Healthy Youth Act.
Letter Writing Party Toolkit

Questions? Contact advocacy@pplm.org
Thank you for hosting a letter writing party for the Healthy Youth Act! There’s no time to waste. April 25th is the deadline to move this critical bill out of committee – and it’s up to supporters like you to push it over the finish line. State representatives need to hear why comprehensive sex education is important to you, your family, and your community.

Included in this toolkit are the following for you:

- Sample agenda for your party
- Sign-in sheets
- Social media guidance

And print out enough of these documents for your guests:

- Background on the bill and a letter checklist
- Healthy Youth Act infographic
- Sample letter

In order to prepare for your party, we recommend having the materials below set up and ready to go:

- Sign-in sheets
- Pens
- Plain paper and envelopes for letter writing OR pre-made postcards from Planned Parenthood Advocacy Fund
- Stamps
- Computer or tablet with access to the internet to look up your guests’ state representatives
- Printouts of the Healthy Youth Act infographic, sample letter, and background on the bill and a letter checklist to share with your guests as they write their letters
- Healthy Youth Act signage and swag
- Food and beverages
- Colored markers
- Music and speakers
- Tape
- Clipboards or other hard surfaces to write on

Of course, if you have any issues or would like further guidance on how to recruit and plan for your party, please reach out to advocacy@pplm.org or your local organizer for assistance. We’d be happy to help you make your letter writing party a success!

Thank you for fighting for comprehensive sex education in Massachusetts!

The Healthy Youth Coalition

#HealthyYouthAct #RespectConsentPrevent
Letter Writing Party
Sample Agenda

WELCOME YOUR GUESTS
20 minutes
Use sign in sheets to welcome guests and sign them up for future events. Set up blank paper or Healthy Youth Act placards that say “I support the Healthy Youth Act because” and have your guests write a reason they support comprehensive sex ed in colored marker. You and your guests can then post the photos of the signs on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram using #HealthyYouthAct, #RespectConsentPrevent, @PPAdvocacyMA.

GIVE INTROS & SHARE YOUR STORY
10 minutes
Kick off the speaking program by welcoming your guests and introducing any additional speakers. You can lead an icebreaker by having all your guests share their name, town, and a fun fact about themselves. Explain the Healthy Youth Act and share why you personally support comprehensive sex ed. We’ve provided talking points and helpful infographics to help you explain the legislation.

GIVE INSTRUCTIONS
10 minutes
Then get down to business. Walk your guests through the materials provided in this toolkit so they understand the bill and know what needs to be included in their notes to their state reps. Make sure to have a computer available to look up your guests’ state reps – malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator. Pro tip: write the website on blank paper and post it on the walls so guests can use their phones to find their lawmaker.

WRITE!
25 minutes
Letter (or postcard!) writing begins! There are three ways to write a letter:

- Fill out a short postcard provided by your local organizer
- Use the template letter included in this toolkit
- Get out a pen and paper and write your own!

Play some music and share some food to help inspire your guests.

SHARE!
20 minutes
Take a moment to encourage everyone to share why they support the bill. Make sure everyone has the correct info about the legislation and signs their letter with their name and town.

WRAP IT UP
10 minutes
Thank your guests for coming. Discuss other events that are coming up and make a plan for your next action. Pass around a sign-in sheet and take any final pictures for social media. Collect the letters and postmark them to the correct state rep at the Massachusetts State House on 24 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02133.

#HealthyYouthAct #RespectConsentPrevent
## SIGN IN HERE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>I’m interested in:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Electing candidates</td>
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<td>□ Lobbying</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>□ Hosting an event</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Email</th>
<th>City/Town/Zip</th>
<th>I am a:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Student</td>
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<td>□ Parent</td>
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<td>□ Community member</td>
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**Date_____________________ Event Name_____________________
Collected by______________________________________________

By providing my cell phone number I agree to receive calls and texts to that number from Planned Parenthood organizations that may be automatically dialed or prerecorded with information on Planned Parenthood issues and ways to get involved. Msg & data rates may apply. Text STOP to quit at anytime, or text HELP for more information.
Social Media Guidance

Are you following the Planned Parenthood Advocacy Fund and tagging us in your posts?

- Facebook.com/PPAdvocacyMA
- @PPAdvocacyMA
- @PPAdvocacyMA

Are you using the correct hashtags for today’s event?

- #HealthyYouthAct
- #RespectConsentPrevent
- Is there an event hashtag? Use it!

Need ideas for what to post? Try some of these:

- Include a call to action! Should your followers fill out an action alert? Sign up to volunteer? Call their reps? Head to bit.ly/HealthyYouthAct for more helpful links.

- Share your story about why LGBTQ-inclusive, consent-focused, and medically accurate sex ed matters to you.

- Go live on Instagram or Facebook to tell your followers why you support the #HealthyYouthAct.

