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NARAL Pro-Choice WI House Party Guide



Dear NARAL Pro-Choice Supporter,

Thank you for your willingness to host a NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin House Party to support women's rights! Communicating our values, goals, challenges and opportunities to others is the most important tool we have to protect a woman's right to choose. Without the knowledge to inform others, pro-choice Americans will be unable to act on their convictions and choice will continue to slip away. Our power to protect choice depends on people like you, who are willing to share their views with friends, colleagues, and family. Our strength is our collective voice.

NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin's Mission is to develop and sustain a constituency that uses the political process to guarantee every woman the right to make personal decisions regarding the full range of reproductive choice, including preventing pregnancy, bearing healthy children, and choosing legal abortion.

In 2010, Wisconsin has faced a lot of up hill battles with the issue of choice. Not only are we living in a state with an anti-choice state government but we are also struggling to get new legislation passed. Yet despite these hardships, our nationwide *Prevention First* initiative is in full swing with the intention of enacting new laws to protect a woman's right of choice. Our aim is to guarantee women's access to birth control mainly in pharmacies, require insurance coverage for contraception and ensure age-appropriate and medically accurate sex education in schools. But these remain just a few of our goals as we look to explore every venue of inequality and seek change.

As part of this effort to seek change, NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin appreciates your interest in hosting a house party. The house party is a way for fellow advocates and for those who are unsure of where they stand on women's reproductive rights to come together in a friendly setting and discuss the pro-choice mission. The house party is not meant to change minds, it is solely an event for all to come together and learn more about current issues in Wisconsin legislation and to discuss your thoughts and suggestions concerning women's rights. Additional information concerning the house party such as a timeline and materials that will be provided for you on behalf of NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin are included within this packet. We look forward to working with you to plan a fun and productive House Party.

If you have questions, ideas, or concerns, please contact Lisa Subeck, Executive Director at 608-287-0016 or email: info@prochoicewisconsin.org.

Thank you for joining the fight for women's reproductive freedom



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CONGRATULATIONS AND THANK YOU!

By agreeing to host or co-host a NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin House Party, you are playing an active role in sustaining and building the pro-choice movement. House parties provide a personal forum to discuss reproductive and privacy rights. In addition, they are an effective way of motivating, educating, and activating pro-choice supporters in your community. Through efforts like yours, we are able to increase the numbers of pro-choice supporters in order to keep reproductive options safe, legal, and accessible.

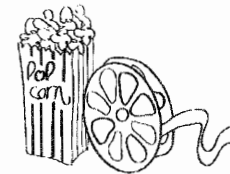
You can help ensure the success of your house party if you follow the attached guidelines. Please carefully read through this packet and call Lisa Subeck, if you have any questions or concerns.

GETTING STARTED

WHAT WILL NARAL PROVIDE FOR THE HOUSE PARTY?

House parties should be fun and engaging and NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin would like to help you accomplish this. To engage and educate house party guests, the following materials are just a few of the items that NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin will provide to you.

- ❖ Stickers/Buttons
- ❖ A petition to collect signatures for any events that are up and coming
- ❖ Information about how to participate in events or volunteer
- ❖ Sign in Sheets
- ❖ Invitations and Thank you's
- ❖ Videos
- ❖ Donation Basket
- ❖ Fact Sheets and Brochures
 - Ex. Fact sheets about safe abortion
 - What will happen to WI if Roe vs. Wade is overturned
 - Snappy Answers to Anti-Choice Statements



These materials will help you facilitate your discussion at the house party and will provide your guests with the resources necessary to learn more about the pro-choice movement and decide if they would like to join in our fight towards equality.

TIMETABLE

4 Weeks Before the Event

- ❖ Settle on a date and let NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin know so that we can send you a packet of materials for your guests at the meeting
- ❖ Draw up an invitation list *** You need to invite 2-3 times the number of guests you want.***

3 Weeks Before the Event

- ❖ Work with NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin to begin inviting attendees
- ❖ Email/Mail out invitations
- ❖ Ask friends to help with the event - help with food prep, take coats, sign people in, co-host option)

7-10 Days Before the Event

- ❖ Call everyone who has not RSVP'd to ask if they are attending
- ❖ Prepare, practice and run through the basic agenda of the party before hand so that when the day comes, you are not stressing over what to say and so you know the chain of events.

The Week of

- ❖ Remind guests who have said they will come *Email and Phone is great and will greatly reduce fall off in attendance.
- ❖ Prepare simple refreshments
- ❖ Remind your helpers of their roles if you have any. Make sure ahead of time that you have enough seating, big enough space, access to AV equipment before your event!!! Also make sure that if you are making food for this event that you plan accordingly so that you don't spend the entire day before your party slaving in the kitchen.

The day of

- ❖ Have chairs arranged so people can easily find a space to sit once inside.
- ❖ Ask people to sign in when they arrive and take the first step in introducing people to one another so that you can create a more personal environment.
- ❖ Have refreshments out, food prepared.



