

Storyteller Readiness and Support Checklist

For organizations that feature storytellers, before, during, and after a story is shared

Before You Feature Them

- ☐ Confirm they have completed [a self-assessment](#) covering their reasons for advocacy, the emotions their story raises, and which parts still feel raw.
- ☐ Confirm they have shared the story with the people it involves, especially family, before sharing it publicly.
- ☐ Confirm they know which parts are off-limits and have set boundaries before a high-pressure setting, such as a press conference or interview.
- ☐ Get a signed release covering their story, their photo, and any family photos you plan to use.
- ☐ Tell them exactly what the campaign or event covers, and where and when the story will be featured.
- ☐ Explain how they will learn where their story gets used.
- ☐ Walk through how a wider audience, including family, a faith or local community, a future romantic partner, or an employer or school, might react if the story spreads further than expected.
- ☐ Offer [storytelling training](#) and assess their emotional and social readiness, not just their willingness.

During the Engagement

- ☐ Remind them they will likely face three audiences: people who support them, people who oppose them, and everyone else who is simply watching.
- ☐ Tell them timing constraints in advance so they can prioritize the most important parts of their story.
- ☐ Confirm they have a plan for emotional moments, such as a pause, a tissue, or a trusted person nearby.
- ☐ Reassure them that a flat or unresponsive audience does not mean they failed to connect.
- ☐ Give them credit accurately and respect the privacy boundaries they set.

After the Engagement

- ☐ Schedule a post-event check-in. Sharing vulnerable or traumatic material can reopen wounds, even when the event goes well.
- ☐ Confirm they have a support person lined up who can reassure them and help them process without judgment.
- ☐ Affirm and amplify their contribution publicly so they see the impact, not just the exposure.
- ☐ If the story spreads further than expected, help them plan for their mental health and their own cyber security, including privacy settings and unwanted contact.
- ☐ Check in again after time has passed, not only right after the event.

Adapted from Storytelling Symposium materials developed by Abortion Survivors Network, Secular Pro-Life, and the Leadership Institute.

Learn more at secularprolife.org/storytelling-symposium