SELF ADVOCACY AND INCLUSION – SPEAKING UP OVER THE YEARS

Self Advocacy History Group –
Reinforce, Chris Bigby, Paul Ramcharan & Patsie Frawley
Getting together and sharing our stories – we used to go on camps and let everyone talk about the things that were important to them – People were included in deciding what we worked on – making decisions together about what to do and how to do it.
Getting information in ways you can understand it and working with other people so they get the information too - Inclusion through knowing how to run meetings and participate in meetings, speak in public, knowing about your rights.
Self advocates have been involved in campaigns about closing institutions like Janefield, Caloola, Mayday Hills in Beechworth and Kew. This year Reinforce is campaigning to close Colanda: The right to live in the community is a right that self advocacy fights for – inclusion is living in the community.
Self advocacy has used lots of different ways of being heard – early on self advocates joined together and did things like squatting in houses to get community housing, demonstrating on parliament steps, talking to politicians. Inclusion is being able to speak out like other people in the community - being political.
Being included by speaking to government, academics, service providers and other self advocates at conferences, meetings and forums:

Inclusion is having a voice and being heard – Self advocacy has given people a voice