

LET'S TALK DISABILITY **HANDBOOK**

A monologue production



ABILITY
MONTANA



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WELCOME MESSAGE



Original Cast of Let's Talk Disability, Butte!

Congratulations on taking the initiative to host the stage production of "Let's Talk Disability"!

This handbook will help you plan and execute a successful and inclusive event that raises awareness about disability and empowers individuals to share their personal stories on stage.

This book provides a comprehensive guide to hosting an event like this, while encouraging you to honor your own communities and develop a show that suits your unique needs and aspirations.

OUR HISTORY

"The recipe started two years ago during a birthday gathering of woman in a disability group. We were all enjoying the moment of friends and little encroachment of our physical disabilities. How it started, no one really remembers, but before long we were all laughing. The stories of the funniest situations, comments, and anything else that came up about our disabilities. At one point someone laughed and said, "We should do a show!"

A few months later Ability Montana and the Orphan Girl Children's Theatre partnered to create Speaking Our Truth. It was not hard to find eight people interested in sharing their story." -Barb Knapke, Assistant Director

2022

Speaking Our Truth

The first production, Speaking Our Truth: Storytelling Through a Disability Lens, is born. The event was held the second weekend in May, a Thursday and Friday, evening to crowds of 50-100 people.

2023

Let's Talk Disability, Butte!

For the second production, we worked with the cast of the first show to upgrade the name, help with recruitment, the story writing and production. The event opens the first week in June and is a huge success.

"Thank you, Ability Montana and Orphan Girl Children's Theater for organizing and presenting such an informative and inspirational event. But mostly, thank you to the 10 people who shared their experiences so freely with us to help each of us start thinking — and talking — about what it means to be disabled."

-T. Hammond, Letter to the Editor 2023




OVERVIEW OF THE EVENT





Welcome to Let's Talk Disability, (your town name here) !
This powerful monologue production showcases individuals with disabilities sharing their personal stories on stage. The event spans over two days, offering participants the chance to present their stories twice, and providing the community with ample opportunities to experience this compelling show.

PURPOSE

Thoroughly outline the event's purpose in collaboration with your committee, clearly articulating the goals you aim to achieve, such as:

- Raising awareness about disability-related issues.
 - Promoting inclusivity and fostering a sense of belonging for all attendees.
 - Sharing information about available services and resources in your area.
- 

Keep in mind that additional goals may emerge and become more evident as the rehearsal process unfolds



THE PROCESS

1. FORM A COMMITTEE

- Assemble a diverse team of individuals with varied skills and experiences who are passionate about disability advocacy and inclusive arts. This can include:
 - Center for Independent Living Staff
 - Local theater groups
 - Volunteers
 - Youth
 - Organizations serving people with disabilities
 - Experienced writers
- Select a director to keep things running smoothly

2. VENUE SELECTION

- Choose a venue that is accessible and inclusive for people with disabilities. Ensure it has a stage with appropriate lighting and sound systems.
- Consider the availability of wheelchair ramps, elevators, accessible restrooms, and designated seating for individuals with mobility challenges.
- Verify the venue's compliance with disability laws and regulations.

3. STORYTELLER RECRUITMENT

- Advertise a call for storytellers who are willing to share their personal stories about disability on stage. Use various platforms to reach a wide range of people.
- Provide support and resources for potential storytellers, including workshops, writing assistance, and rehearsal sessions.

4. STORY WRITING

After identifying the storytellers, it's time to initiate the story writing process, with two options available:

- Participants can write their own stories, reflecting their unique perspectives and experiences.
- Alternatively, participants can collaborate with a writer who will incorporate their full input to craft the story.

Once the initial story is written, the storyteller group will engage in the editing process, refining the narratives as the production draws nearer. Ideally, the first draft of each participant's story should be ready by the second meeting.

To ensure a dynamic production, stories should be concise, lasting no longer than 10 minutes each.

*** It's recommended to have at least 6 and no more than 10 storytellers**



5. REHEARSALS

- The first meeting of the storytellers should take place 10-12 weeks prior to the production date.
- The first meeting would give an overview of the event, cover the story writing process and provide materials to start writing.
- Meet one time per week, at a consistent time, that works for most participants for 1.5 hours. This can be done via zoom, in-person, or a combination.
- Have participants start reading their stories and spend time as a group offering feedback.

6. MULTIMEDIA

TRANSITION VIDEOS: If there are 10 participants in the production, you would select a video to play in between each storyteller. These videos can include:

- disability services
- personal stories
- recreation services
- celebrating accessible spaces
- subjects that impact people with disabilities.

