

Personal Testimony Tips

- **Build confidence with practice.**
 - If you don't have experience with public speaking, practicing with a friend or even in front of a mirror can help you develop confidence.
- **Go to the meeting with a friend.**
 - It's easier to feel more confident when someone is with you to provide support.
- **Provide testimony with a group.**
 - This is called group advocacy and can be very empowering. The movie theater example could easily be a group advocacy effort in which friends of the individual providing testimony could also describe how important it is to them that their friend be able to attend movies with them.
- **Keep it short and clear.**
 - There is usually a time restriction of 2-3 minutes. Practice with a timer so you can see how long it takes for you to share your story.
- **Practice your pace.**
 - Slow down so that your audience can understand you.
- **Stay calm.**
 - Take a deep breath before you begin speaking and slowly exhale. Pause for a breath between sentences to help you maintain your calm pace.
- **Speak naturally.**
 - Try to memorize your testimony. If you can't memorize your comments, simply let your audience know that you will be reading your thoughts.
- **Make eye contact.**
 - Eye contact is good way to connect with your audience. Try to make eye contact with at least a few people in your audience when you pause for a breath. You may also make eye contact when you introduce yourself or at the end of your comments.
- **Reflect.**
 - Think about what went well and what could be improved after you've given your testimony. This is something you can do on your own or ask a friend to help you with. Thinking about your successes and challenges will help you prepare for the next time!

