Storytelling Tip Sheet

Thank you for participating in the local CHVP storytelling effort. Public health storytelling brings government programs to life. It can help a site recruit new participants, retain existing participants, inspire staff, and educate legislators and key stakeholders. We want to make sure you have the resources and tools at the ready to implement this project.

Find our top tips and next steps below:

1. **Identify** 3-4 participants you think might be good for the storytelling effort. When you think about the work you are doing, which participant's name bubbles to the top? Which of your participants are now truly successful and standing on their own? We recommend someone who has been in the program for a while.
2. Ask their **permission** to interview them and walk through what an interview might mean for them. It's important to discuss what might happen with the information shared. Would they be OK sharing their story with the general public or is that not a good idea for them? Visit out **Storytelling Ethics Checklist** for guidance.
3. Once permission and risk-assessment is complete, have the participant sign a story **release form**.
4. Use these **questions** (with your agency's SurveyMonkey link) when conducting your interviews.
5. **Interview** 1-2 of these participants before your agency's deadline.
6. **Log responses** via the Survey Monkey link provided to you from the MCAH Communications Team. There are two surveys to complete:
   a. Home Visitor/pre-interview Survey
   b. Participant Survey (available in English and Spanish)
7. When interviewing…
   a. Ask open-ended questions – avoid YES or NO questions.
   b. Go with the flow – often conversation takes over, and that's OK.
   c. Don't get stressed by silence – it's a natural response to want to talk, but take a pause, a breath and let the participant have time to respond.
   d. Rephrase it – if a participant has difficulty understanding the questions, you can rephrase it in a way that will make sense to them.
   e. Cover the story arc – you want to make sure you have answers to the "before" "now" and "future" of the participant.

Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Division
Communications and Outreach Unit