



Strategic Self-Advocacy (SSA) — Easy Read Summary

Strategic Self-Advocacy (SSA) is a way to help people keep control of their stories. It is written by a survivor.

What this is

SSA is for people who use symbols, gesture, sound or AAC (alternative communication). SSA helps teachers, community workers and advocates run safe and fair programs.

What SSA means

- **SSA treats all forms of communication as authorship** — that means every time someone expresses themselves it is their work.
- **SSA is trauma-aware** — people can say "no", take breaks and choose how they share.
- **SSA works with many ways of communicating:** sound, gestures, images, objects and AAC.
- **SSA helps people stay safe, respected and in control.**

The eight short modules

The eight modules help people learn and practice self-advocacy. Each module includes simple tools for accessibility, consent and reflection.

| Module | Focus | Key Question |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Listening as Power | Sound and recordings | Who gets heard? |

| Module | Focus | Key Question |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2. Voice & Silence | Gesture and symbols | What does silence mean? |
| 3. Sound as Protest | Rhythm and chants | What needs to change? |
| 4. Composing Self | Art and audio journals | Who are you becoming? |
| 5. Consent in Creativity | Drama and consent boards | How do we co-create safely? |
| 6. Sensory & Story Mapping | Maps and objects | What stories live here? |
| 7. Challenging Performance Norms | Process art | Who defines success? |
| 8. Creative Advocacy Projects | Group projects to make change | What do you want to change? |

How to use SSA — short steps

1. Co-design with people who have lived experience.
2. Try 1–2 modules first.
3. Make a clear plan for consent (who can see the work and how it is used).
4. Record authorship: who made it, the date, and the purpose.
5. Give accessible outputs (Easy-Read, AAC, Auslan).
6. Ask people for feedback and improve the program.

Check questions (use instead of tests)

- Did the person make something in their own way?
- Was their communication treated fairly, no matter how they communicated?
- Was consent asked for and kept?
- Did facilitators notice feelings and adjust?
- Did the work support repair or change?

Who this is for

Community groups, teachers, advocates, and organisations who want safer, more inclusive programs for people who use AAC or non-verbal methods.

Downloads & videos

- Full white paper: [File](#) (link to ssa-white-paper.pdf)
- SSA implementation checklist (short): [File](#)

- Auslan video & script (short hero clip): [📄 File](#)

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