CHECKLIST



- Figure out where you will be hosting the party or contact a co-host
- Develop guest list
- Gather contact info for all invitees
- Stamp and mail invites
- Call invitees to tell them to watch for invite
- Call people who have not RSVP'd
- Make plans for food and drink
- Make reminder calls to "yes" and "maybe" RSVPs
- Set up the hosting space to make sure that there is enough space for food, literature, the sign-in sheet, chairs for the attendees, etc.
- Host the party!!!
- Give the sign-in sheet back to NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin
- NARAL will send thank you notes to the guests
- Send personalized thank you's to guests (recommended, but not required)



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NOW THAT YOU ARE A HOST.... WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

Don't fret, we have a list of tips for house party hosts:



1. First decide on where you would like to host your party. Typically, we encourage people to open their homes for the event to create a nice, warm talking environment.
 - ❖ If you believe your home is too small to host a party of 15-20 people, find someone to help you co-host your party at their house. Co-hosting is a great way to collaborate with fellow pro-choice advocates.
 - ❖ Do you live in a small space? You can still host a great house party! Consider venues such as: a coffee shop, a library, a union hall, a college campus, a community center... The possibilities are endless and many places would be more than willing to open up a space for you in their establishment.
 - ❖ Remember when choosing a venue, if you have chosen to review a video or present a power point presentation that the establishment has audio visual capabilities. Are there hook ups available? Make sure you talk with staff before planning your party.
2. After deciding on a place to host the event, **START INVITING EVERYONE!!!** Turnout for these events are critical. Think outside of your usual group of friend. Invite family members, co-workers, classmates, neighbors, acquaintances!
 - ❖ Your goal should be to have at least 20 guests attend your event. (More information on the invite process will be discussed in the next page of the booklet)
3. Keep everyone happy by making sure there is enough space in your location so that everyone is comfortable. Buy beverages and snacks in advance (or bake), because there is nothing better than going to an event and eating delicious food!
4. Remain calm and remember to have fun. Planning the event shouldn't be as stressful as it is to plan a wedding. Stay on top of the things you need to do as a host and enjoy the fact that you are doing something to benefit the lives of women worldwide.



THE INVITE PROCESS



Now that you have decided on a location it is time to start inviting people to your event. Studies have shown that there is a proper way to go about the invitation process so that you can retain as many participants as you need. According to research you need to begin spreading the word and inviting up to 80 guests. I know it seems like a big number but don't worry, you really know more than 80 people when you think about it. 40 of these people will say they'll

come, but really only half (20) of the people will actually show. NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin is confident that you will be able to meet the goal of having 20 attendees at your host party.

Other things to keep in mind:

- ❖ You are the RSVP contact for your event. Make sure that you have fill out the RSVP spreadsheet to mark who is or isn't attending.
- ❖ Send your postcard invites out three weeks before the event in order to give people enough time to schedule your party into their calendar. We also have a samples e-vite if you would like to utilize them as well.
- ❖ Call people the day you send out the invites so that they are aware that they should be receiving an invite and encourage them to RSVP as soon as possible
- ❖ **Make personal calls to those who fail to RSVP within two weeks of the event.** You'll be surprised at the number of invited guests who haven't yet decided if they would come or not, and will now come because you called.
- ❖ The week of the party, **call your confirmed guests** to remind them of the party. This is crucial and ensures a great turnout.
- ❖ Feel free to use other methods of communication instead of phone calls such as email however, we strongly recommend that you **do not use email as your day before the party reminder.**



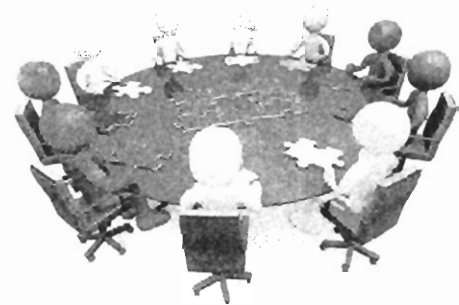
SAMPLE AGENDA

1. Meet and Greet (30 minutes)- Guests should sign in, host should be sure to briefly introduce those who don't know each other, appetizers or food should be set out. This is a time of mingling, so just make sure that you are working your way through your guests and ensuring that they feel comfortable in the setting.

2. Host Introduction/Purpose (15 minutes) Introduce yourself and give a brief overview of what the night will consist of. Talk a little bit about NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin, or some key points concerning the pro-choice mission.

3. Show Movie? Activity? (20 minutes) You and your guests can watch a short film about pro-choice movements or a movie that you think will work for your presentation. If no movie, try to come up with an engaging activity, maybe like Jeopardy with pro-choice decisions to test the audience on their knowledge of current legislation in Wisconsin.

4. Open Discussion (20 minutes) You and your guests should discuss the film and things that you have learned from the film/ or activity. The hosts should lead the discussion and answer questions. (NARAL will be happy to provide you with talking points and fact sheets. You DO NOT need to be an expert on these issues). Hand out copies of worksheets, if any. Just get your audience to critically think about major issues with women's reproductive rights and choice.



5. Socialize/Ending Remarks (15 minutes) Inform the audience about how NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin relies on donations so if possible, would be much appreciated. Thank your guests for coming and allow the party to stick around and continue discussion if they choose.

You are invited to join a house party on behalf of NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin. Come join us as we discuss current issues regarding a woman's right to autonomy over her body and decisions. Voice your opinions in an environment with people who share your views. Food and refreshments provided. Just bring yourself!

Pro-Choice House Party!

Date: 04/02/2011

Time: 7-9pm

Where:

122 State Street

Madison, WI 53703



Sponsored by NARAL
Pro-Choice Wisconsin

Please RSVP by calling Christina at
608-263-2222 by 03/26/11

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608-263-2222 by 03/26/11

YOU'RE INVITED TO A NAME: PRO
CHOICE WISCONSIN HOUSE PARTY

Hosted By:
Location:
When:
RSVP By:

Join us to learn more about the pro choice movement and the laws in Wisconsin regarding women's reproductive health and choice.