



**ZONTA**

CLUB OF  
PERTH INC

MEMBER OF ZONTA INTERNATIONAL  
**EMPOWERING WOMEN**  
THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY



## Advocacy Guide

*The Zonta Club of Perth is your local international human rights organisation committed to empowering women and girls worldwide through service and advocacy.*

[www.zontaperth.org.au](http://www.zontaperth.org.au)

This document is designed to be read on-screen

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### Introduction

The Advocacy Guide has been prepared by the Zonta Club of Perth to raise members' awareness of Zonta's advocacy processes.

As members of Zonta International we are advocates for all women in all countries. In making our Zonta pledge we are committed to the legal, economic, health, educational, professional and political empowerment of women.

Zonta International has provided members with a clear set of policy guidelines to enable us to take up our role as advocates in the local community, as well as at a national and international level.

This practical guide provides valuable information to support you on your advocacy journey.



Mary Gurgone, Club President

*Mary Gurgone  
President 2020-22  
Zonta Club of Perth Inc*

## Zonta International Advocacy Policy

Zontians are urged to express themselves about and become involved in issues that:

- improve the legal, political, economic, educational, health, and professional status of women;
- advance understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of executives in business and the professions; and
- promote justice and universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

**Zonta International, its districts and its clubs are non partisan and non-sectarian.**

## What is advocacy?

A useful definition is to plead the cause of another, but advocacy means many different things to different people.

Zonta International defines advocacy as:

*... expression of support for or opposition to a cause, argument or proposal.*

*Advocacy may include influencing laws, legislation or attitudes.*

*Zonta advocacy is an action taken in the public interest or for the greater good with respect to advancing the status of women and girls and their human rights.*

## How do we advocate?

**We Act.** Zontians are encouraged to support legislation that advances the:

- Objects and resolutions of Zonta International;
- the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;
- CEDAW—the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women;
- the Sustainable Development Goals; and
- the UN and Council of Europe Conventions.

**We collaborate.** We should seek to cooperate with other like-minded organisations or individuals to raise awareness of issues—and the actions we must initiate to effect positive change.



**We educate.** Where possible we should work with other organisations to educate people and ourselves about women's issues and how to effect change.

**We are balanced.** Every effort should be made to present a well-balanced presentation of facts and viewpoints.

**We are autonomous.** We must remain autonomous in our advocacy. We may not endorse a political candidate or party or any religious denomination. We may endorse qualified individuals for non-partisan positions.

**We may protest.** We may register protest concerning violation of human rights with the Zonta International Advocacy Committee

## When do we advocate?

We should advocate:

- When an issue is brought to our attention through our local community, our work, the media or Zonta International Headquarters.
- When we wish to support a group which has alerted us to an issue.

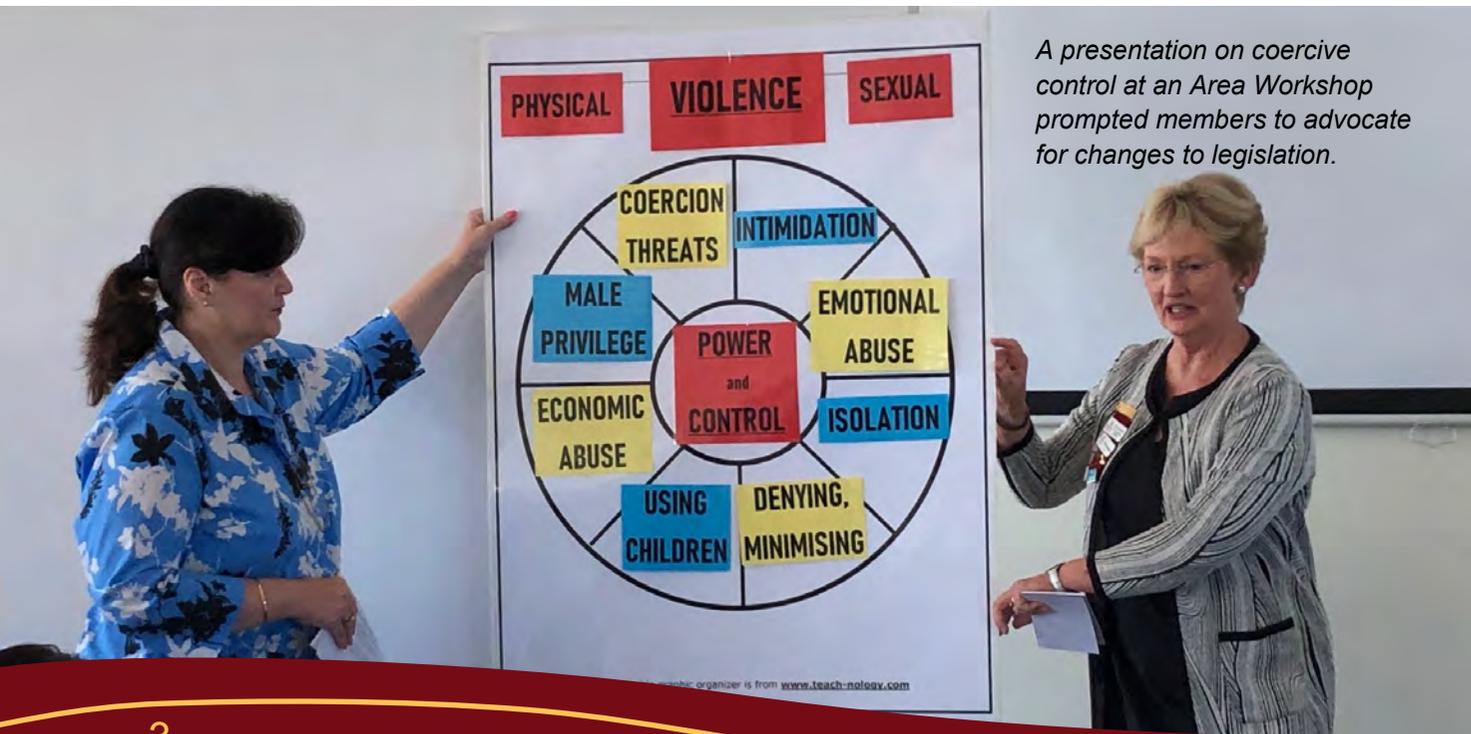
- When we wish to support legislation or amendments to legislation.
- When we wish to oppose legislation.
- When we wish to draw attention to an issue to gain public support or raise awareness.
- When we wish to present a vision for the future and influence policy makers.

