

MISSION IN ACTION

**The Bobby Dodd Institute
Storytelling Project and**

Brand Guidelines

Everyone Has A Story

The best stories are simple and authentic. They are emotional but not overly dramatic. They are relatable. The stories need to leave the viewers inspired to take action and not feeling sorry about the main character in the story.

Why Your Story Matters

Many individuals with disabilities often feel isolated and forgotten. Many face challenges posed by societal barriers, preventing them from reaching their full potential.

By sharing your story, you help shed light on these challenges and provide valuable information to those who may need it or seek access to resources. Though sharing your story may be daunting, remember that by being honest, open, and vulnerable, you can have a lasting impact on those who see, read, or listen to your experiences.

By changing just one life, you have the power to transform an entire community.

Everyone has a story: Where to begin

1. Set Intention

Why are you telling your story? Why are you telling it now?

2. Define Audience

Who are you telling your story to? Service participants? Volunteers? General audience?

3. Tie it All Together

Decide what details to include. Always protect your privacy and the privacy of other people included in the story. Don't shy away from emotions, but don't victimize the main character of the story. Make it personal and authentic.

Ways to tell your story

There are multiple formats that you can use to tell your story.

- A picture or multiple pictures
- Video
- Blog post
- Social media post

How to tell your story on social media

How many times did you check your phone today? How many times did you peek at your social media accounts, be it Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn? One? Two? Twenty?

On average, Americans spend 2 hours and 14 minutes per day on social media and check their mobile device 159 times a day.

Why does this matter?

On average, Americans spend 2 hours and 14 minutes per day on social media and check their mobile device 159 times a day.

We all live in a world where technology has become an integral part of our lives. Rarely do we leave our houses without our phones, as they serve us in navigating places, delivering daily news, and connecting us with friends and family. So, what better place to reach your audience than where they are now – on social media? Six out of ten people are on social media today. And the numbers are growing.

Living with a disability can be a lonely experience. However, you are not alone. There are people out there looking for answers, seeking support and information. Some are looking for jobs and careers but don't know where to begin. Others are dreaming of living independently but are not sure how to start.

“Why would people care about my story,” you may think. Because it is relatable. Your story can help bring greater awareness to vital issues in the disability community and indirectly secure access to crucial services.

You may feel intimidated or scared. The first steps can be challenging, but this guide is here to provide you with some useful techniques on how to start using social media to build awareness around issues surrounding the disability community.

How to tell your story on social media-cont.

Social media is a powerful tool to help you bring awareness to an issue that you deeply care about. Remember, although sometimes you may not feel that way, you are an expert. You are the one who went through hoops to overcome that challenge. Why not help others in a similar situation secure better lives for themselves?

If you are naturally present on social media, this may be an easy thing to do. However, you may be wondering how much is appropriate to share, what to say, and what type of content to use. It could be even more difficult to get started if you've never been on social media.

Social media not only helps you shed light on particular issues, but it gives you the opportunity to celebrate success and build you own personal brand and credibility.

This guide provides useful guidelines to help you get started.

- **Be authentic and transparent** - clarify your role. Are you a person living with a disability, a caregiver, or an organization representative? Are you connected to the Bobby Dodd Institute?
- **Be consistent** - ensure your message remains uniform across all your social media channels.
- **Personalize** - while maintaining consistency in your message, tailor your content to the specific social media channel and audience.
- **Use visuals** - the saying "a picture says a thousand words" holds special meaning in social media. To capture attention, be sure to include some form of visual content, whether it be a photo, video, or graphic, that complements your message.

How to tell your story on social media-continued

- **Review and Review Again** – be mindful of the message you are trying to convey. Ask yourself if this is something that you will be proud of in 5 or 10 years. Will my message harm someone else's or my own privacy?
- **Interact** – not every message on social media should be an individual post on your channel. There are many ways to get your message across. One way is to comment or reshare content connected to the issue you are trying to raise awareness about. When posting comments, adhere to the brand standards outlined in this guide. If you want others to engage with your content, begin engaging with theirs.
- **Don't set it and forget it** – revisit your content often, and make sure to reply to any comments. Make edits to your content if necessary.

