

**Message from Massachusetts PTA President Michelle Tremont
March 2007**

Advocacy is generally not a term used around the family dinner table. However, advocacy is discussed in many different forms even if the specific term is not used. We advocate every day for ourselves, our pets and our family members. Here are some escalating examples of working to improve our lives and the lives of our loved ones (a.k.a. advocacy).

- “Please pass the salt. I’m not completely satisfied with how my meal tastes so I’m going to improve it”

- “Emma, if you don’t understand how to divide fractions, talk to the teacher and ask him to explain”
- “The teacher didn’t explain to you how to divide fractions? I will call and talk to him”
- “Since the teacher didn’t return my phone calls, I’m going to speak with the principal when I go into the school to volunteer tomorrow”

- “I’m not happy with how the curriculum is presented in our school district. I’m going to volunteer to sit on the School Council so that I can have some input”

- “I believe that the school lunches our school provides are not healthy enough to support the health policy in the state. I’m going to research options and present them to the school committee”

- “I’m going to attend the rally on Beacon Hill to support the Massachusetts PTA and Stand For Children and fight for increased funding for public schools”

Whether you believe in working toward bettering one life or the lives of many, you are an advocate. It’s easy to see how we advocate every day in varying degrees. Given these real life examples, it’s also very easy to see why it’s so important to advocate for things that are important to us.