

Constituency Training & Mobilization

The importance of grassroots advocacy cannot be overstated. As former Speaker of the House Tip O'Neil famously said, "All politics is local." When a citizen contacts or visits a Member's office on behalf of your organization, the Member receives the clear message that your issue is important to voters. A personal story from a person impacted by a policy or issue can be a very powerful tool in advancing your goal. However, it is essential that your supporters be trained to convey your message clearly and in the proper manner to key decision-makers.

Since its founding, The Sheridan Group has conducted highly effective grassroots training on behalf of clients and put advocates in touch with key lawmakers to share personal stories of the impact of a policy or issue on their lives. The 106th Congress engaged in a high-profile debate over legislation to regulate tobacco. Working with the **Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids**, The Sheridan Group mobilized grassroots leaders to lobby Members of Congress. As the legislation was being debated by Congress, The Sheridan Group created a "war room" to coordinate activities by the Campaign and the **ENACT (Effective National Action to Control Tobacco) Coalition**, which was convened by the Campaign and comprised of public health organizations concerned with tobacco policy. The war room allowed the coalition to communicate with Members of Congress and immediately respond to any arguments advanced by the tobacco companies.

The Sheridan Group has played an integral part in organizing events from annual grassroots advocacy days to large-scale operations for a variety of clients including **Patient Access Coalition, One Voice Against Cancer, and the CFIDS (Chronic Fatigue and Immune Dysfunction Syndrome) Association of America**. For 10 years, The Sheridan Group has handled the arrangements and training for the CFIDS Association's annual advocacy day in addition to giving presentations to local CFIDS groups around the country.