

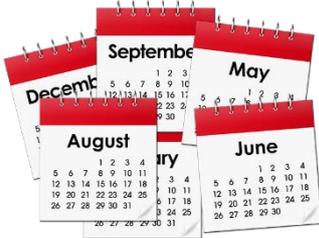
The importance of Spokespeople for LDE

	<p>Spokespeople are so important to Learning Disability England.</p> <p>They inspire other people and also act as role models and represent the voices of our members.</p> <p>They all come with different skills and are able to talk on many different topics.</p>
	<p>Our spokespeople do lots of different things.</p> <p>They might be asked for a written or spoken comment from the media or they might even be asked to be interviewed for TV or the radio.</p> <p>They are also asked to talk at events or conferences or go to meetings as well.</p>
	<p>Of course, LDE try and give them lots of support with this.</p> <p>As a spokesperson you can choose how much or how little you want to do. They are totally free to say 'no' to something if they do not want to do it.</p>
	<p>Being a spokesperson gives people a chance to meet and network with lots of other people and travel around England to speak.</p>



It was great to see self-advocates kick off our first meeting together since lockdown last week.

They all showed that they had so much passion, enthusiasm, eagerness and confidence.



We plan to have monthly get togethers for the spokespeople to share and support each other.

These meetings will also give everyone a chance to work on their public speaking.



We believe people with learning disabilities and family members speaking for themselves will change the way society sees them.

Learning Disability England wants our spokespeople to be like a megaphone and raise the voices of our members.



When it comes to my personal journey as self-advocate and spokesperson, I have been speaking up and representing people with learning disabilities and/or autism since 1982.



To do this I had to develop self-confidence and assertiveness skills.

What really helped me do this was going to college where I did art, play writing and drama. I had to act on stage in front of big crowds of people.



Later I got involved in television as a presenter and reporter. I have now spoken in big crowds in this country and overseas.

All of this helped me become the spokesperson I am today.



I hope my story and hearing about our spokespeople will encourage others to try and speak up get their voices heard.



If you are interested in becoming a spokesperson please email Lisa to find out more:

Lisa.watchorn@LDEngland.org.uk

By Gary Bourlet