



Classroom Guide

Organ and Tissue Donation

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Dear Educator,

Thank you for your interest in educating your students about the importance of organ and tissue donation. You are in a great position to equip them with the knowledge they need to make an informed decision about this important topic.

There is a massive shortage of available organs for transplant for the over 110,000 people on the waiting list for a lifesaving transplant. More than 10,000 of those people waiting are in Texas. You have the unique opportunity to help close the gap between those waiting and the people who are willing to register to become organ and tissue donors.

Please review the provided materials with your students and encourage them to share the information with their family members. Feel free to contact us if you would like to schedule a speaker to come to your classroom.

Sincerely,

Lesley Adams
LifeGift, SE Region

Linda Mize
LifeGift, North Region

Sara Gooch
LifeGift, West Region

Goals:

1. Provide students with the knowledge and understanding needed to make an informed decision about donation.
2. Encourage students to share that information with family, friends, classmates and other outlets.

Objectives:

1. Emphasize the benefits of organ and tissue donation
2. Address myths and misconceptions about donation
3. Explain how to register as a donor



Aaron Daniels, waiting for kidney transplant

Benefits of Donation:

One Donor Can:

- Save the lives of **8** people through organ donation
- Enhance the lives of more than **50** people through tissue donation
- Donate kidneys to free two people from dialysis treatments
- Give sight to two people through the donation of corneas
- Donate bones to repair injured joints or help save a limb threatened by cancer
- Help burn victims recover through the donation of skin
- Provide healthy heart valves for someone whose life is threatened by diseased or malfunctioning valves

What Can Be Donated:


- The organs that can be donated are lungs, heart, kidneys, liver, pancreas and intestines.
- The most commonly donated tissues include: corneas, bone, tendons, ligaments, skin, saphenous veins, heart valves and fascia lata.

Fast Facts:


- More than 110,000 people are waiting for a lifesaving transplant
- More than 10,000 of those waiting are in Texas
- Every 10 minutes a new name is added to the list
- Every day 18 people die waiting

Myths and Misconceptions about Donation


Myth: If I am a registered donor, hospital staff will not work as hard to save my life.

 **FACT:** ALL efforts to save an individual's life are exhausted prior to the topic of donation being raised.


Myth: Donation will alter my funeral arrangements.

 **FACT:** Organs and tissues are recovered like any routine surgery. Donation does NOT alter funeral plans or prevent you from having an open casket funeral.


Myth: Donation is against my religion.

 **FACT:** ALL mainstream U.S. religions either support donation or leave the decision to the individual.


Myth: Celebrities receive organs first.

 **FACT:** The national system is based upon the severity of the disease and other medical factors. No preferential treatment is given.

Myth: I am not an acceptable donor due to medical conditions.

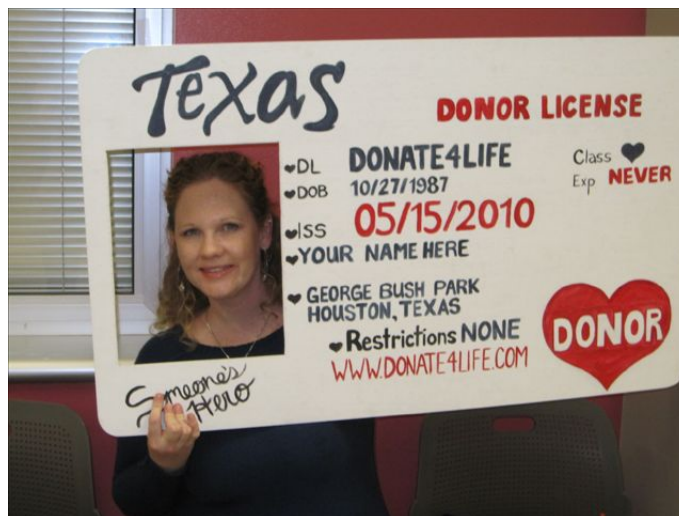
 **FACT:** Everyone is a potential donor. Your medical condition at the time of death will determine if you can be a donor.

Myth: One can recover from brain death.

 **FACT:** It is impossible to recover from brain death.

How to become a hero:

- When you apply for your driver's license, you will be asked if you would like to register as an organ and tissue donor. If you say yes, you will be placed on the official Donate Life Texas Registry and your driver's license will feature a donor heart on the bottom right-hand corner.
- You can register online at anytime at www.donatelifetexas.org.
- Be sure to tell your family about your decision and encourage them to make the same one!



Dear Parent or Guardian,

Today at school I learned about the importance of organ and tissue donation. We learned that one donor can save the lives of 8 people through organ donation and enhance the lives of more than 50 through tissue donation. Donation can dramatically improve and save the lives of those suffering from organ failure, bone defects, burns, blindness and other injuries.

There are over 110,000 Americans currently waiting for a lifesaving transplant. Tragically, thousands of people die each year due to the shortage of donors.

An important part of our lesson was to share it with our loved ones. In the event of a tragedy, as members of my immediate family, you may be asked for your consent to donate my organs and tissue.

My decision is:

YES, I want to be an organ and tissue donor

NO, I do not want to be an organ and tissue donor

I am undecided

These are the reasons for my decision:

Signature _____ Date _____

Santos Gonzales

Organ Donor



Sixteen-year-old Santos “Makis” Gonzales saved the lives of four people through organ donation when he died tragically on November 16, 2009. His family is pictured here with the man who received his heart, holding a photo of Santos.

Ciara Nunez
Heart Recipient



When you see almost 3-year-old Ciara Nunez, you would never know that she had a lifesaving heart transplant at 4 months old. She is a beautiful, energetic child, but she was born with a heart defect.

Tyler Nelson

Waiting for a double lung and liver transplant



Seventeen-year-old Tyler Nelson was diagnosed with Cystic Fibrosis when he was three days old. He is currently waiting for a lung and liver transplant at Texas Children's Hospital.

Do you know the Facts?

Quiz

Directions: Write True or False next to each statement

- ___ Only hearts, livers and kidneys can be donated.

- ___ Organs for transplant can be bought by the wealthy or famous.

- ___ One organ donor can save the lives of 8 people.

- ___ If I am admitted into the hospital, and doctors are aware that I have registered to be an organ donor, they will not work as hard to save my life.

- ___ Less than 1 percent of the people who die each year become organ donors.

- ___ If you have a history of medical illness your organs or tissue are unfit for donation.

- ___ There are more people on the transplant waiting list than there are organs available.

- ___ A person can recover from brain death.

Resources

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Visit and subscribe to our LifeLines Blog: <http://www.lifegift.org/>

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***Thank you to Donate Life New Jersey “High School Heroes” program for inspiring this publication and allowing us to reference their “Organ and Tissue Donation Classroom Guide”.*