

# Sharing Your Story: Self-advocates guide for success

Presented by

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2022  
**DISABILITY  
ADVOCACY DAY**



**Utah Statewide**  
Independent Living Council



Utah Developmental  
Disabilities Council.

# How does it feel when someone makes decisions for you?



Did you choose what you wore this morning?



What you ate for breakfast?



The background of the slide is a composite image. The top half shows a dark, stormy sky with a bright lightning bolt striking down on the left. The bottom half shows a wide, flat field of crops, possibly corn, stretching towards a horizon where several wind turbines are visible. The overall color palette is dark and moody, with a mix of blues, greys, and browns. The text is centered in a large, white, sans-serif font. There are also some decorative elements: a small blue plus sign below the text, and some faint, white, curved lines and a red line on the right side of the image.

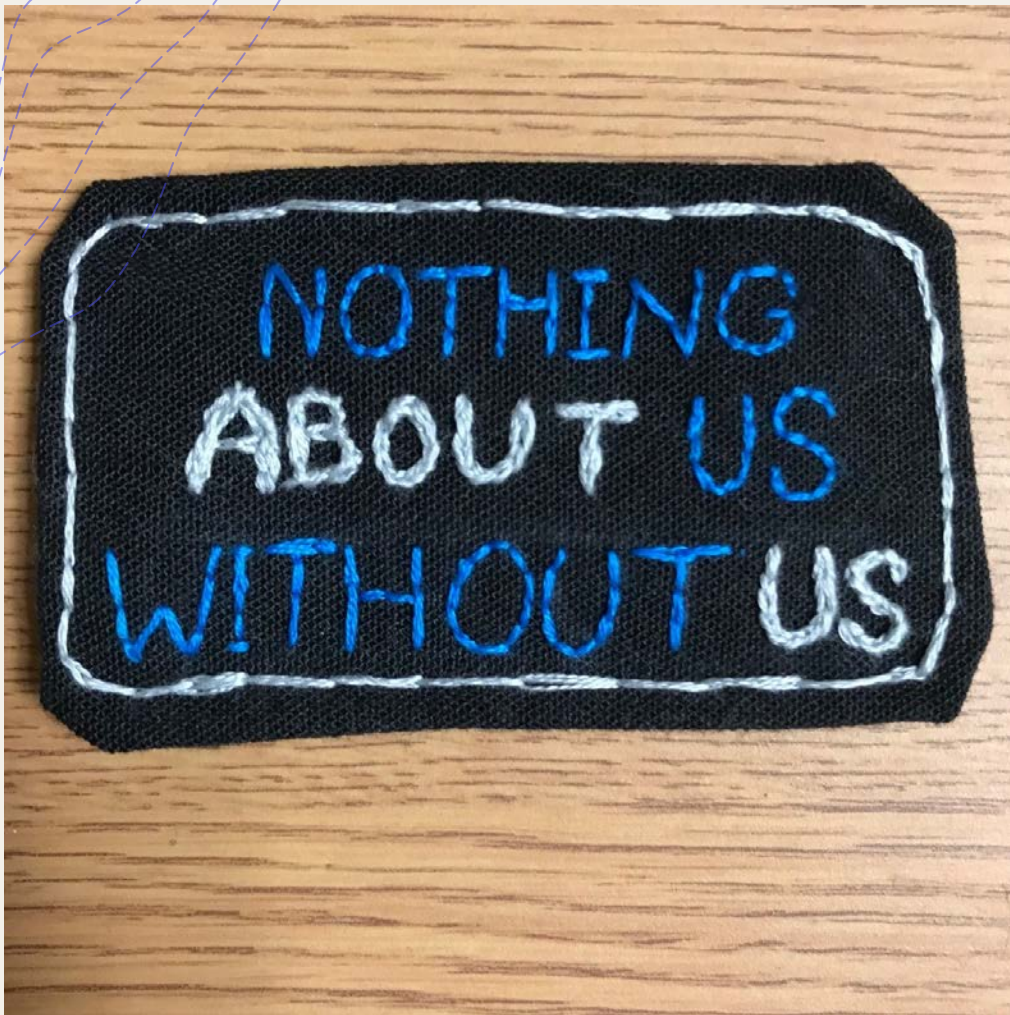
**Why do I need to be an  
advocate?**

+

# 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.

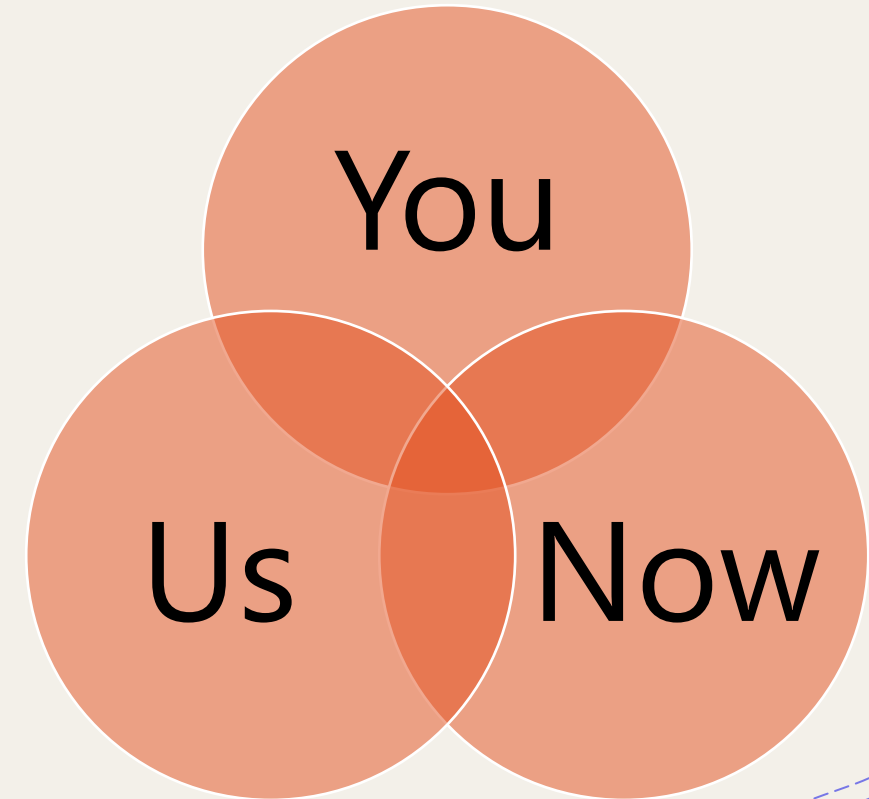
# Help Change the World

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.



# 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.

The background is a light beige color. In the top-left corner, there is a white circle partially cut off by the edge, with several blue dashed wavy lines extending downwards and to the right. In the bottom-right corner, there is another white circle partially cut off, with several blue dashed wavy lines extending upwards and to the left. A solid orange line curves from the bottom-left towards the bottom-right, passing over the blue dashed lines.

# **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

Search Settings Login

UTAH STATE LEGISLATURE

Legislators Bills Code Committees Audits Budget Research and Legal

Home Legislators District Maps

## Utah State Legislative District Maps

**Who represents me?** Enter **street address** in the first field and your **zip code** in the second field, then click Find. You may also click on the map to determine who the State Senator and House Representative are for that location, or contact your county clerk for official legislative district information.

Street Address  Zip Code  [Find](#) [Help?](#)

Find District  [Find](#) [Use map location](#) [Use physical location](#)

Wyoming

- <https://le.utah.gov/GIS/findDistrict.jsp>

# Get Involved

- + Access daily remote session
- + Track the Budget
- + View upcoming legislation
- + Track committee agendas

The screenshot displays the Utah State Legislature website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Utah State Legislature logo and links for Legislators, Bills, Code, Committees, Audits, Budget, and Research and Legal. Below the navigation bar is a search bar with the text "Search le.utah.gov". The main content area features a calendar for January 2022, with the 18th highlighted. The calendar includes details for each day, such as "First day of the annual General Session" on the 18th and "Last day for a legislator to designate priority bill" on the 20th. At the bottom of the page, there are three buttons: Resources, Calendar, and My Legislators.

