

Songs of self-advocacy and self-determination

Chester Finn He's the Man

Chorus

Chester Finn he's the man
If he can't do it no one can
All he needed was a dream and a plan
To send his message across the land

He hails from Buffalo
Where Lake Erie winds blow all that snow
He's a guy you should get to know
He's got lot to say and I should know

I've learned a lot from him
Not about birds or pandas or how to swim
But about how we're all the same inside
We can change our lives if we just decide

Speak up for yourself and others too
Nobody can do it as well as you
That's his message for you and me
That's the way we'll all be free

Momma let me go

Momma it's time for me
To go my own way
Momma it's time for me
To live my own dreams

Chorus

Momma let me go
I won't be that far
Just across a dream
I wished upon a star

It's not that I don't love you
It's not that I don't care
But there's a world outside my room
I need to go there

I know you are afraid about
Who'll take care of me
You worry that I'll get hurt
You fear what you can't see

I'm gonna get my own place
I'll be back to visit you
I've got some friends to help me
This is what I want to do

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Jesus is a member of my circle of support

I'm inviting some friends to a meeting
To help me plan my life
I want a real job, my own place
Maybe someday a wife
With all these friends plus One other
There'll be no problems to report, cause
Jesus is a member of my circle of support

Chorus:

*Jesus is a member of my circle of support
Of support, of support
Jesus is a member of my circle of support*

I'm a Deacon in a local church uptown
Sunday's my favorite day
I like to talk about freedom
I like to show my friends the way
When people say I can't do something
I have a quick retort. I tell them:
Jesus is a member of my circle of support

You can't do this, you can't do that
I hear it all the time
When will people realize
That this life is mine,
They keep worrying about my safety
They guard my health like a fort
But I tell them don't worry, cause
Jesus is a member of my circle of support

I ain't no slot"

You can't roll me
You can't fold me up
And put me in a slot
Cause a slot I'm not

When are you going to get it in your head
That I ain't no bed
Get it in your head

And I ain't no unit of service either
I could not believe her
When she called us slots

I ain't not slot
I ain't no slot
And I'm not a bed
Get it in your head

You can't roll me
You can't fold me up
And put me in a slot
Cause a slot I'm not

When are you going to get it in your head
That I ain't no bed
Get it in your head

And I ain't no unit of service either
I could not believe her
When she called us slots

*This song came from a speech by Tony
Phillips at OMRDD's 20th anniversary
party.*

Moving Train

Where there was so much to gain
They said no
But we feel your pain

But rejection isn't what it may seem
It fuels our engines
Gives us steam

Don't think our efforts are in vain
It's just a stop along the way
We don't care if they feel our pain
They can't stop us
We're a moving train

We've still got a lot of work to do
We won't stop
Till we see it through

Where there was so much to gain
They said no
But we feel your pain

Rejection isn't what it may seem
It fuels our engines
Gives us steam

Don't think our efforts are in vain
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We don't care if they feel our pain
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We're a moving train

We've still got a lot of work to do
We won't stop
Till we see it through

Free our people, Goodbye Tia

How do we say goodbye to a friend
Whose been with us through thick and thin
A leader who has helped us win
Respect of people across this land

Free our people, goodbye Tia
Where would we be without you
You are our friend, you've been our leader
Free our people, we'll miss you
Free our people, we'll miss you

You taught us about closing doors
Of places that keep people down
Free our people is what you screamed
It was heard for miles around

Free our people, goodbye Tia
Where would we be without you
You are our friend, you've been our leader
Free our people, we'll miss you
Free our people, we'll miss you

Get ready to Mumble

Get ready to mumble
It's a bureaucrats tongue tumble
It's the art of speaking in jumbles
Get ready! Are You ready!
Get ready to mumble?

Hey I'd like to buy my own home
I like to try to live on my own
Badabadodobadadodo
No no no no no no no no no
I don't think so
No no no no no no no no no
I don't think so

I met a girl the other day
I'd like to take her on a date
Ohbadobaohohohdodo
No no no no no no no no no
I don't think so
No no no no no no no no no
I don't think so

Get ready to mumble
It's a bureaucrats tongue tumble
It's the art of speaking in jumbles
Get ready! Are You ready!
Let's do lunch and mumble

I'd like to change case managers
Why won't people listen to me
Dobadodobadobadododoba
We'll have to wait and see
I'll send a memo to you
You send one to me

Get ready to mumble
It's a bureaucrats tongue tumble
It's the art of speaking in jumbles
Get ready! Are You ready!
Get ready to mumble?

