

Statement of Purpose

The Right to Life Speech Contest provides the opportunity for high school sophomores, juniors and seniors to share their pro-life view with others. Although speaking ability is important, this contest also seeks to help teens organize and express their pro-life views. We also strive to give the contestants an opportunity to meet other pro-life teens.

2026 Speech Contest Rules

1. High school sophomores, juniors and seniors, in that grade **February 1** of the year of the national contest are eligible to compete. A sophomore could win the \$250 first prize but is not allowed to compete in the state competition. The second-place winner, if a junior or senior would represent our local affiliate. In the case of advanced students, non-traditional students, or home-schooled students, the school must recognize the student as a junior or senior or the year the student will enter college will be used to determine eligibility. A \$250 prize will be awarded to the sponsoring school or department of the first-place winner. If the first-place winner is home schooled, this award will go to the local, state or national home school organization of the winner's choice.
2. Students who have competed in their sophomore or junior year may compete the following year (with an entirely new speech) EXCEPT a student who has won the national contest may not compete. Second place winners may compete again.
3. Contestants are to research, write, and present an original pro-life speech on **abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, or stem cell research.**
4. The speech is to be 5-7 minutes in length. A contestant will be disqualified if the speech is timed to be less than 4 minutes or over 8 minutes in length. Judges are instructed to use their judgment regarding over or under time limit speeches. It is left to the discretion of the judges how the 4-5 minute and 7-8-minute speech will be reflected in the contestant's score.
5. Appropriate gestures are allowed. Props are not allowed.
6. Speech content may not be significantly changed as a contestant advances. Editing for minor corrections or to adjust time is allowed and encouraged. A written copy of the contestant's speech must be forwarded to the national contest.
7. The contestant should use **up-to-date, factual** information.
8. The style or speech type should be appropriate to the message of the speech. A **dramatic presentation is not acceptable.** A dramatic presentation is considered anything read or performed that has been previously written by another author, a short story, poem, etc.

Although quotes to support a position or statement are appropriate, they may not dominate the speech and should be appropriately cited. Dramatic presentations are also defined, for the purposes of this contest, to include acting as a thing or another person, such as acting out the life of an unborn baby. This rule is not to be interpreted to rule out the use of emotion.

9. The judges' background and qualifications differ, and all are pro-life. The students' speech should appeal to a broad audience.
10. No copyrighted speeches shall be used in the contest.
11. The contest may be videotaped or recorded. The tape will remain the property of Right to Life of Indianapolis, Inc.
12. Contestants may use notes.
13. The use of a podium is optional.
14. The use of microphones will not be allowed. The Contest Director may make an exception if the contest room creates the necessity for the use of microphones.
15. The contest will begin with at least one preliminary round, depending on the number of participants. For the preliminary round, contestants will be divided into groups of 4 -7 to compete. The 2 contestants from each group with the highest scores will proceed to the next level until there are 4 contestants participating in the final round.
16. The contest will have three (3) judges, one (1) timekeeper.
17. Speaking order for the preliminary round will be determined before the contest by drawing. Speaking order in following rounds will be determined by scores in the previous round.
18. The judges score contestants in four areas: **INTRODUCTION, CONTENT, PRESENTATION, and CONCLUSION.** Contestants are given a score of 1-10 in each area (10 being the best). The scores are then added together for a perfect score of 40. The total scores from all three judges are added together to achieve a grand total. The grand total will determine which contestants move to the next level.
19. The judges' decisions will be **FINAL.**
20. All efforts will be made to assure accuracy. In the event of a mistake, every effort will be made to correct it.
21. Ties will be handled by the Contest Director.
22. These rules apply only to Right to Life of Indianapolis, Inc. Speech Contest. No other rules from any national, state, or local speech group apply.

23. The decision of the Contest Director concerning application of these rules is **FINAL**.