UTAH STATE LEGISLATURE

Legislators Bills Code Committees Audits Budget Research and Legal

Search le.utah.gov

Jan 16 17 18 19 20 21 22

Business, Economic Development, and Labor Appropriations Subcommittee Revised

Infrastructure and General Government Appropriations Subcommittee

Executive Offices and Criminal Justice Appropriations Subcommittee

Business, Economic Development, and Labor Appropriations Subcommittee

Infrastructure and General Government Appropriations Subcommittee

Resources Calendar My Legislators



**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.

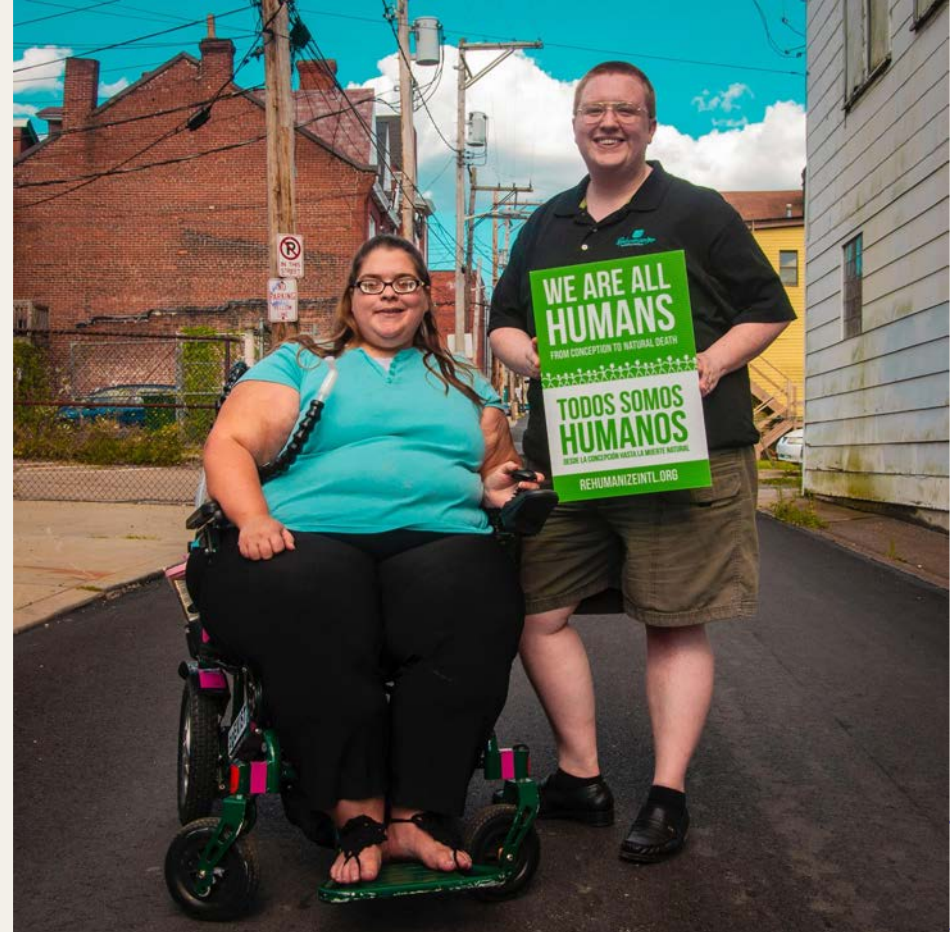


Photo by Maria Oswald



# 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 Developmental  
Disabilities Council™



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