



## Who is an Adult Ally?

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**'Adult Ally' is a term that we use for adults who work with young people with disabilities.** An Adult Ally strives to be a partner and a role model to young people, teaching them and learning from them. An Adult Ally approaches working with young people as a possible partnership, an equal relationship that can benefit each of them and the work that they do together.

### **An Adult Ally:**

- Believes that youth can 'be youth' and still be partners and meaningful participants.
- Is clear about his or her intentions as an ally
- Creates a 'space' for youth to feel comfortable and respected. An Ally
- considers the place where work is done together, the times when meetings are held and even the way information is shared (use of language, format of materials, etc) to make sure that it is as comfortable for the younger participants as it is for the adults.
- Uses youth friendly and accessible language—and makes sure others do, too
- Does not assume that youth only know about 'youth issues'
- Supports young peoples development; as meaningful participants, valued leaders and equal partners.
- Includes youth in decision making
- Believes that youth are valuable and have potential
- Supports the hopes and dreams of young people
- Doesn't talk down to young people. Assumes that young people know stuff. Listens to what they have to say.

For more on being an effective adult ally, see the KASA manual, "How to Include Youth As Leaders".

**Visit Kids As Self Advocates on the web at: [www.fvkasa.org](http://www.fvkasa.org)**

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