



# **Influence of Parents & Third-Party Validators to Drive Change**

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# What is Third-Party Validation?

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*“No matter how many times you toot your own horn, no one will believe you until they hear it from someone else.”*

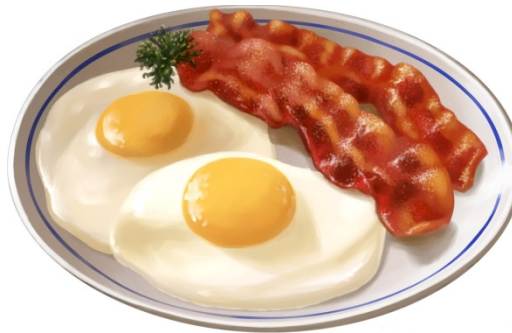


# “The Father” of Validation



Edward Bernays  
1891-1995

- Developed technique for influencing public opinion by studying “crowd psychology” and social sciences



Doctors recommending  
bacon & eggs for breakfast



Legislators requiring  
hairnets near machinery

# How Does this Apply to Gifted Advocacy?

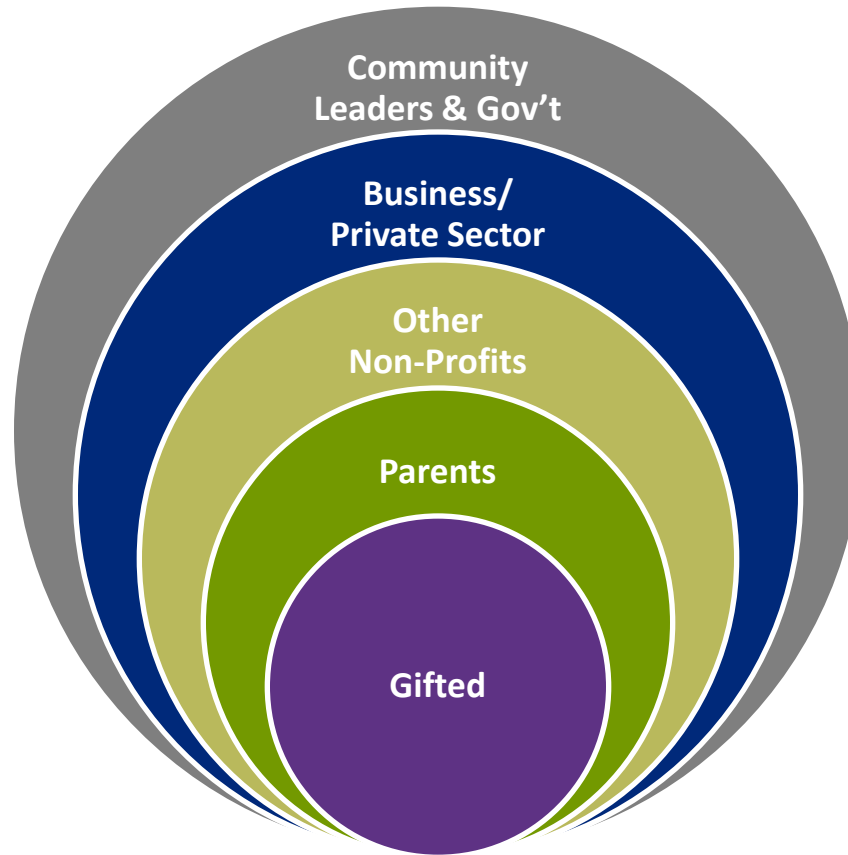
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*Historically, gifted has been isolated—talking amongst ourselves—  
“inside” not “outside” the community*

# Need Others to Join Our Cause

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# Why All These Audiences?

