

LADDER



- L Look at your rights, what you want, what you need, and your feelings about the situation.
- A Arrange a convenient time and place to discuss your problem with the other person.
- D Define the problem situation as clearly as you can.
- D Describe how you feel about the situation using "I" messages (ex. "I feel upset when...")
- E Express your request in a few clear, concise, but firm statements.
- R Reinforce the possibility of getting your request by highlighting the benefits to the other person or legal protections offered under disability rights laws.

Remember:

- Ask questions about why your rights are being limited. Keep asking questions until you understand what is happening;
- Write down the answers you are given or get the answers on tape. Get as much information as you can and make sure it's correct;
- Get a friend to help you if you want support. Some towns have services that can help you get a friend who knows about advocacy;
- Find out what all the choices are and pick the ones that are best for you;
- Decide what you think about the situation and what steps you need to take;
- Know who to talk to and who is in charge. Go to the person who makes the decisions;
- Know and use your rights.