

The “Make your mark” video was created with the input of young people in Minnesota who wanted to see authentic stories of teens touched by organ, eye and tissue donation. The stories featured here show teenagers who have either given or received the gifts of life and sight.

The video is flexible to fit the curriculum needs of individual instructors, and can either be played in its entirety (run time: 21 minutes) or by choosing chapters to share with students. An accompanying quiz can be handed out for students to answer as they watch the video and learn more about how donation and transplant touches the lives of people in our community.

CHRISTOPHER’S STORY

Christopher was an 18 year old who was deeply connected to his family, his friends and his church. He is described as a quiet kid with a big heart who was always looking for someone he could help.

Christopher was on his way to a basketball game when he was involved in a fatal car accident. His family knew his wishes about donation and didn’t hesitate to support his decision. His mom recalls having a conversation about donation with him when he applied for his driver’s license and knew he wanted to help others. Christopher generously gave the gifts of organs, eyes and tissues to grateful recipients and his family takes great comfort in the legacy he has left through donation.

HALLEY’S STORY

When Halley was eleven she was having extreme pain in her abdomen and required surgery. It was during that surgery that doctors noticed her liver was not healthy. She was in need of a liver transplant to survive.

Halley received her life-saving liver transplant and is now an active, normal teenager. Her donor was a 17 year old girl named Kayla who made the decision to be an organ, eye and tissue donor when she applied for her driver’s license. Kayla’s parents remember discussing donation with her and supported her decision. In addition to Halley, Kayla saved the lives of many others through the gifts of organ, eye and tissue donation.

ANTHONY’S STORY

Anthony was a 16 year old whose nickname was Prince Charming. He was involved in football, hockey, skateboarding, youth ministry, and leadership camps. He loved school and had completed his pre-ACT and was thinking about careers in engineering or science.

Anthony was the unintended victim of gang violence in Minneapolis. He made the decision to be a donor on his state ID card, and his family supported his decision. His gifts of tissue and eye donation saved and healed 54 people of all ages in 14 states and his family takes great comfort in knowing that he’s living on in others.

ELLIOTT'S STORY

At the age of 11 Elliott complained of a side ache that prompted his mother to take him to urgent care. They quickly discovered that he had an aggressive form of liver cancer and would need chemotherapy and a liver transplant to survive.

Elliott received a liver transplant, and shortly thereafter it was clear that something had gone wrong and the new, wonderful liver he had received would not survive. Elliott was once again urgently in need of another liver transplant, which he miraculously received shortly thereafter. Elliott's second transplant has been a wonderful success and he's now a healthy, active teenager who just received his own driving permit and checked the box to register as a donor himself.

KOURTNIE'S FACTS ABOUT DONATION

Kournie is a registered nurse and donation coordinator. She works with the families of organ and tissue donors to facilitate the gifts of donation so generously given by donors and their families. Kournie's chapter answers many frequently asked questions about donation, such as:

- What do I do if I support donation?
- How do I register to be a donor?
- What if I'm under 18?
- Is my age or health condition a factor?
- Will my body look different if I choose to be a donor?
- Is there any cost to me or my family?