I want to hire my own staff
I'd like to follow my own path
Dobadobadobadobawawawa
We'll get back to you on that
Might take a while, we'll let you know
Which means
No no no no no no no no no
I don't think so
No no no no no no no no no
I don't think so

Get ready to mumble
It's a bureaucrats tongue tumble
It's the art of speaking in jumbles
Get ready! Are You ready!
Get ready to mumble?

Tired of being P'd

We've been IEP'd
We've been IS and IPP'd
We've been PCP'd
Even three I's and a P'd

And we're tired of being P'd
Tired of being P'd
It's time that we
Put the me
In all those Ps

We've heard all the lingo
All the alphabet bingo
Words don't take us where
We want to go
We're tired of being P'd

Yeah, we're tired of being P'd
Tired of being P'd
It's time that we
Put the me
In all those Ps

In My Own Home

In my own home
I'm the King
I can walk and talk and dance and sing
I can do most anything
I can dream
I can dream
In my own home

In my own home
I can let go
Don't have to move fast if I want to move slow
I go where and when I want to go
From my own home
In my own home

In my own home
I'm the King
I can walk and talk and dance and sing
I can do most anything
I can dream
I can dream
In my own home

There are lots of people in my neighborhood
Maybe I'll have a party
I think I should
I'll invite the guy from across the street
Who seems so all alone
He might enjoy some company
In my own home

In my own home
I'm the King
I can walk and talk and dance and sing
I can do most anything
I can dream
I can dream
In my own home

We don't need a bowling program

I don't know if you can understand
What we're trying to say
How would you like to live your life
With a program for every day
How would you like to have no friends
In the city where you live
How would you like to be held back
When you had so much to give

Chorus
We don't need a bowling program
We just wanna bowl
When we go out in our communities
We want to be part of the whole
We don't want to be special
Treat us like everyone else
We don't want to be special
We just want to be ourselves

If you want to help us
Give us a ride to town
Introduce us to some people
Who just want to hang around
Who'd like to get to know us
I think they'd like to know me
Take us where we want to go
A place in our community

Some us would like to join theater groups
Others political campaigns
Some of us want to volunteer
Others join in a pick-up softball games
Think about the things you like to do
We like to do them too
Think about the people whose
Minds need to change

How about starting with you?

Our keyword is Freedom

To find things on the net you need a keyword
Your search will come out right
We all have a keyword
We're going to sing it for you tonight

We're talking about our lives here
We don't want the moon or sun
When talking about our lives
Our keyword is Freedom

Freedom, Freedom
Our keyword is Freedom
Freedom, Freedom
Our keyword is Freedom

You may say we have choices
About where we live and play
About who we hang around with
And how we spend each day

While it may be true for some
For many it is not
For lots of folks real choice is
A battle still being fought

Freedom, Freedom
Our Dream is Freedom
Freedom, Freedom
Our dream is Freedom

Self-determination is our dream
Self-advocacy's the way
Join us in our fight for freedom
Get on board today

Freedom, Freedom
Our dream is Freedom
Freedom, Freedom
Our dream is Freedom

Self-Determination: The chant/song

We're determined
We're determined
We're determined
To get the life we want

It's our choice
Hear our voice
It's our choice
We choose the life we want

It's our right
Our civil rights
It's our right
To get the life we want

It's our dream
It's our dream
It's our dream
To get the life we want

Start today
Start today
Start today
To get the life you want

Show us the money
Show us the money
Show us the money
We'll get the life we want

We're determined
We're determined
We're determined
We'll get the life we want

Self-Determination!

This is a simple song/chant, easy to play on the guitar and accompanied by whatever percussion instruments are available as well as our own personal five stringed instruments (hand claps). Versus can easily be added:

We won't stop
It's our hope
With a circle of support!

We want what you got!

A self-determination anthem

It's really pretty simple

Response (after each line)

We want what you got!