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## Third-party validators are essential:

- Builds credibility
- Volume=many voices
- Diversity=different audiences
- Shows strength
- Helps organization grow
- *Creates change*

*It's not self-serving—or tooting our own horn—to let others make the case with us and on our behalf!*

# Sample Audiences: Illinois



## Illinois Educators/ Administrators/Boards

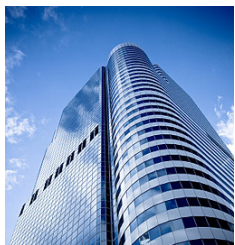
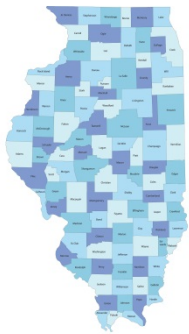
- Current IAGC members
- Title I Schools
- Illinois Administrators
- Illinois Association of School Boards
- Illinois Education Association
- Illinois Principals Association
- Illinois School Social Workers Association
- Illinois Special Education Directors
- Large Unit District Association
- Past GES participants
- Graduates of university gifted programs



## Parents

- PTAs
- Parent support groups
- Talent center/enrichment program participants
- Family Action Network (FAN)
- Parents with special talents: Legal, Marketing, Public Speaking, etc.

# Sample Audiences: Illinois



Audience	Stakeholders
<b>District Ambassadors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-IAGC members</li> <li>-School district gifted coordinators</li> <li>-Parents</li> <li>-Teachers</li> <li>-IAGC Convention &amp; Prof Development attendees</li> <li>-University representatives</li> </ul>
<b>Businesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Abbott</li> <li>-Allstate</li> <li>-Archer Daniels Midland</li> <li>-Boeing</li> <li>-Caterpillar</li> <li>-Deere</li> <li>-Illinois Manufacturer Assn</li> <li>-Mondelez</li> <li>-Sears</li> <li>-United Continental</li> <li>-Walgreen</li> </ul>
<b>Foundations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The Coleman Foundation</li> <li>-Grand Victoria Foundation</li> <li>-John Deere Foundation</li> </ul>



# Sample Audiences: Illinois

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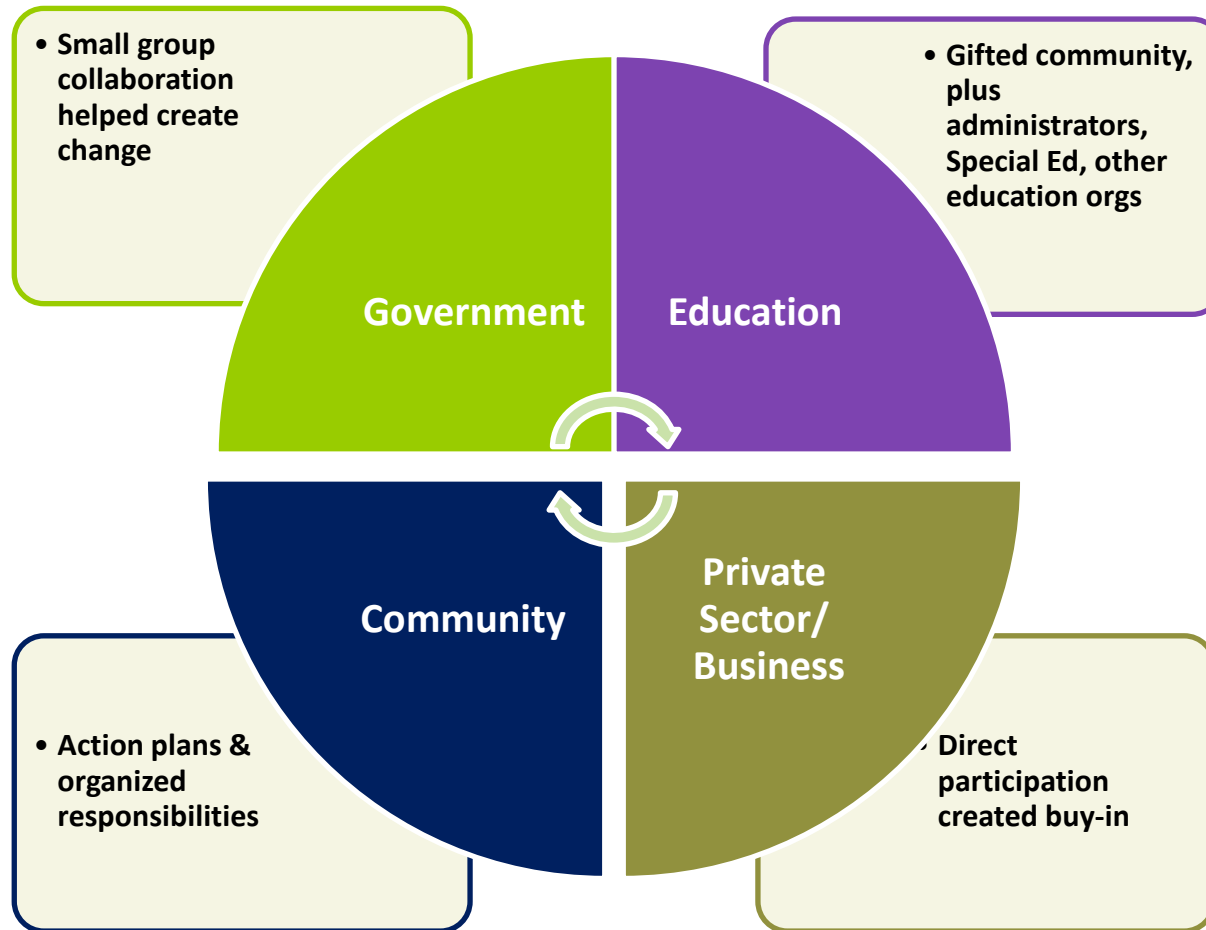


