

Hosting a Community Teach-In

Organizer's Toolkit

A “teach-in” is an opportunity to **teach people in your community about an issue, create a venue for building strong connections with neighbors, and give participants a way to take action on the issues they care about.** Teach-ins are meant to be practical, participatory, empowering, and action-oriented. Organizing a teach-in is one part of a larger and longer organizing effort.

As you are planning your teach-in, there are three key questions you should always keep in mind:

- **What lessons do you want attendees to walk away with?**
 - **What long term impact and relationships can this event create?**
 - **How do you want participants to take action after the event is over?**
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How to Host a Teach-In

Hosting a teach-in is easy. Here is a step-by-step guide to walk you through what you need to do.

Planning Your Teach-In

Gather a Team to Help You

Running events is always more fun when you share the work and get to work together with others.

Who to ask to join your teach-in organizing team:

- Think of neighbors, friends, book club members, or other folks you are connected to already.
- Ask people who you know support Planned Parenthood — they may want to help do more.
- Ask other Planned Parenthood volunteers in your community.
- Reach out to community partners, local elected officials, and education leaders.
- Think about how you can bring in a diverse group of people who can offer relevant and unique knowledge and perspectives to the issue at hand.

Create your list of people who can help you organize the teach-in and invite them to join your organizing team.

Plan Your Teach-In Logistics

- Set a date and place for the first planning meeting with your Teach-In organizers. Begin with introductions and identifying team roles. Here are a few examples of team roles you can have volunteers claim. Keep in mind that smaller groups might not have all these roles but can still be successful. Many can be done by the same person or by a combination of people:
 - **Engagement and Outreach Lead**
 - Tasks include crafting key messages about the event; working with digital media tools (such as creating promotional graphics, social media posts, adding the event to online community calendars, etc.); and working with community partners, businesses, campus groups and local press to promote the event.
 - **Logistics Lead**
 - Tasks include securing a venue, equipment, transportation, signage, and accessibility, as well as recruiting day-of volunteers to help direct attendees, set up equipment and more if it's an in-person event and/or ensuring that all digital logistics are taken care of if it's a virtual event.
 - Tasks include coordinating support, meetings, and internal communications.
 - **Facilitation Lead**
 - Tasks include planning and setting the agenda, finding and securing speakers, identifying and securing a moderator, and planning moderator questions.
- Use your first meeting to identify the goal of your event, the topic you would like to cover, your audience, and who else you could collaborate with in your community.
- Then create a work plan that will lead you up to the event and through the follow-up activities from the event, and identify next steps you will each take after the meeting. Use the model of a "POP" = Purpose, Outcome, Process, to create a work plan
 - **Purpose:** Why you are doing this and what you hope to accomplish
 - **Outcomes:**
 - # of people attend
 - Learning outcomes
 - **Process:** Agenda of the teach-in
- In your organizing meeting you should identify what date or dates would work for your event and possible location ideas. Give yourself enough time to research the issues, gather materials, develop an agenda or curriculum for the Teach-In, and publicize the event. Ideally, you will want to give yourself 2 to 4 weeks to execute the event. Be sure to ask: "Is there an expert we want to bring in? Will we have speakers?" so you can get

those asks out!

- Plan how you will capture your event. Will you take notes? Will you record the event audio or video? Will you livestream the event? Based on what you decide, determine what A/V needs you have and recruit the appropriate people to help.
- Keep in mind accessibility needs, especially during events. This includes securing a space with gender-neutral bathrooms, considering ASL interpreters for events, and being inclusive of non-English speaking folks when recruiting/leading a teach-in.

Create an Agenda

The key to a successful event is your agenda. We have provided a sample agenda at the end of this toolkit that you can use to guide your planning. The purpose of the agenda is to keep the teach-in on schedule and make sure the event is engaging and goal-oriented. The Program Coordinator should lead the agenda development with support from anyone else interested in helping.

The specifics of the agenda are largely up to you, just be sure to include:

1. An introduction and welcome explaining “why are we here?” with an introduction of the issue and goals of the teach-in. This introduction should also introduce your speakers.
2. A presentation, panel discussion, video, or briefing on the issue you are covering with an interactive component (eg. Questions & Answers, small group break-outs, sharing a personal story with peers) to keep participants engaged and learning. When planning the educational components of your event, think about who will be the most effective messenger to deliver the lessons. Who has had personal experience with the issue?
3. An opportunity for participants to take action and commit to participate in future activities to support the pro-reproductive and sexual health movement.

If you are inviting special guests, make sure to give them plenty of notice in advance of the event.

At the conclusion of the teach-in, consider hosting a reception to allow for extended conversations, networking, and discussion of follow-up activities and responsibilities.

Accessibility

During your planning sessions with your team, discuss what accessibility looks and feels like for your teach-in. Include a question on your sign up forms, that ask participants if there are accommodations requests. Ask your affiliate organizer what the budget looks like to meet accessibility needs for the event.