Tagging or mentioning involves using the “@” symbol followed by an organization's name or social media username. Tagging the organization can enhance the post’s reach, making it more likely to be seen by both their followers and yours.

How to stand out on social media?

- Tell your own story authentically – people connect to other people.
- Be open and inviting.
- Be open to feedback and welcome criticism with respect but stay true to your values and beliefs.
- Provide valuable information.
- Stand out with impactful images.



What images to use on social media

The use of imagery should be purposeful and impactful. The images should evoke a sense of empowerment.

- The image should not be overly staged.
- Be mindful of what is included in the image – what's in the background and in the foreground.
- Ensure that the person in the photos is in focus.
- In images where multiple people are pictured, make sure the person closest to the camera is always in focus.
- Use your lighting wisely. Ensure that the light, whether it be the sun or artificial light, is on your back and not against the camera.
- Avoid editing your images too much and adding filters. This may reduce the overall impact of the image.

How to tell your story on Facebook

If you are just getting started

When you create your profile on Facebook, add profile and cover photos. They can be successfully taken with a cell phone camera. The profile photo could be a picture of you or some type of image that represents you as a person. It will show as a thumbnail. Your cover photo is meant to further establish the perception of you as a person. It's like a banner and can be successfully used to bring attention to a particular cause or event. You can connect with others by sending a friend request. You can also follow and like pages whose content you find interesting and relevant.

How to be successful on Facebook

People generally go on Facebook because they want to be entertained. This is why telling your story in an engaging way is vitally important. Make it fun and entertaining.

By using the storytelling framework provided in this guide and incorporating the techniques outlined here, you can successfully communicate your message and reach a larger audience.

- Make it personal and authentic.
- Keep your message short.
- Initiate a conversation by including a question.
- Take advantage of pop culture – listen to what’s trending right now, what are people talking about, and try to seamlessly integrate it into your message.
- Use emojis, but don’t overdo it.
- Have a consistent posting schedule.

Make sure you know who is in your audience. Crafting a message while considering your audience will make it resonate more strongly with them.

How to tell your story on Instagram

If you are just getting started

Instagram is a visually driven platform. Before you begin, setup your profile. You can create your account by downloading the Instagram app or going to [Instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com).

When your account is live, edit your information. Include a visually-appealing profile photo. Include a short bio that aligns with you as a person.

How to be successful on Instagram?

Instagram is a visually-driven platform. Therefore, try to use high-quality images and videos. They could be taken/recorded with a cell phone. Make sure you follow the techniques provided in the “What Images to Use on Social Media“ subsection above.

- Make sure the style and look of your visuals stays consistent. Use carousels to post multiple images to tell a more compelling story.
- Write compelling captions. By using the storytelling framework provided in this guide and incorporating the techniques outlined in the "Everyone Can Tell a Story" section, you can successfully communicate your message and reach a larger audience.
- Use Stories and Reels to reach beyond your current followers.
- Use emojis, but don't overdo it.
- Have a consistent posting schedule.

Make sure you know who is in your audience. Crafting a message while considering your audience will make it resonate more strongly with them.

How to tell your story on LinkedIn

If you are just getting started

Download the LinkedIn app or visit [linkedin.com](https://www.linkedin.com) to create your account. Ensure you upload a professionally looking headshot and a banner that seamlessly integrates with your profile image. Your banner can be utilized to promote a cause or an event, or it could simply be a decorative image that represents you as a person.

Include your professional bio in the "About" section. Aim to incorporate a story that led you to your current position or one that will intrigue potential connections you'd like to build.

Detail your professional experience, providing descriptions of your accomplishments during each position. Additionally, add any other pertinent information such as certifications, volunteer experience, skills, and interests.

Get creative with your headline.

How to be successful on LinkedIn?

LinkedIn is a professionally-driven platform.