Audience	Stakeholders
<b>Medical Professionals</b>	-Physicians -Psychologists
<b>Other Non-Profits</b>	-One Chance Illinois -Untapped Potential Project -Project Syncere (STEM focus) -Big Shoulders
<b>Community Leaders</b>	-Illinois Science & Technology Coalition

*It's all about networking: You never know where the entry point occurs or who will be a connection.*

# Success Story: Wisconsin & Utah

## *Statewide Problem-Solving Conferences*



Source: Schatz (1991), Todd & Larsen (1992)

# Parents are Important, Too

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## Parents have:

- Stories
- Connections (e.g., business, community)
- Passion
- Motivation
- Insights
- Many “feet on street”
- Validation

*Major changes in policies relating to children are often due to parent advocacy and influence.*

# Parent Advocacy Success Stories

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State	Success
<b>Iowa</b>	Parent phone tree helped get candidate elected in tight election
<b>New York</b>	Became players in district planning after specifying policy for gifted learners, creating enrichment program, and breaking down barriers to acceleration
<b>North Carolina</b>	“Bag It” Campaign: Given 2 paper bags and asked to take someone to lunch—principal, PTA president, reporter

Source: Robinson, A., & Moon, S. (2003). National study of local and state advocacy in gifted education. *Gifted Child Quarterly, 47*.

# How to Work with Parents

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- Leverage their passion/enthusiasm
- Look for skills and/or contacts to match needs
- Identify roles
  - Coalition leadership
  - Serve as liaisons to other audiences
  - Communications, public relations and list management
  - Legal/policy review
  - Speak at Listening tours/Budget hearings
  - At large: District legislator contact
- Find stories/anecdotes
  - Underserved, profoundly gifted, 2E, homeschoolers, private independent gifted

