



Telling Your Story

“Stories are how we learn best. We absorb numbers and facts and details, but we keep them all glued into our heads with stories.” – Chris Brogan

Your story is the most important part of advocacy! While no one can write your story for you, we would like to provide you with a few tips to make your story impactful and powerful.

3 Basic Parts:

In order to have an impact, your story should have three basic parts;

- 1) Introduction – let your audience know who you are and why they should listen (e.g. you are a parent/patient/provider, a constituent) and find a common ground
- 2) Your Story – what is your experience with CHD? How does it tie in with key talking points? See below for specific tips for developing your personal story
- 3) The Ask – Make sure you ask your listener to do something (e.g. visit a website, donate, sign a petition, support funding)

Tips for telling your story:

- Keep it short – many of us feel we could write a novel, but a 2-3 minute story is best for most circumstances
- Be clear - use plain words and avoid medical jargon, this may be the first time your listener is hearing about congenital heart disease
- Speak from the heart – Yes, it is ok to choke up as you are relating your experience
- Be accurate and honest – don't make anything up to enhance your story
- Avoid relying on statistics – one or two catchy facts are usually a good balance to your story
- Be polite, respectful, patient and grateful – win them with your positive passion
- Practice, practice, practice. Tell your story to others and notice their reactions. After each practice, edit what you liked, and what you didn't like.

Resources:

Visit www.conqueringchd.org for a list of CHD facts that you can print out, use in your story, or even give to your listener.

Please contact advocacy@conqueringchd.org for an up-to-date, personalized list of talking points.

