

The Pitch

We are facilitating a digital storytelling workshop for six young adults with congenital heart disease.

Watch our [Boost Up Pitch video here](#).

By the way, a digital story is a 2-to-4-minute movie created with images and video clips, voiceover narration, music, and various video editing techniques to help individuals create authentic digital stories that enhance resilience.

The People

Kristy Wolfe, CHD Parent & Digital Storytelling Facilitator

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Kristy is a digital storytelling facilitator with [Common Language DST](#). Common Language facilitators offer Digital Storytelling experiences in health and wellness settings with attention to a robust ethical framework and awareness of storyteller wellbeing. [Watch one of Kristy's personal digital stories here](#).

Kristina McGuire

Kristina was a participant in a digital storytelling workshop for medical parents in the spring of 2022. She created her [own story, That Day](#), which led to her interest in becoming a level 1 digital storytelling facilitator. Kristina's son is diagnosed with Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome and her background is as a cardiovascular and neonatal intensive care nurse. She is a patient researcher, a PaCER graduate and a facilitator for the Family Engagement in Research program.

Vittorio Borrelli

Our workshop will be hosted in part by Vittorio Borrelli, a passionate CHD advocate with lived experience. Vittorio was born with Tetralogy of Fallot and is an adult transplant patient. Vittorio is an active member of the Heart Beats community. He has grown up in the community, his parents having been part of the original founding group for the Heart Beats Childrens Charity. Returning now as an "alumni", Vittorio is a leader for the youth and sibling programming for CHD families in Calgary called "Offbeats" which is an opportunity for junior and senior high-school

youth with CHDs to connect, socialize and have fun with peers. Vittorio will be creating a digital story during the retreat.

The Organizations

[Heart Beats Children's Society of Calgary](#) is a grass-roots registered charitable organization that has been helping families of children with congenital heart disease (CHD) since 1987.

[Western Canadian Children's Heart Network](#) was founded in 2001 with the goal of offering a framework for which collaborative cardiac care is provided to children in western provinces and territories. The [WCCHN Origin Story. Imagine](#), was co-created with Kristy Wolfe. It is the story of why the Western Canadian Children's Heart Network is important to congenital cardiac patients, families, clinicians and operational leaders.

The Plan

- Introduction to Storytelling: Preparing for the Retreat (2 hour virtual introductory workshop)
- Digital Story Retreat (2.5 days in person retreat in BC)
- Friends & Family Screening: (2 hour virtual screening)
- Follow up planning for sharing digital stories (with storyteller permission) on Heart Beats website, in newsletters, on social media and for presentations

Kristy will guide 6 participants in developing their own digital story using the four step Digital Storytelling Process. Kristy will support them to write their story, create a voice-over for the story, choose visuals and music to compliment the story, and share the story how they wish. Participants will leave with their own digital story.

Introduction to Storytelling: Preparing for the Retreat (virtual)

This DST Introductory Workshop is a virtual 2-hour introduction to digital storytelling that prepares participants to tell their own story. This interactive workshop will help your participants learn to recognize the meaningful moments in their own extraordinary and routine experiences. We will explore: why stories matter, story structure and delivery, and there will also be dedicated time for self-reflection and one-on-one feedback to help participants identify important lessons embedded in their own experiences. Participants will leave with a rough outline of their story.

Digital Story Retreat (in person retreat in BC)

*****Accommodation and food costs are covered, some funding for transportation***

In this 2.5 day workshop, Kristy will guide participants in developing their own digital story using the four step Digital Storytelling Process. Kristy will support them to write their story, create a voice-over for the story, choose visuals and music to compliment the story, and share the story if they wish. Watch a digital story [here](#). Participants will leave with their own digital story.

Friends & Family Screening: (virtual)

An important piece of storytelling is having an audience witness it. The potentially therapeutic aspect of Digital Storytelling is the affirmation inherent in meaningful audience engagement with the Digital Story. It is through audience engagement that some participants come to understand, often for the first time, that their story matters.

Debriefing a screening experience with the participant is an important final step. This discussion provides an opportunity to reflect on the DS experience and process the feedback provided by friends, family, strangers, or healthcare professionals who viewed the Digital Story.

For this Heart Beats project we plan to hold a virtual screening to include as many people as possible across the Heart Beats & WCCHN networks.

Planning for Sharing Stories Publicly

The final step is follow up planning for sharing the completed digital stories publicly. Please note individual storytellers will have final say on whether the story is public and through the continual consent process will be able to remove consent at any time.

We would expect most storytellers to be open to sharing because of conversations had during the storyteller recruitment phase.

Options for Heart Beats to share publicly could include:

- Website
- Newsletter
- Social Media
- Presentations
- Conferences

But Why?

Young adults with congenital heart disease need to know they are not alone. They need to know that others have experienced this journey, and by sharing their stories of struggle and hope, we aim to support these young adults in creating a visual testimony to share and be celebrated.

By facilitating a digital storytelling workshop, our team will create an opportunity for these young adults to meet, make meaningful connections with peers who have similar experiences and create a resource for other patients and families to benefit from in the future.

"Kristy invited me into her space to co-create a digital story. The impact this whole process had on me has completely surpassed anything I had expected or even thought was possible. Kristy helped me understand and believe that the story I had to tell, was not only worth telling, but worth sharing. She was invested in not just the outcome, but the process and in fact the process is where I found the most meaning. I would absolutely recommend working with Kristy to everyone - we all have a story to share!" - Kathleen Shearer - DST workshop participant

"Kristy's energy and passion for storytelling is infectious and she is just plain fun to work with... even if the topic of the story is heavy. Her skills in photography and digital storytelling are a potent combination that allows her to help people find meaningful moments from their lives and then share them with others in an artistic and compelling way." - Dr. Mike Lang - Common Language DST Founder