# How to Get Started

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## People

- Research
- Identify
- Invite
- Connect
- Share
- Sign On



## Tools

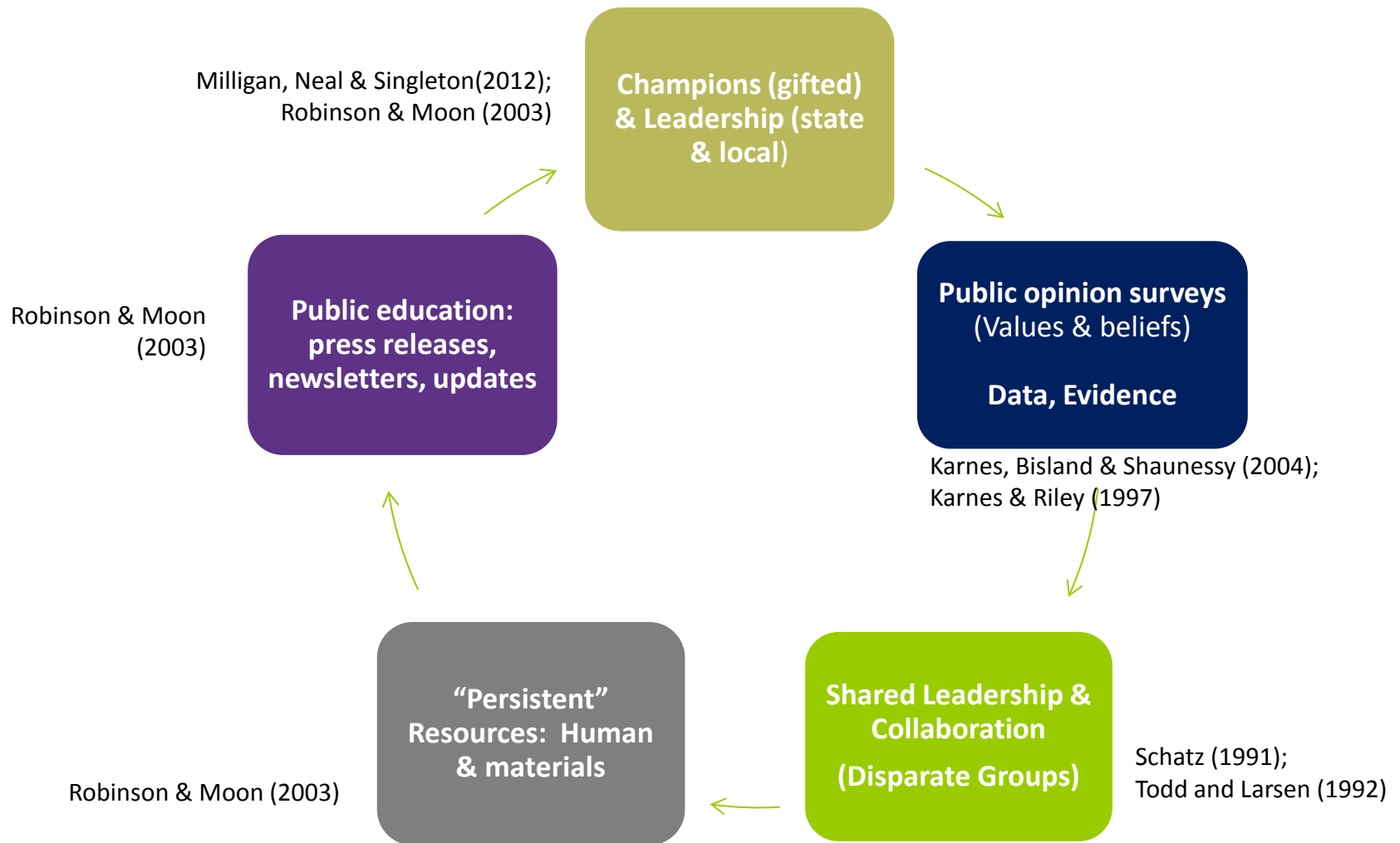
- Data
- Polls
- Surveys
- Evidence
- Anecdotes
- Social Media
- Contact/  
Mail System
- Materials



## Platform & Plan

- Identify  
“The Ask”
- Socialize
- Update
- Action List
- Manage  
Actions
- “Rinse &  
Repeat”

# Best Practices in Advocacy



# Summary

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- Research demonstrates success in advocacy when
  - Leadership is comprised of cross-disciplines
  - Coalition across industries, outside of gifted
- Need tools, platform and a plan
  - Data, public research & opinion, customer management system, social media, back-up materials
- Deliberately orchestrated outreach and action



# Summary

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**Advocacy spans years, sometimes decades. It requires:**

- Patience, diligence, and constant attention
- Continual, formal and organized process

***However, if we do it right,  
change will occur!***

# Thank You!

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