- Connect with people strategically.
- Engage with content.
- Post content regularly and have a consistent schedule.
- Share original content, but also share relevant articles, and comment on others' posts.
- Be polite and professional.
- Break down lengthy content into shorter messages. Instead of sharing an entire blog at once, consider creating a carousel that leads your connections through the content step by step. Lengthy posts can be overwhelming, and people might not feel compelled to read them.
- Have an idea that you would like to talk about in detail? You can post full-length original articles on LinkedIn.

Make sure you know who is in your audience. Crafting a message while considering your audience will make it resonate more strongly with them.

How to tell your story on Threads

If you are just getting started

To create a profile on Threads, you'll need to sign in with your Instagram account. If you don't have an Instagram account, you can create one.

It's easy to create an account. Simply download the Threads app. Click "Create Account" and follow the prompts on your screen.

How to be successful on Threads?

Threads works, in essence, like X. The platform is designed for short messages. You can only add up to 500 characters. As with every other social media, building genuine connections and sharing meaningful content is key to success.

- **Engage** - respond to messages, comments, and updates from your friends.
- Use Instagram to grow your Threads audience.
- Have a consistent posting schedule.
- Create authentic content. Use stories rather than simple facts. To expand your story, use meaningful images and videos to enhance the impact of your content.
- Use good quality images and videos.

Make sure you know who is in your audience. Crafting a message while considering your audience will make it resonate more strongly with them.

Blogs

Writing can offer numerous benefits, such as improving communication and developing problem-solving skills. It can boost creativity and contribute to mental health. Additionally, writing provides a safe avenue for self-expression and sharing emotions. Furthermore, it can help you connect with audiences and shine a light on the problems that you deeply care about.

The beginning can be challenging and cumbersome. Sitting in front of a blank page may feel intimidating. How do you start writing if you don't have any experience?

- Set reasonable goals. Begin by writing down your ideas, even those that you may feel sound irrelevant or "stupid."
- The next step is to refine your thoughts. Sift through your ideas and look for those that, in that particular moment, connect with you the most.
- Start with a personal story. As noted in this document, people relate to other people. This will help you create an instant connection with your audience.
- Use stories, personal experiences, and real-life examples throughout the text. Include relevant facts and statistics from reliable sources, Wikipedia don't count.
- Cite your sources if you are using information from other publications.
- Provide helpful techniques on how you have been dealing with the problem you are writing about. This applies to situations where you keep grappling with this particular issue or may not have made any progress in solving it yet.
- Stay authentic.

Video

Crafting and sharing your story through video is a wonderful form of communication. Its visual nature provides a compelling platform to establish a meaningful connection with your intended audience. The most effective videos are those that are not only highly relevant but also authentically reflect your narrative.

- Use humor
- Educate
- Spread awareness
- Reflect on experiences

[Video example Instagram](#)



BDI

illuminating the possibilities
in disabilities



FONTS GUIDE

Large Heading (Lora)

Sub-heading (Muli Black or Bold)

This is your body text. The font to use here is Muli Regular. The minimum font size for body text is 14 points for Word documents and 24 points for PowerPoint presentations.

FONTS IN USE

Aa LORA

Aa MULI

Aa MULI BLACK



#091953



#009DA5



#BA389A



#615D59



#97A926

Bobby Dodd Institute

Dos and Don't When Creating Content

Do

Do use the full brand name, **Bobby Dodd Institute**, if you are mentioning the organization for the first time in your writing.

Do use the abbreviation, **BDI**, for any instances after that in the same text.

Do use images and other visuals.

Do protect the privacy of the people in your story.

Do ask for help.

Do be open and authentic.

Do engage with your audience.

Do use different methods to tell a story but stick to the one you are most comfortable with.

Do include a strong call-to-action.

Don't

Do Not change the BDI logo.

Do Not use any colors outside the approved color palette.

Do Not tell a story if you are in doubt.

Do Not victimize the heroes in your story.

Do Not publish a story without a photo release form.

Stay in touch with Bobby Dodd Institute

Website:

www.bobbydodd.org

Social media handle:

@BobbyDoddInstitute