- Is the audience bi or multilingual? If so, what would it look like to get translators or translated materials for the event?
- What would it look like to get an ASL interpreter?
- Is it possible for participants to attend both in-person and/or online for those who are unable to participate in in-person events due to COVID-19?
- What would it look like to get closed captioning if the event takes place online?

- Does the venue have gender neutral bathrooms or bathrooms for people in wheelchairs? If not, what adjustments can be made and/or is it possible to find another venue?
- What type of transportation options are available for someone to attend the event if it is in person? What would it look like to cover transportation costs if a participant is unable to cover it on their own?
- What time is your event being held?
- What would it look like to provide childcare support either in person or monetarily so that people taking care of children are able to join?
- What other accessibility accommodations does your team need to think about?

Secure a Location

Before you can start to promote your event, you need to secure a location. When looking for a place to host your Teach-In, here are some pointers:

- Look for a free space that will accommodate the number of people you think will attend. Here are a few ideas: your house, a local coffee shop, the library, your place of worship, or a local recreation center. Your local PP staff may be able to share a list with you of spaces that have hosted groups or events in the past.
- Public spaces are often booked well in advance, so make this an early priority. Choose a location that is close to public transportation and that can accommodate various accessibility needs. Event attendees may require wheelchair ramps or other accommodations.
- Consider locations that already have the infrastructure you will need such as large monitors or projector screens, sound equipment, and seating for large audiences.
- When looking for a location, consider the size of your group, and make sure the space can accommodate your audience.
- Pick a venue where your attendants will be able to hear speeches and discussions. Avoid venues with lots of ambient noise.
- Many places will donate their space or offer a discount if you tell them it is a free public education event. Your local Planned Parenthood staff may be able to share with you a list of which businesses in the community support our issues and have a history of donating space or food for Planned Parenthood events.

Get the Word Out

Two weeks before your Teach-In send out invites to your event. When you're thinking about advertising your event, think about which communities you want to reach and what channels are best to reach each community.

A good invite should include:

- Event date, start time, and end time for the Teach-In
- The full name and address of the meeting location.
- A brief description of the event's goal, desired outcomes, and a short introduction of special speakers — if any are invited.

Identify Folks to Invite

To start, think about people who might have a personal interest in the work you're doing. Two groups to think about are:

1. **People whom you have personal relationships with:** Think of friends, family, or close co-workers. Your friend who's always rocking the Planned Parenthood swag, your aunt who constantly posts about how much she hates the Trump administration, your co-worker who volunteers for progressive causes. These people already like you and care about the things you do, so they can be great to have on your team!
2. **People in places interested supporters might be:** These aren't people you know personally, but people that might be likely to support the work you're doing in some way. People at rallies, protests, and community events are all good folks to connect with.

To help get organized, make a list of people in the first group that you could personally ask to join. Then make another list of potential events or online spaces such as Facebook groups or local organizations that you could go to for recruiting people you don't know personally. Put due dates next to the names and events so that you stay accountable to yourself.

Publicize Your Event

Now you're ready to turn out the crowds. When promoting your event, try to think about how you can bring in new supporters. Some ways to do this include:

- Create posters, flyers, leaflets that you can post around your community.
 - Posters and leaflets should be distributed at least two weeks out from your event. Try posting in local cafes, the library, on college campuses, and other community education centers.
- Promote your event online through email, social media, and community listservs.
 - **Once you create the event link -- share, share, share!** Share the event link through email, your social media accounts, or event print or write the link down on the posters that you distribute!
 - Use the Facebook events tool to create an event and invite your friends on Facebook.
 - Create a sample email invite and share it with your organizing committee to send out.

Just Before the Teach-In

If hosting the teach-in virtually/online:

- **Send a reminder to participants.** Use multiple channels to remind your RSVPs to come. In addition to a reminder email, make sure you send a text message or make confirmation calls to ensure your sign-ups show up. Start doing event reminders as much as 5 days in advance.
- Confirm speakers or other special guests with a reminder email or phone call and make sure they are clear on what will be required of them.
- Ensure that your digital streaming platform (i.e., Zoom, Facebook Live, Twitch) is properly set-up and that participants are able to register for your event.
- Make sure your streaming service is able to collect the necessary information for registration so that you are aware of who attended and are able to follow-up with them accordingly.

- Create a digital sign in sheet to track registration OR ensure your streaming service collects the necessary information to follow-up with registrants afterwards.
- Schedule a dry-run with all the speakers and individuals running the teach-in 2-3 days before. This can be a phone or video call to go through the run of show.

If hosting the teach-in in person:

- Make sure that your teach-in is following COVID-19 precautions and designated by the CDC and WHO. (i.e., proper social distancing, masks, vaccination requirements if applicable in your state, etc.)
- Check with your meeting location to confirm all your event logistics:
 - Are they able to accommodate your AV needs? Accessibility needs?
 - Will the weather change your plans?
 - What details do you need to sort out if the event is catered? Are you close to a place where attendees can get food during a break?
- Ensure that you have enough educational materials to provide your attendees - enough copies of the agenda for each person, pens, paper, if in person.
- Consider using a QR code to a digital sign in sheet for individuals to complete on their phone to reduce crowding at a sign in table. Alternatively, create multiple sign-in sheets and make sure to take attendance and ask people to provide their email and phone number for follow-up.
- Identify how you will capture sign-ups and other commitments at the event. This could be a petition sign up sheet, text to number code, or a web form that attendees can pull up on their phone.
- Schedule a dry-run with all the speakers and individuals running the teach-in 2-3 days before. This can be a phone or video call to go through the run of show.

