

# TELL A STORY, SAVE A LIFE



The use of injury and fatality narratives to convey agricultural safety and health messages and to develop effective resources through collaborative, multi-disciplinary approaches.

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National Children's Center  
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# Goal for today

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**Use insights from TTSP as a roadmap to learn how you can create safety messages that resonate with farmers through personal stories.**



# The Power of Storytelling in Public Health and Agriculture

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- In public health, storytelling has been found to be effective in helping change knowledge, attitudes and behaviors
- In agriculture, there is a rich history of storytelling through oral history and personal narratives
  - Storytelling likely plays a role in dealing emotionally with the aftermath of severe agricultural incidents



Source: Robertson et al., 2006  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1748-0361.2006.00001.x>



# Why use storytelling to share safety messages?

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Statistics and data summaries of ag injuries, hazards and risks sometimes are not enough - **safety education messages with “real-life” stories of a close call, or fatality can help bring the message home.**



# Telling the Story Project

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## ***Tell a Story, Save a Life...***

The **Telling the Story Project** is creating injury prevention messages that highlight personal stories and first-hand experiences.

*Raising farm safety awareness  
through personal stories*

<https://tellingthestoryproject.org/>

- Provide space for those directly or indirectly involved in an agricultural injury incident to share their story, and with an understanding of the educational benefits to the listeners.
- Readers connect on a cultural, intellectual, and emotional level with the storytellers, moving them to integrate safety practices into their work.



# The Storytellers

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**Telling the Story Project**  
"We don't want this to happen to anyone else."



# Storytelling Guidelines

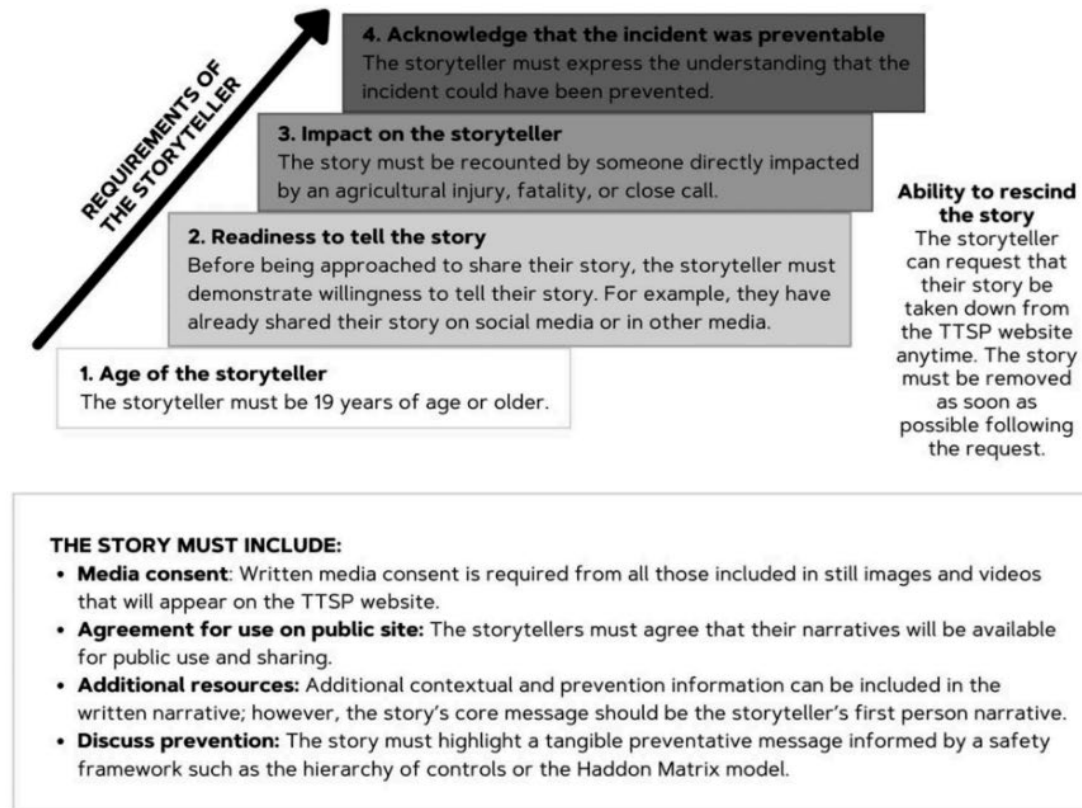
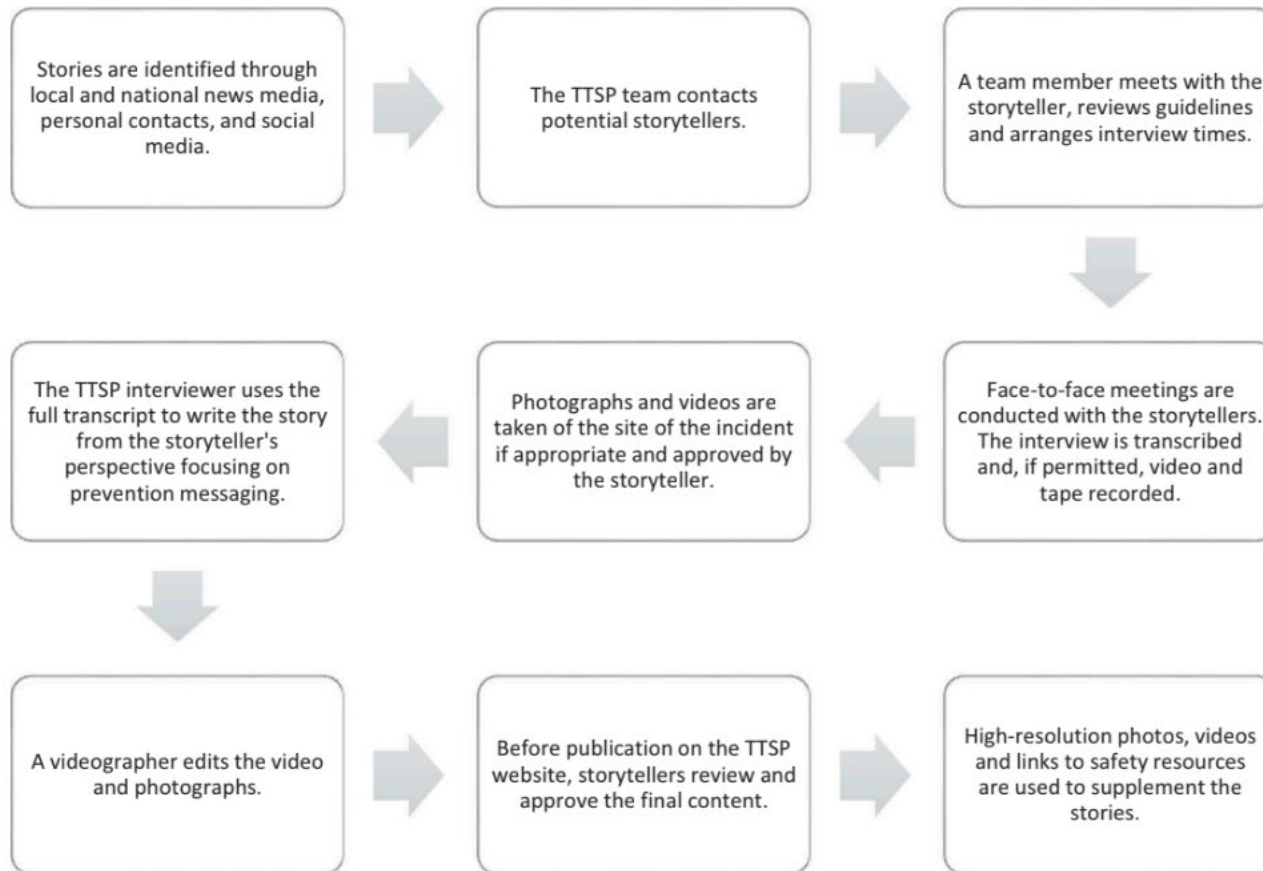


Figure 1. Telling the story project guidelines.

# Storytelling Process

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**Figure 2.** Telling the story project interview, writing and recording process.



# Common themes from the stories

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Thematic analysis was used to identify and report **common themes** within 11 TTSP stories

Thoughts during  
incident

“I thought about dialing 911, but how do you describe where you are to a 911 operator” - David’s Story (ATV rollover)

Reflections on  
cause of incident

“How stupid...why? Why didn’t I just let him out. Why did I think I had to close that gate?” - Susan’s Story (Working alone with large livestock)

Positive outcomes  
since incident

“Thirty years on, I’m grateful for every day above ground” - Jerry and Julie’s Story (Manure gas)

**Sub themes: Safety perspective, Farm Environment, Risks and Hazards**

# What storytellers can teach us about communicating safety

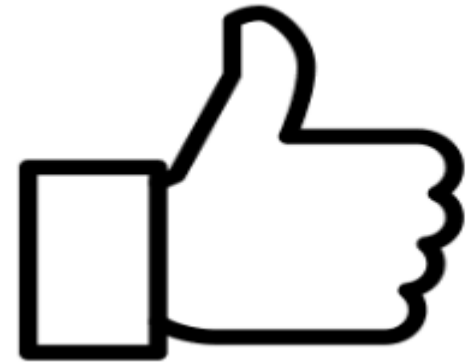
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Storytelling can help reflect on agricultural incidents, and **what happened before, during, and after they occurred.**



Understanding the **environment** offers valuable insights for preventing similar incidents.



Outreach messages could highlight **positive outcomes** to better connect with agricultural communities.

# Sharing the Stories

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→ Consider different pathways to share the stories

- ◆ Website
- ◆ Facebook
- ◆ Twitter
- ◆ Instagram
- ◆ TikTok
- ◆ YouTube
- ◆ Newspaper/magazine
  - Media releases
- ◆ Media kits and campaigns

→ Engage with your audience

- ◆ Examples: Discussion guides, audio, video, cartoons, imagery, interactive ag health and safety materials





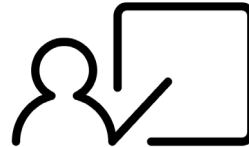
# TTSP Reach

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Safety Professionals and  
Farm Safety  
Experts/Trainers



Extension Agents



High School Teachers  
and College Professors



Media



- The TTSP website been visited over 49,300 times as of October 2024.
- TTSP stories and reports have been published in a wide range of agricultural media publications reaching over 84,000 households in the Midwest, and online.
- Media releases featuring TTSP stories are sent to a database of more than 300 agricultural communicators.
- Messaging using an TTSP media kit reached over 15,000 users via Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

# TTSP IMPACT

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**Individual** - Personal stories can help change the way farmers view work and influence decisions they make about taking risks.

**In the community** - Organizations have adopted TTSP model and educators and professors are using TTSP in the classroom

**Policy/Media** - Storytellers have engaged in advocacy around safety and health policy (ie National ROPS Rebate Programming)

TTSP has helped create a shift in how we talk about injuries in agriculture.

# Questions?

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