Not hard to understand

Forget all your plans

It's no surprise

Open your eyes

We want our own lives

We're not slots or beds

We want our own homes

We want real jobs

(Five silent lines with the response varying from a whisper to very loud singing)

We'll make it plain

No doubt should remain

It's time for a change

Group homes are overrated

Workshops are outdated

It can't be misstated

Hear our voices

We want our own choices

Self-Determination

We don't want your dimes

It's about time

Self-determination

(People can continue making up their own lines as we go--ending with five silent lines the response varying from a whisper to loud singing)

This song was inspired by a speech by Clint Perrin.

**Give us a chance,
We'll show you what we can do!**

Just give us a chance

We'll show you what we can do

Just give us a chance

We'll show you what we can do

It's our lives to live

We got a lot to do

Just give us a chance

We'll show you what we can do

Just give us a chance

We'll show you what we can do

Just give us a chance

We'll show you what we can do

But we'll tell you right now

We're not taking no from you

We're telling you now

We're not taking no from you

Just give us a chance

We'll show you what we can do

Just give us a chance

We'll show you what we can do

We got choices

We decide what we want to do

We got choices

We decide what we want to do

Just give us a chance

We'll show you what we can do

Just give us a chance

We'll show you what we can do

Note this song was inspired by Mary Varney of New Hampshire

Ride the Wave

Chorus

Ride the Wave 2-0-0-0

Everybody get ready to go!

Self-advocates across the land

Come to Rhode Island hand in hand

We're riding the wave to freedom

Surfing to Providence one by one

Talking charge of our own lives

Making things better for everyone

Yeah, making things better for everyone

Let's go!...Chorus

50 states, one loud voice

1000 people standing strong

Do you really have a choice?

Come to RI where you belong

Making things better for everyone

Let's go!...Chorus

Save up your bucks, plan your trip

This is a time you don't want to miss

Self-Advocacy is growing strong

Come to Rhode Island where you belong

Making things better for everyone

Let's go!...Chorus

Change the name, change the name

We're tired of labels that defame

We want you to change the name

Change the name, change the naaaaaaame

Change the name, change the name

Stop the bureaucratic game,

Change the name, change the name

We won't stop singing to you change the name

Change the name, change the name

Get your butts in gear, change the name

Change the name, change the name

Change the name, change the naaaaaaame

Change the name, change the name

You'll get a valued outcome if you change the name

Change the name, change the name

We're no heavenly choir, change the name

We'll stay till we expire or you change the name

Change the name, change the naaaaaaame

Change the name, change the name

We're tired of being nice, change the name

Take our advice, change the name

If we have to we'll break out the chains

Change the name, change the name

Change the name, change the naaaaaaame

Change the name, change the name

We are not all the same, change the name

It will be your' greatest claim to fame

Change the name, change the name

You'll get a letter of thanks if you change the name

There's a plague for you if you change the name

Change the name, change the name

I forgive you

When I was born in 1962
The Doctor told you there was nothing he could do
Then he said something, that haunts me to this day
He said the best you can
Is to put the boy away

I forgive you
You felt there was nothing else to do
You had no hope, you had no help
They sold a bill of goods to you

Spent a lot of my life
In a place that no longer stands
Spent a lot of my days with my head buried in my
hands
It was hell, without the flames
If was life without light
We were numbers without names

I forgive you
You felt there was nothing else to do
You had no hope, you had no help
They sold a bill of goods to you

Now I live in own place
Got a job at the grocery store
I'm looking for a girlfriend
To share my dreams and more

I forgive you
You felt there was nothing else to do
You had no hope, you had no help
They sold a bill of goods to you

We all have a dream

Some of us want to be presidents
Some of us want to fly
I know a man with a dream
He's a heck of a guy

He wants to recreate the world
He wants to change a few things
He says we all should be included cause
We're all bound together by angel strings

We all have a dream
We all have a dream
His is just a little bit brighter
Coming on like a broad moombeam

Most dreams are simple
We try to be what we can be
This man's dreams is inclusive
It's for you and it's for me

He can see communities
Where everyone hangs out
There are parks with fountains
Nobody's left out

Keira--you're the best

Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, Keira
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, Keira
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, Keira
You're the best!

Where you get your strength no one can say
You teach us about courage everyday
You inspire us with your fire and flame
We loved it when you sang with Shania Twain

Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, Keira
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, Keira
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, Keira
You're the best!