## Why do we advocate?

- To influence public opinion.
- To influence public policy.
- To educate people and ourselves about the issues.
- To promote our aims and empower women in general.
- To assist with the resolution of a current issue which is confronting women.

## Who should we approach as members of Zonta?

When an issue is identified, discussion should take place with the Club President,



## Translating intentions into actions

Here are a few suggestions to translate intent into action:

- **Publish guidelines** for advocacy procedures for clubs
- **Provide up-to-date contact lists** of Local Councillors, State and Federal Members of Parliament and local media contacts.
- **Conduct a public women's forum** (perhaps close to International Women's Day). Invite a panel of female

members of parliament to speak on selected topics related to the advancement of women.

- **Arrange workshops/information sessions for women**—how to network, how to influence policy makers, how to get into positions of influence, how to access information.
- **Apply for funding** to finance workshops, forums etc.
- **Use local media** to raise the profile of Zonta International and present views on current issues. Invite the editor of the local paper to a dinner meeting. Get to know local journalists. Establish a regular

dialogue with local media to improve our chances of coverage when we have an issue or event.

- **Keep doing** what Zontians are already doing by way of our awards for Women of Achievement, Young Women in Public Affairs etc.

### Points to remember

- Zonta clubs may express their opinion on issues only as clubs.
- Zonta Districts may express their opinions only as Districts.
- The Convention may express views on issues on behalf of Zonta International
- Districts may include guidelines for the process for determining their advocacy activity in their district rules of procedures.

**Club members may express their personal views on issues as private citizens. In doing so they must not attribute their personal views to a Zonta club, district or Zonta International.**



## Effective advocacy skills

- **Believe in your rights before you begin**—be familiar with the Zonta International policy and guidelines.
- **Have a clear vision**—know what it is that you want to achieve, i.e. a radical change, influencing a decision, helping to overcome a problem for a group, or supporting someone in need.
- **Be organised**—set up a file on advocacy issues, actions and contacts. This can be handed on to new members and updated as necessary—it will form a good basis and historical record for others to follow.
- **Prioritize**—decide which is the most important issue at the present. State your desired outcomes in positive terms—write them down and make sure you have consensus amongst club members.
- **Understand the context and the factors involved in the issue**—do research and make sure you have all the details of the issue before you plan your action.

- **Know the laws**—familiarise yourself with current legislation relating to the issue.
- **Follow the chain of command**—start at a local level before you take it to the next level i.e. if it is a local government issue, contact local government first.
- **Be informative**—share what you know about the issue with other clubs and organisations of like mind.
- **Be creative**—offer solutions when discussing problems.
- **Be principled and persistent**—keep focused on your initial goal—don't give up—be clear about what your club wants to see happening and stand firm. Ask questions if you don't understand

something, project authority, don't be timid, listen to what people are saying, avoid being adversarial—attack the problem, not the person.

- **Develop endurance**—pace yourself for a long race.
- **Follow through**—monitor progress. Try to give feed-back and maintain contact with the organisation you have approached, maintain some ownership of the process.

**Be persistent. Be polite.  
Be patient.  
Never give up.**