Running Your Teach-In

If hosting the teach-in online:

- On the day of your teach-in, ask your organizers and speakers to show up at least 30-45 minutes in advance for a tech set-up. This will give you time to set up the space and run through the program to make sure everyone is comfortable with the run of show.
- Provide 2-5 minute buffer time at the top of the call for individuals to join. You can play music and include a slide letting folks know the teach-in will get started shortly.
- Assign one or more organizers to be chat support to welcome people as they join the call.
- Include an agenda overview so participants know what to expect during the teach-on.
- During the event, make sure to **take a screenshot! Have attendees sign a media release form, if you plan to post pictures publicly.** Post pictures of your event to social media with relevant hashtags We want to help amplify your work, so don't forget to send us your pics and stories from your event! Email them to your affiliate organizer!

If hosting the teach-in in person:

- On the day of your teach-in, ask your organizers and speakers to show up at least 60-minutes in advance. This will give you time to set up the space and run through the program to make sure everyone is comfortable with the run of show.

- Set up a sign-in table at the front where participants can sign-in and sign-up to become a Planned Parenthood supporter.
- Assign one or more organizers to be a greeter to welcome people as they come in, ask them why they came, and if they have volunteered with Planned Parenthood before. The goal is to build strong social connections and make everyone feel welcome! No one should ever come to one of our events and leave without talking to anyone.
- Provide regular updates on what is happening throughout the event, including when the program will start, how long the event will go, and how people can help. People like to know what's going on, and if you need to delay the start of the event it is important to respect people's time. We also recommend ending on time.
- During the event, make sure to **snap some pictures! Have attendees sign a media release form, if you plan to post pictures publicly.** Post pictures of your event to social media with relevant hashtags We want to help amplify your work, so don't forget to send us your pics and stories from your event! Email them to your affiliate organizer!

Event Follow-Up

- **Follow up with people who attended:**
 - After the event, make sure to send an event summary via email with notes or the recording (if applicable) of the meeting out to anyone who attended. Personalize the email and lift up memorable moments of your meeting, while respecting confidentiality of participants.
- **Follow up with people who RSVP'd and did not attend:**
 - Send an event summary with notes via email and upcoming events people can join. This will not only communicate important knowledge with the community after, it will also help you keep people who were not able to make it to the event up to speed.
- Follow up with everyone to let them know next steps after the event and remind them about what they can do next. Make sure to provide a clear next action opportunity.
- Document sign-ups from the event and share them with your affiliate organizer!
- Create your own digital spreadsheet to track sign-ups, attendees, and commitments from the event.
- Send thank-you letters to:
 - Panelists
 - Partners, hosts, and the event owner or manager
 - Community, faith and industry leaders, and sponsors
- Find, collect, and share media from the events:
 - Post updates to Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram and use relevant hashtags.

Sample Agenda: In-Person Events

[EVENT NAME]
[DATE], [TIME]
[INSTITUTION], [LOCATION]

Purpose:

Outcomes:

-
-
-

Process:

Set-Up/Prep:

-
-
-

Materials

-
-
-
-

Time	Activity	Speaker / Facilitator
5 min	Welcome Remarks	[NAME], [POSITION AND ORGANIZATION]
5 min	Overview of [TOPIC] or Introductory Video	[NAME], [POSITION AND ORGANIZATION]
10-30 min	Speaker 1 OR Panel OR Discussion I OR Activities	[NAME], [POSITION AND ORGANIZATION]
5-10 min	Q&A Session I OR Report Back Session I	[NAME]

10-20 min	Speaker 1 OR Panel OR Discussion II OR Activities	[NAME], [POSITION AND ORGANIZATION]
5-10min	Q&A Session II OR Report Back Session II	[NAME]
5 min	Call to Action	[NAME], [POSITION AND ORGANIZATION]
5 min	Closing Remarks	[PERSON NAME], [POSITION AND ORGANIZATION]
30-60 min	Optional Reception	

Sample Agenda: Virtual Events

[EVENT NAME]

[DATE], [TIME]

Purpose:

Outcomes:

-
-
-

Process:

Set-Up/Prep:

-
-
-

Materials

-
-
-

Time	Slide #, Facilitator	Activity	Links to drop in chat / Tech Cues
5 min		Welcome Remarks	
5 min		Agenda Overview	
5 min		Security & Community Safety	
5 min		Community Agreements	
30-60min		Speaker, Panel, Discussion, or Activities	
10 min		Q&A Session II OR Report Back Session II	
5 min		Call to Action	
5 min		Closing Remarks	
10 min		Optional Q&A time	