You're a leader in the fight
To close a place called Southbury
You wrote a song about freedom
That's how things ought to be

Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, Keira
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, Keira
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, Keira
You're the best!

We're you're second family
Brothers and sisters never fail
Here with love and support
Just give a call or an email

Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, Keira
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, Keira
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, Keira
You're the best!

You're a leader and a freedom fighter
A queen of Web TV
Your feisty and your funny
Just the way you ought to be

Why do you think we can't think?

Does he like cream in his coffee?

Why don't you ask him that?
He's sitting right there in his Quikie Wheelchai
Why don't you ask him that?

Why do you think that we can't think
It's cause we look a little different I think
Why do you think that we can't think?
It's cause we look a little different I think

How does he like his burger?

Why don't you ask him that?
He may not see
But he can speak
Why don't you ask him that?

Why do you think that we can't think
It's cause we look a little different I think
Why do you think that we can't think?
It's cause we look a little different I think

Born to be wired

A song parody for our friend Joe Buchroeder
Sing to the tune of "Born to be Wild" by
SteppenWolf

He's got his modem running
Information super highway
Looking for connections
In the world of self-advocacy

Yeah, he's the one who makes it happen
Joe's the king of our web page
His fingers got these keys a clicking
SABE's in cyberspace

His got us all connected
Hits are coming like thunder
If you got a question
Just send him an instant email

Yeah, he's the one who makes it happen
Joe's the king of our web page
His fingers got these keys a clicking
SABE's in cyberspace

Like a true internet child
He was born, born to wild
Our web site is riding so high
We're shooting to the sky
Born to be wired
Born to be wired

He's got his modem running
Information super highway
Looking for connections
In the world of self-advocacy

Yeah, he's the one who makes it happen
Joe's the king of our web page
His fingers got these keys a clicking
SABE's in cyberspace

Like a true internet child
He was born, born to wild
SABE's sight is riding
We're shooting to the sky
Born to be wired
Born to be wired

Don't send him no spam mail
That might be a blunder
But send him your stories
And you'll be a wonder

I'm a voter and you know it
*(Sung to the tune--
If you're happy and you know it)*

We are voters and you know it listen up
We are voters and you know it listen up
We are voters and you know it
If you want our vote don't blow it
We are voters and you know it listen up

We've got a right to speak so listen up
We've got a right to speak so listen up
We've got a right to speak
And our voice is strong not weak
We've got a right to speak listen up

Nothing about us without us listen up
Nothing about us without us listen up
It's our lives to live and
We've got a lot to give
Nothing about us without us listen up

We are voters and you know it listen up
We are voters and you know it listen up
We are voters and you know it
If you want our vote don't blow it
We are voters and you know it listen up

Leader with a heart of gold

From a small town in Nebraska
Across the nation you have flown
As a leader we have watched you
And oh how we've grown

Nancy thanks for all you've done
SABE has grown from the seeds you've sown
SABE came from your soul
You are a leader with a heart of gold

Jerry's kids will never be the same
You saw that telethons are a lowdown shame
It's time to share you with those who don't know
There's still a lot of work and places to go

Nancy thanks for all you've done
SABE has grown from the seeds you've sown
SABE came from your soul
You are a leader with a heart of gold

(Dedicated to Nancy Ward. Written by
Moore, Nelis, Holmes February 2000)

Where are my tomorrows

Words Eric Charlton, Music by Steve Holmes

I see a lonesome shadow
Stretched across the afternoon
The air is still and somber
The day is almost through
The day is almost through

There's not a sound to echo
That silence cannot find
Though my heart keeps your memory
Forever and all time
Forever and all time

Somewhere in the distance
A whipporwill he sings
My heart is melancholy
There's truth in the song he sings
There's truth in the song he sings
Yesterdays have gone before

They shall not come again
But where are my tomorrows?
With you they'd never end
With you they'd never end

To Elaine and Lois

Poem by Gail Bottoms

President of People First of Georgia

August 5, 1999

Music by Steve Holmes

July 10, 2000

Chorus:

Thanks, Lois, thanks Elaine
Your action has made it even more plain.
Stand up for yourself, a self-advocate be.
There is nothing to lose and everything to gain

There were two women, Elaine and Lois
In an institution that wasn't their choice
They wanted out so they used their voice
They wanted out so they used their voice

Chorus:

To make a difference was their plan
To help themselves and their fellow man.
They hired the Lawyers who said, "we can",
And went to fight, their future to plan.

