Summary of Schoffstall et al., "From Theory to Practice: Self-Advocacy Skill Development of Students who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing who are Transitioning Into Post-Secondary Settings"¹

Why was this work done?
- To explore the process of self-advocacy skill development in deaf students
- To better understand how self-advocacy skills are related to student success in postsecondary settings
- To inform future transition planning practices for deaf students who are transitioning into postsecondary settings

How was this work done?
- Researchers reviewed education and disability research literature to unpack the conceptual construct of self-advocacy.
- Authors examined the relationship between student self-advocacy and postschool experiences and outcomes for deaf students.

What did researchers find?
- IEP teams in secondary settings play a critical role in identifying and supporting self-advocacy skills during transition.
- Students with disabilities who employ self-advocacy skills (including knowledge of themselves, knowledge of their rights, communication skills, and leadership skills) experience more positive academic and lifetime outcomes.
- School curricula that incorporates student-led Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings as a standard practice have been found to not only support positive IEP outcomes, but also improve student leadership skills and overall involvement in transition planning.
- Deaf students who choose not to pursue higher education need opportunities to actively explore personal, vocational, and occupational interests.

"IEP teams are in a unique position to promote and support their students’ self-advocacy skill development."

What are the implications of this work?
- This review underscores the importance of integrating self-advocacy training into transition plans for deaf students.
- IEP teams and other professionals who work with deaf students can play an important role in providing instruction and scaffolding self-advocacy skill

development.

• Future research efforts should focus on specific practices for IEP development and transition planning.