Sharing Your Story: Self-advocates guide for success

Presented by
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How does it feel when someone makes decisions for you?

Did you choose what you wore this morning?

What you ate for breakfast?
Why do I need to be an advocate?
What is wrong with this picture?

+ Advocacy is just a matter of seeing a need and finding a way for you to address it.
+ Individual Advocacy- Speaking up for your own needs
+ Systems Advocacy-Speaking up for your needs AND the needs of others. This refers to policies and laws that effect everyone including people with disabilities.
Speak up!

- Systems advocacy can be as simple as telling your story to legislators or committees.
- Nobody knows what you need more than you.
- Leaders are people who act.
Help Change the World

Each of us have a story to tell that can move others into action! Learning how to tell your story this way encourages others to join you in creating change.

TOGETHER WE WILL CHANGE THE WORLD
The Story of You, Us, and Now

+ A “story of you” tells why you have been called to advocate.
+ A “story of us” communicates why our community in particular is called to act, and why we in particular have the capacity to lead.
+ A “story of now” communicates the urgent challenge we are called upon to face now.
The story of US
How to impact the process

**Find**
Find the decision maker
- Your Boss
- Local Schools
- A legislator or a committee

**Understand**
Understand the Process
- Learn where decision makers get their information
- Learn how to help them make decisions

**Decide**
Decide the best way to tell your story
- Writing a letter
- Talking to decision makers individually

**Support**
Know what support you need
- a trusted ally
- more education
- seeking out feedback
What rights do I enjoy?
The Rehab Act

- Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs conducted by federal agencies, in programs receiving federal financial assistance, in federal employment and in the employment practices of federal contractors.
The ADA

- Prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in several areas, including employment, transportation, public accommodations, communications and access to state and local government' programs and services.
IDEA

Ensures that all children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment and independent living.
WHY do I need to be an advocate

Be an active participant in what rights you enjoy as a citizen.
Pave the way for future generations.
HOW:
Let’s Hear from a Self-Advocate
David Egan Testifies at Congress
What did you notice?

- What is David going to present about?
- How does he connect it to a lawmaker? To himself?
- What else did you notice?
Find your Legislator

https://le.utah.gov/GIS/findDistrict.jsp
Get Involved

+ Access daily remote session
+ Track the Budget
+ View upcoming legislation
+ Track committee agendas
What Rights do we Still need access to?
What rights do we still need access to

- Community-Based Long term supports & services
- Direct Support Professionals
- Education
- Employment
- Transportation
- Health Care
- Housing
- Technology
What can I do?

+ Testify- speak to a legislator or write a letter “share your story”
+ Keep an eye out for “injustice”
+ Stay informed
+ Own your disability and the role it plays in your life experience
+ Strive to raise expectations
+ Teach people how to treat you
Your Turn: Let’s Write a Letter!
Composing Your Story

Step 1: Introduction

What is your name?

Where do you live?

2-3 sentences that share personal or professional information about yourself.
What is the issue?

- **Step 2: Identify the Problem** - Write 1 or 2 sentences explaining the issue.

- **Step 3: How the Community is Affected** - Write 1 or 2 sentences about how your community is affected or changed by the issue (for good or for bad).
Bring it Together

Step 4: Describe Your Concern

Write out in a few lines why this issue concerns you.

Step 5: Request for Action

Describe what you would like the decision maker to do.

If you have an idea of a solution, you can share it here!
THANK YOU!!

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Utah Statewide
Independent Living Council

Utah Developmental Disabilities Council