

Successful advocacy efforts require grounded storytelling that centers the voices and perspectives of those most affected by a policy or political action.

We are each experts in our own life experiences and have a story to tell that can motivate action and community change. Building storytelling skills is a vital changemaking strategy for youth and adults alike.

Why Storytelling Matters

People listen to people and narrative based storytelling can:

- Raise public awareness
- Connect real faces to the impact of a policy
- Grow understanding and move decisions makers to action
- Increase accountability for elected representatives when they hear from voters

Crafting Your Story

- Who You Are:** Introduce yourself with key parts of your identity related to the policy (ex: you are a student or teacher)
- Describe The Problem:** Explain a specific example of your experience with the issue
- Highlight Solutions:** Detail the supports (or lack thereof) that shaped your experience with the problem, dig into what helped or would have helped in the situation
- Call To Action:** Specify your ask to the audience (ex. policy change)

Knowing Your Audience

Your narrative can and should change based on who you are speaking to! Consider the following audiences and tips to shape your story.

Policymakers or Decision-Makers

- Be clear and concise (3-5 minutes)
- Focus on policy impact and facts
- Make a direct ask for change

Community Members

- Keep it personal and grounded
- Avoid jargon or technical language
- Be conversational and relate to audience

Example Narrative

“Hello, I’m Alex and I am a junior at Central High School. Today, I’m asking the school board to review and recommend a curricular update of the sex education curriculum in our district. Since I was in 5th grade, I have received less than 2 weeks of education on my sexual health. This is not enough time. I, along with my classmates, need time to build understanding, develop skills, and grow my confidence in making choices. I know this because when faced with fear over a partner’s STI status, I looked back and recalled no education on the topic, had no one to ask, and I felt so alone. With more education and an updated curriculum, my experience and others’ could be so different”

Try For Yourself

Who You Are	Introduce yourself with key parts of your identity related to the policy
Describe The Problem	Explain a specific example of your experience with the issue
Highlight Solutions	Detail the supports (or lack thereof) that shaped your experience with the problem, dig into what helped or would have helped in the situation
Call To Action	Specify what you are asking of the audience