- Look up your state rep on Twitter or Facebook and tag their account in your post.
The Healthy Youth Act was first filed in the Massachusetts Legislature in 2010. Since then, the #MeToo movement took off, youth STI rates have continued to climb, and the Trump administration has launched a federal attack on sex education programs. Today, there is a growing urgency for the bill.

The Healthy Youth Act would ensure public schools choosing to offer sex education teach a comprehensive curriculum, helping young people learn the benefits of delaying sex, as well as how to prevent STIs and pregnancy when they become sexually active. But comprehensive sex education is about more than just sex – it helps creates a culture of consent, recognizes and prioritizes LGBTQ youth health needs, and gives young people the skills to build healthy relationships. And unlike its alternatives, comprehensive sex education curricula are proven to help young people lead healthy lives.

The Healthy Youth Act has already passed the Massachusetts Senate and we have until April 25th to push the bill out of committee. It’s up to you to raise your voice, take action, and share why comprehensive sex education is important to you.

Before you send your letter, make sure you do the following:

- Address your letter to your state representative. You can look them up online at https://malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator.

- Within the body of the letter, include the bill information: An Act Relative to Healthy Youth (H. 3704), otherwise known as the Healthy Youth Act.

- Share your personal story and opinions. Is comprehensive sex ed important to you because you are a parent? A student? A doctor? Did you receive great sex ed? Bad? Share why the Healthy Youth Act matters to you!

- Sign your letter with your full name and address so your state rep knows you are a constituent. Letters from people outside a rep’s district are less impactful.

- When addressing the envelope, follow the outline below:

  The Office of State Representative {First Name} {Last Name}
  24 Beacon Street
  Boston, MA 02133

#HealthyYouthAct #RespectConsentPrevent
**Building healthy, safe communities begins with our youth.**

The *Healthy Youth Act* would give young people in Massachusetts the foundation they need to lead secure, productive lives. The legislation would:

- Ensure districts that offer sex education teach age-appropriate, medically accurate information;
- Require those districts to teach consent, the benefits of delaying sex, how to build healthy relationships, and how to prevent pregnancy and STIs when a person does have sex;
- Require the curricula used be LGBTQ-inclusive;
- Continue to allow parents and guardians to take their children out of school-based sex education.

**The Healthy Youth Act: Why now?**

No one should have to say #MeToo, especially our young people.

Nine percent of Massachusetts teens reported experiencing non-consensual sexual contact in 2015. We must combat sexual assault at its roots.

The Trump administration is pulling $200 million from evidence-based curricula that prevent teen pregnancy. Instead, he is investing in programs proven to be ineffective, like abstinence-only and “fertility awareness” initiatives.

**STI rates** are on the rise in Massachusetts, and young people are disproportionately affected.

In 2015, 62 percent of chlamydia cases and 41 percent of gonorrhea cases were reported among young people ages 15 to 24. Young people do not have the tools to stay safe and healthy.

**LGBTQ youth** are disproportionately impacted by STIs and sexual assault.

Comprehensive sex education is inclusive of all gender identities and sexual orientations and recognizes LGBTQ youth health needs.

**What is the Healthy Youth Act?**

The *Healthy Youth Act* would ensure every young person who receives sex ed learns how to build healthy lives, relationships, and communities.

Comprehensive sex education teaches medically accurate, age-appropriate information. Unlike its alternatives, comprehensive sex education is actually proven to:

- Delay the initiation of sex;
- Reduce the frequency of sex, the number of partners, and unprotected sex;
- Increase the use of condoms and contraception;
- Lower STI and unintended pregnancy rates;
- Reduce bullying for LGBTQ youth;
- Enhance students’ overall ability to learn.
Dear ___________________________,

Please pass An Act Relative to Healthy Youth (H. 3704). This bill, known as the Healthy Youth Act, is commonsense legislation that would ensure public school districts choosing to offer sex education provide their students with age-appropriate, medically accurate information. The bill is not a mandate and retains parental and guardian discretion to remove their children from school-based sex education.

The need for comprehensive sex education has never been more urgent. As the #MeToo movement brings to focus the prevalence of sexual assault and harassment, we must determine how to stop this cultural disease in its tracks. According to the Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), 9 percent of Massachusetts teens reported experiencing non-consensual sexual contact. This trend continues as people get older. Sixty New England colleges reported 784 “forcible sex offenses” in 2015. We can combat sexual assault at its roots – by teaching young people how to ask for and recognize consent before they become sexually active.

The Healthy Youth Act has overwhelming, bipartisan support. In a 2017 poll, 92 percent of registered Massachusetts voters said they believe students should receive sex education in high school and 89 percent agreed that sex education should include information about how students can stay healthy should they choose to become sexually active. The Healthy Youth Act is endorsed by a large, diverse coalition of medical professionals, educators, researchers, and advocates.

I support the Healthy Youth Act because:

Comprehensive sex education is essential to the health and wellbeing of our community. Please work to pass the Healthy Youth Act today.

Sincerely,

__________________________________________________
Name

__________________________________________________
Town
Healthy Youth Act.

I support the *Healthy Youth Act* because: