



Narratives for Health

In Action: Prioritize Diverse Voices

Since 2021, [Narratives for Health](#) has worked with hundreds of public health departments and nonprofits, advocacy organizations and others across the country. The goal is to develop a shared understanding around narrative to shift mindsets on what drives health and equity and to organize for and operationalize the changes we seek.

[Narratives for Health](#) has compiled more than 60 examples of ways narrative change has been implemented into health and equity work — examples that can inspire and advance your narrative efforts. This document highlights one of five categories. View the [full resource here](#).

What are narratives?

Narratives, or values-based themes of stories, help us understand our world and what is possible. They call attention to what Frederick W. Mayor states as “who we are, what we believe and what we value.” Narrative change is an organizing tool to see shared values actualized in our communities and in the decisions we make.

How does Narratives for Health support narrative change?

Regardless of where you are on your narrative change journey, Narratives for Health can support. After completion of a [Narratives for Health training](#), participants can join our monthly community of practice sessions. The community of practice is a space to share and learn from others on how to diffuse and deploy narratives and discuss how to lead with shared health equity values in conversation with others. Narratives for Health also offers paired support with narrative organizers and partners. [Contact us](#) to join a training or learn more about the support we offer.

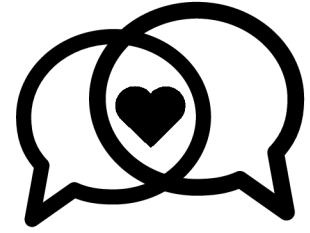
What are transformative narratives and the transformative narrative draft?

Through rounds of engagement within the train-the-facilitator series, Narratives for Health, along with over 300 organizations, created the Health Equity Transformative Narrative draft to elevate shared values that reflect a world where everyone can thrive and affect decision making. Because there are harmful narratives used in society that influence how we operate, the draft offers shared values that uplift health and equity to change what is possible.

Find that and more in our [Narratives for Health guide](#), which is a free, public resource that includes concepts, models, recommendations and tools to aid organizations delving into narrative change.

Prioritize Diverse Voices

For people and places to thrive, we must honor the leadership and experiences of people most impacted by the health inequities we are working to address.



Prioritize diverse voices. Here are four examples related to narrative change work:

- A community-based organization engaged a part-time media coordinator to elevate stories around fatherhood in blended families.
- A university health sciences center operates a parental advisory committee that gives feedback to the medical school's research program. The center presented to the parents the importance of framing how and why research is done. They also held a webinar with therapists, psychologists, law enforcement and others to introduce narrative and incorporate narrative in a national grant program about children's sexual behavior, with a focus on shifting how systems (medical, law enforcement) think about and treat children with problematic sexual behavior.
- A state public health institute includes narrative as a relational strategy in their work with communities experiencing health inequities.
- A national population health technical assistance organization runs narrative cohorts with community advisors who have experienced discrimination in the medical system and health care professionals to decrease poor birth outcomes.