

## Speak Up! Vikki's Story – Video Transcript

Audio	Visual
<p><b>Vikki, Speak Up! Advocate:</b> My name is Vicki, and I was homeless for four and a half years.</p>	<p>[On Screen Text: Vikki’s Story]</p>
<p><b>Vikki:</b> I have schizophrenia and I started hallucinating and having delusions that my medication was poisoning me, so I stopped taking it and about two weeks later, I started having hallucinations of enemy armies invading America and killing me and everyone I ever cared about.</p>	<p>Vikki speaks to camera in her home</p>
<p><b>Vikki:</b> So in psychosis, I ran away and I found a place behind the old Santa Monica Library in Santa Monica California. Luckily, there was some Vietnam vets there there were homeless too and they kind of took me under their wing and they watched out for me. That's one thing - I could sleep where a lot of women out there can't. And it's there that I lived for four and a half years.</p>	<p>Exterior of Santa Monica library is shown. Vikki speaks to camera.</p>
<p><b>Vikki:</b> Most days I would wake up at 5:00 a.m. because if I didn't, I was afraid the police were gonna ask me to leave, or even worse, arrest me. I walked aimlessly 10 to 12 hours a day yelling at walls for hours, walking in circles screaming at these enemies.</p>	<p>Vikki walks down sidewalk. Police car passes in the background.</p>
<p><b>Vikki:</b> I call it the monster system. You know, the system is so scary to me. You know, there's no information - like how to get your doctor to give you a housing voucher. Thankfully, this kind stranger who dropped off food about once every week or two - one day he just finally asked me: "Please, go to Ocean Park Community Center in Santa Monica." There was a family clinic there. And I was in such a bad way that I finally said yes.</p>	<p>Vikki speaks to camera. Exterior of Ocean Park Community Center is shown.</p>
<p><b>Vikki:</b> She fills out the paperwork and about two weeks later, I got an interview. And about three weeks later, the caseworker walks up to me - I'm sitting in the dining room and she says, "You got accepted. You have an apartment." All I kept saying was, "No way." Cause I was so amazed I couldn't believe it. I couldn't even absorb it. You</p>	<p>Vikki speaks to two women at a community center. Vikki stands in a furnished bedroom. And looks around.</p>

<p>know what do you say about people that saved your life? You know, what do you say?</p>	
<p><b>Vikki:</b> I have a great life. I'm now an advocate with Corporation for Supportive Housing. The CSH Speak Up! program takes formerly homeless people and teaches them to tell their story where it matters. To Congress people, in a way that can help solve the crisis of homelessness. I mean the workshops are incredible. You get to learn all the new advances, and the coordination, and the networking of what's working today. It changes who you are.</p>	<p>Vikki is speaking on stage, presenting at a conference.</p> <p>Vikki speaks with other advocates in a conference room.</p> <p>Vikki speaks with a Congress person.</p>
<p><b>Vikki:</b> When I first got into the advocacy program, I was totally afraid - I would listen to everyone else but I would kind of just be real quiet so they wouldn't notice me. The whole program really changed my life, teaching me to not be afraid to tell my story and that it does help. Because I love waking up, you know. I just, I have the greatest life! I really do.</p>	<p>Vikki meets with other advocates in a conference room.</p>
<p><b>Vikki:</b> People actually call Ann English, our director, and say: "Hey, can we have that lady talk over here? Because we heard about her and we want to hear her story." I travel all over the place. I go around to Congress people, Senators, police departments, students.</p>	<p>Ann English presents to a room of advocates</p>
<p><b>Vikki:</b> I love talking to students and trying to explain that, you know, this is what homelessness is. It's just a normal person, that got in a bad situation or a mental illness or poverty or whatever. But it's just a person. And trying to put that face to what homelessness really is, to help people get a house just like I did. And it's just knowing that I'm actually making a difference. And CSH gave me that.</p>	<p>Vikki pictured with Senators and students in conference rooms.</p> <p>Vikki speaks to camera.</p> <p>Vikki presents on a panel.</p> <p>Kitchen in a supportive housing unit is shown.</p>
<p><b>Vikki:</b> My life today is incredible. I wake every morning and I love my life. I appreciate my life. I have friends. I have people that care about me. I can't explain how incredible it is to live again, after feeling like I was dying for so long. Please, please, supportive housing is the answer. I live with 46 other women here in this apartment</p>	<p>Vikki walks dog down a corridor.</p> <p>Vikki puts on backpack in her bedroom.</p> <p>Vikki speaks to camera.</p> <p>[On Screen Text: Vikki's Story]</p>

building alone. They are all success stories.  
Supportive housing works.

[On Screen Text: [csh.org/speakup](http://csh.org/speakup)]