take one or more turns in each role. (reader and judge)

6. Options:

- This would be a fun game to play more than once. Perhaps when you have lots of new folks, or some visitors.
- Make up some of your own situations, in addition to the cards. It's OK even if none of you know the right answer. The point is to get people thinking.

7. End with the main point: Why do you think we're practicing being a judge? Take some thoughts. It's because we need to know our rights, and know when we're not getting them.

Take-aways

- Some rights are protected by laws.
- We have more power when we know our rights.