Chorus:

Elaine and Lois went through a big fight,
To set folks straight and put things right.
To tell institutions to go fly a kite,
To live in their community is a God-given right.

Chorus:

They convinced the judge, they could live on their own
Make their own choices, and have their own home.
So tonight we honor you both for what you have done.
You fought with the system and thank God you won.

Walking Miracle
A song by Ernest Walker
Music by Steve Holmes

I'm a walking miracle of heaven up above.
God has wrought within my life a miracle of love.

I cannot explain it how such a thing can be.
But all who look upon my life a miracle can see.
If you want your life to be a thing of wonder too,
The God who wrought this grace in me can do the same for you.

I'm a walking miracle of heaven up above.
God has wrought within my life a miracle of love.

God is doing miracles with every passing day.
He confounds the proud and high--they know not what to say.
Yet the meek he raises, they shall break forth in song.
He gives them joy and victory amidst the troubled throng.

Don't delay with questioning what all this can entail.
Just cast yourself upon the Lord, He can do all but fail.
I'm a walking miracle of heaven up above.
God has wrought within my life a miracle of love.

I'm a walking miracle of heaven up above.
God has wrought within my life a miracle of love.

Sight

To: Mom
By: Justin Randall
Music: Steve Holmes

Sight--oh guiding light
Light of my life
Know you're living eternally
Show me the way
Rejoice reached ultimate

It's not a question of if, it's when

**It's not a question of if, it's when, let's close all institutions down
It's not a question of if, it's when, let's close all institutions now**

There's no more time for debate, our friends in these places can't wait
With a full life in the community, they have a date
Let's close all institutions now!

**It's not a question of if, it's when, let's close all institutions down
It's not a question of if, it's when, let's close all institutions now**

All of the facts are in
What some once thought was right, we now know is a sin
Things don't change from without, things change from within
Let's close all institutions down

**It's not a question of if, it's when, let's close all institutions down
It's not a question of if, it's when, let's close all institutions now**

The Scars will never go away

The Scars will never go away
Rose's story may upset
One thing we need to say today
We can never forget

We can never forget

Lives of misery and neglect
Lost in a world of pain
She was a number without a name
We can never,
We can never let it happen again

We can never forget

Ain't nobody's business but my own

Well they know my height, they know my weight
Now they want to know who I date
Ain't nobody's business but my own

Chorus

It ain't nobody's business, it ain't nobody's business
It ain't nobody's business but my own

Well they got my records, got my paper history
But none of those words tell my real story
Ain't nobody's business but my own

They even know about my bowel movements
They got ten ways I can make improvements
Ain't nobody's business but my own

I got three valued outcomes
But I don't control any of my funds
It ain't nobody's business but my own

They know my cholesterol level
And they know when I was six I acted like a devil
Ain't nobody's business but my own

They know where I went to school
They even know I once fell in a swimming pool
Ain't nobody's business but my own

The agency pays for my supports
But all they care about is report
Ain't nobody's business but my own

Records are for cases they're not for us
We tell our dreams to the people we trust
It ain't nobody's business but my own

Joshua gone self-determination

When Joshua left the hospital
He took forty-five friends with him
Then everybody got together and
Had that place condemned

Chorus

Joshua's gone self-determination
He's living in his own home
People said it couldn't happen
Mom said, "he'll have a life of his own"

Joshua moved to a group home
But that was a stop on the way
When it came to making decisions
He didn't have a lot of say

Mom and dad said take our house
What better place for you
To create your own life
We'll be with you to see it through

Some people really make a difference
They just 'Do It' like the slogan says
They don't wait for blueprints
They make it up as they go instead

These folks have something called courage
They teach others to find a way
We all can follow Joshua
We can have the life we want today

Bridge

There's a lot of injustice in this world
But Joshua's smile is a gift
An antidote to thoughtlessness
A sign that things can shift



Freedom



Authority

Songs of Self-Advocacy

and

Self-Determination

Support



Responsibility