



What If You Can't Vote?

Even if you can't vote, you can still be involved in the political process. Here are some suggestions:



Find out about the issues and candidates, and pick your candidate or issue:

- Investigate: Check out the campaign websites. Watch TV debates. Read newspaper. Share information and opinions with your friends, family, neighbors, classmates, etc.
- Don't be afraid to ask tough questions at candidate meetings, at rallies, and when a campaign worker rings your doorbell.
- Support your candidate or issue. If you convince even two voters to support your candidate or issue, you've had twice the impact of someone who just votes once.
- Talk to your friends and family about your candidate or issue. Think together of ways to support candidates or issues you believe in.
- Be a letter writer. Tell candidates, newspapers, and party leaders how you feel about the issues or the campaigns.
- Call TV and radio stations to praise or criticize campaign issues.
- Volunteer to work on a campaign.



Support the elections:

- Encourage and assist others in registering to vote and getting to the polls on Election Day.
- Volunteer to promote fair elections. Some non-partisan organizations include Election Protection 365 and the National Campaign for Fair Elections. Volunteers are trained to assist voters and record problems on Election Day.
- When you turn 18 or become eligible, register to vote. And then on Election Day, VOTE!



Turn up the heat in between elections:

- Organize direct action, such as rallies, pickets, boycotts, and sit-ins. Anything that disrupts business-as-usual can put pressure on politicians to pay attention.
- Find creative ways to make your voice heard.

Adapted from the March 2004 issue of *The Change Agent* by Ami Magisios.

Pick Your Candidate

There are two major things to consider when trying to pick a candidate to vote for:

- What does the candidate say about the issues that are important to you?
- What qualities and experience do you want a candidate to have?

There is an excellent, non-partisan, user-friendly resource that you can download and use to help you *Pick Your Candidate*. Go to <www.nelrc.org>. **Click** on *Publications and Online Collections*. **Scroll**

to *Civic Participation and Citizenship Collection*. **Select** *Civics for ABE and ESOL* on the left. **Scroll** to *Voting, Government, and the Constitution*. **Open and scroll** to *Pick Your Candidate*; click on the link.

Picking a candidate is just one step. See <www.nelrc.org/changeagent/extras> for links to more resources about registering to vote, finding your polling place, etc.

Pick Your Candidate, by Debbie Tasker of the NH Bureau of Adult Education, is appropriate for multiple levels.