



## A GUIDE FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING FOR REACH PROJECT ADOPTION AMBASSADORS

You bring to your speaking engagement the passion you have for children and an awareness of the vital need for more adoptive families. But, since Public Speaking 101 might not be top-of-mind anymore, we've compiled a few simple suggestions to help you prepare for your talk. Being ready and practicing ahead of time can help you deliver a more focused and successful talk and, most importantly, help you to be more comfortable and confident in front of your audience.

### **PREPARE:**

- Organize your talk into sections
- Create a clear beginning and a clear ending
- Write easy-to-use notes summarizing your points – consider using note cards

### **PRACTICE:**

- Practice your talk for content and flow of ideas
- Time yourself to ensure you can stay within your limit
- Practice as if you are in front of a real audience – consider running through your talk in front of your family or friends ahead of time

### **DELIVER:**

- Be friendly in your style
- Don't rush it – speak slowly
- Make frequent eye contact with the audience
- Deliver the talk as you practiced it
- Be sure to use positive adoption language
- Close the talk definitively, thanking the audience for listening
- Keep introductory remarks brief, "It's nice to be here," "Thank you for inviting me" or "I appreciate the chance to speak with you today," etc.
- Stay open for questions from the audience after you close

### **REMEMBER:**

- Using stories from your own experience is an effective way to connect with your audience and to illustrate why adopting a child is such a wonderful choice. However, if you have foster children in your home, it is important to avoid disclosing particularly personal or confidential information about them in the course of telling your family's story.
- Even after finalization, it is important to protect and preserve your child's story. We encourage you to remember that there may be birthparents or birth families in any audience and to be sensitive and respectful to all individuals during the presentation. Also, we encourage you to choose words carefully in order to protect your child(ren)'s privacy and self-esteem.
- **And most importantly, no one is grading or judging you. As long as you share your story and your journey with your adoptive child, you will have been successful.**

Your story could inspire someone to become an adoptive parent and give a home to one of the hundreds of children waiting for a permanent family of their own. Thank you for your time and your commitment to children and families!