

Abortion Speak Out Kit

There is a hostile climate of opinion surrounding abortion. Women seeking abortion care must walk through crowds of protestors; abortion providers fear for their safety; states are passing laws to make women seeking abortions go through waiting periods, obtain parental or judicial permissions, or view photos of aborted fetuses; politicians vote against women's reproductive rights and the author of the last U.S. Supreme Court decision on abortion, Justice Anthony Kennedy, publicly shamed women who have later abortions in *Gonzales v. Carhart*.

Women speaking out privately to family and friends and publically will create a more favorable climate of opinion.

This kit is intended to be a guide for organizations or individuals to develop an Abortion Speak Out. Please use as much or as little information as necessary. And if you or your organization(s) have any suggestions to further develop this kit, please let us know!

Thank you,
Women's Health in Women's Hands
www.womenshealthinwomenshands.org

HOW TO PLAN A SPEAKOUT: Topics to discuss prior to filling out “How To Plan A Speak Out” form.

1. **GOALS:** To throw off the shroud of secrecy and share abortion stories.

2. **TYPE OF EVENT**

CLASSIC SPEAKOUT: A large public event, either with celebrities or prominent speakers who “come out”. In this case, it’s good to have press and several speakers with different types of abortion experiences (illegal, parental consent, deformed fetus, RU486, etc.) This can be a fund-raiser for a local provider, or a recruiting for escorts for a provider who’s being harassed, or it can be to kick off a campaign 1)to raise money to help women to get abortions, 2)support or oppose upcoming legislation (Best not to make this part of a election campaign)

INVITATION ONLY: Usually small, composed of members of your chapter and friends. If small, it can be a discussion group, discussing how to tell: a partner, family, co-worker(s), to recruit a committee to plan a larger event, or to plan a larger action.

Or, this may be a larger event which has not been publicized in the wider community instead the event is publicized through word of mouth.

Invitations: Women only? Although women’s significant others are supportive, they don’t usually choose to attend women’s meetings to talk about having had an abortion. If one or two do choose to attend, their presence isn’t disruptive, in and of itself. If several do, you may suspect you’ve been infiltrated. Unless they are there with a woman, you can ask them to leave.

Staffing:

- **Greeters and Minglers:** If you plan to have an informal social time before the program, you may want to have a few people designated as “Greeters”. These individuals greet people as they come through the door and guide them over to the sign-in desk. Then, after they’ve signed-up, the greeter introduces herself to the guest, gets their name and then takes them over to introduce them to a “mingler”. The minglers are usually your committee members or officers.
- **Security:** There is a possibility that if it is a large, publicized event, anti-abortionists may choose to protest out in front. It is unlikely, however they they may infiltrate and try to break up the meeting. You need to make a decision in advance whether to allow them to be part of the audience if you recognize them. If you decide to exclude them, you can ask them to leave.

Prior to the program you need to have made a plan with your local law enforcement as to how

to maintain order in your meeting, if necessary. Take action at the first sign of any non-supportive action.

Anti-abortion activists very rarely direct their disruptive attacks against pro-choice events, however, it is best to be prepared. If they see that you have a number of persons as designated "Security" who are stationed at the strategic places, they will probably either leave or sit quietly.

Having a sign-in table with greeters and minglers is an effective way to get to know the guests. The staff can alert anyone they're suspicious of.

How To Plan A Speak Out Form

Goals:

Type of event: _____

Who will coordinate: _____

Who is on the planning team: _____

Who To Invite: all the mailing lists, staff, donors, referrals, vendors, neighbors of the clinics, our doctors, WHS Board of Directors, escorts, volunteers/interns, community groups, elected officials, local police, family, friends, people we want to develop a relationship with: _____

Is it private or public: _____

PSA send-date: _____

Press plan, press release, press conference? _____

Invitations: Print or Xerox? _____ Date to print: _____

Mail invitations: _____ Date: _____

Phone calls: to whom _____

Email: to whom _____

Date: (check the local chamber and the calendar for conflicts) _____

Time: Set Up: _____

Event: _____

Clean Up: _____

Place: _____

Number of Guests: _____

Program: _____

Guest speakers: _____

Staffing the event: Sign-Up desk _____

Refreshments _____

Security _____

Greeters _____

Minglers _____

Publicity Plan:

- Flyers How many _____ Printed _____ in house _____
- Notice in staff Paychecks
- PSA ? If public event
- Press Release- public
- Radio announcement- public

Budget:

- Cost
- Fundraising plan
- Sponsors
- In kind donations

Entertainment: _____

Food: _____

Beverage: _____

Supplies: hot cups, cold cups, ice, plates, spoons, forks, napkins, table clothes: _____

Décor: Signs, flowers, photographs: _____

Displays: Big Blue, abortion, birth control, self help, donation displays: _____

Nametags, Guestbook, Mailing list sign-up: _____

Security Plan: Do we need security guards?

Front desk sign-in

Do we need to check & copies photo ID's?

Photographer: _____

Tape Record/Video-tape the event? _____

A/V/L: Do we need microphones, amplification, lighting (indoor, outdoor), and/or podium?

Staff briefing/training/orientations: When (date/time) _____

Parking Plan: Guests
Staff

Childcare: is it an issue?

Thank you's sent:

- Staff
 - Donors
 - Presenters
1. Who will send notes
 2. How do we want to thank them

Make the follow-up plan:

- Expense report to Admin
- Vendors paid
- New contacts sent to PR to add to mail list
- Etc.

Many thanks to Eileen Schnitger, a director of Women's Health Specialists, 1750 Wright Street, Sacramento, CA 95825 for permission to adapt the form "How to Plan An Event", 2010

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femwords.blogspot.com

Abortion Speak Out

Prescreened pro choice websites, where women can read and share abortion stories.

Post:

• At work • At Church • At School

- 45 Million Voices www.45millionvoices.org
- Women's Health Specialists www.cawhs.org
- I'mNotSorry.Net www.imnotsorry.net
- Women On Web www.womenonweb.org
- Abortion Chronicles www.abortionchronicles.com
- I Had An Abortion abortionandlife.com
- Abortion Care Network . . . www.abortioncarenetwork.org
- Supportion www.supportion.org
- 1 in 3 Campaign www.1in3campaign.org

Feminist Women's Health Center

www.fwhc.org/stories/story1.htm

Exhale: an after-abortion counseling hotline

www.4exhale.org

Hold a meeting to share stories
Info: **Women's Health in Women's Hands**
womenshealthinwomenshands.org/SpeakOut

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Abortion Speak Out Campaign TO ORDER

ÿ **“Abortion Speak Out” Palm Cards: *It’s time to Come Out of the Closet***, is a collection of 9 different web sites that are collecting abortion stories i.e. 45 Million Voices, I’mNotSorry.Net, Project Voice. Designed for display in clinic settings or to distribute amongst friends

____ 200 CARDS \$20 PLUS SHIPPING AND HANDLING

To order by mail

ÿ **Carol Downer articles**

ÿ *We Must Continue to Work for Abortion Rights to Gain Reproductive Freedom and Reproductive Justice*, 1 page, two-sided, magenta

ÿ *Justice Kennedy’s Carhart Opinion Points Finger of Shame at American Women Who Have Abortions*, 1 page, two-sided, yellow

ÿ *Tribute to Dr. George Tiller*, delivered at Santa Monica California, June 6, 2009, 1 page 2-sided, pink

____ 1 FREE COPY, ____ 20 COPIES, FREE: SHIPPING AND HANDLING

ÿ **Consult with Carol Downer** by e-mail or telephone; No charge. Carol will share her experiences and contacts with you.

ÿ **Carol Downer, speaker.** Carol has been active since the late 1960’s in the struggle for civil rights. In 1969, she joined N.O.W., and she and other women learned to perform early abortions; she co-founded the Self-Help Clinic, a type of women’s group. The Feminist Women’s Health Center founded the Women’s Choice Clinic in 1973; she served as vice-president of National Abortion Federation, and she has travelled around the world giving presentations and workshops. Travel, expenses and honorarium

NAME _____ E-mail _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIPCODE _____

DELIVERY NOTE:

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