You can make your own, contract with a videographer, or find videos published online.

*The transition videos allow time for the participants to come on stage at a comfortable pace

PARTICIPANTS: Participants are encouraged to have photos that can be added on screen while they're telling their story.

EVENT FORMAT

1. Welcome

(this will cover the purpose of the event, reminders, sponsors, importance of accessibility, etc)

2. Transition Video (1)

3. First Speaker

4. Transition Video (2)

5. Second Speaker

6. Transition Video (3)

7. Third Speaker

8. Transition Video (4)

9. Fourth Speaker

10. Transition Video (5)

11. Fifth Speaker

INTERMISSION

During intermission you can have a musician, have photos or sayings scrolling on the screen, etc

SECOND ACT

12. Sixth Speaker
13. Transition Video (6)
14. Seventh Speaker
15. Transition Video (7)
16. Eight Speaker
17. Transition Video (8)
18. Ninth Speaker
19. Transition Video (9)
20. Final Speaker
21. Thank you Speech

(Invite all participants back on stage. Thank the participants, the director, and volunteers that made the production happen.)

APPLAUSE AND BOW



OTHER DETAILS

1. BUDGETING AND FUNDRAISING

- Create a detailed budget that covers all expenses, including venue rental, production costs, advertising, and accessibility accommodations.
- Explore fundraising opportunities, such as sponsorships, grants, donations, and crowdfunding campaigns.
- Establish ticket prices for the event & where the funds will go

2. ACCESSIBILITY

- Arrange for qualified sign language interpreters to be present during the event to ensure that deaf or hard-of-hearing attendees can fully participate.
- Arrange for audio description services for individuals with visual impairments.
- Provide assistive listening devices for individuals with hearing impairments.
- Consider implementing sensory-friendly practices for neurodiverse attendees.
- Offer accessible ticketing options, such as online purchasing and accessible seating preferences.
- Add closed captions to all transition videos

OTHER DETAILS

3. MARKETING AND PUBLICITY


- Publicize the event through local media, community centers, disability organizations, and online platforms.
- Share engaging content about the event and its purpose to generate interest and support.
- Make all promotional materials accessible, including the website, flyers, and social media posts. Use alt-text for images and provide captioning for videos.

4. VOLUNTEER COORDINATION & RECRUITMENT

Recruit volunteers to assist with various tasks such as:

- ushering
- registration/selling tickets
- stage help
- hair & make-up on performance days (ask help from a local salon)
- accessibility assistance during the event.

CHECKLIST

	Need	Notes	
1	Form a Committee		
2	Accessible Venue		
3	Storytellers		
4	Consistent time/rehearsal space		
5	Transitions Videos		
6	Sponsorships		
7	Interpreters/CART		
8	Branding: Flyers, website, social media		
9	Volunteers		
10	Photographer & Videographer for event		

FEATURING:



Michelle



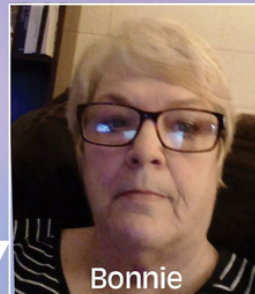
Jackson



Destiney



Nicole



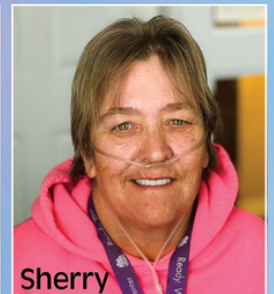
Bonnie



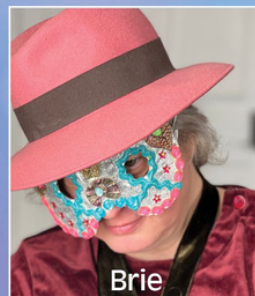
Gail



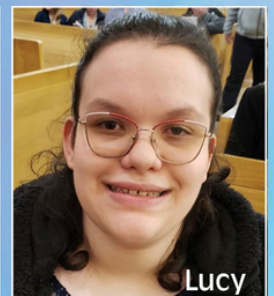
Mitzi



Sherry



Brie



Lucy

LET'S TALK!

DISABILITY - BUTTE



Show will include sign language interpretation

A monologue production featuring individuals with disabilities sharing their personal stories onstage.

BROUGHT TO YOU IN COOPERATION BY:



QR Code

THURSDAY & FRIDAY

June 8 & 9

2023

Show starts at

6 PM

East Middle School Auditorium
2600 Grand Ave — Butte, Montana