

Planned Parenthood®

HOSTING A VIRTUAL GATHERING

SO YOU WANT TO HOST A GATHERING...

Thank you for your interest in hosting a gathering in support of UHPP. In this guidebook you'll find everything you need to get started, including:

- What to consider, tips, and some prep work as you set up your event (page 1)
- A how to template for hosting your virtual get together (page 2)
- Email templates inviting guests to join you (page 1) and thanking them for attending when the event is over. (page 3)

LET'S GET STARTED

In Advance of the Gathering:

- Send out an invite, and include a start and stop time
- Send out a confirmation email with instructions on how to join the call. Encourage people to find a quiet and well-lit location, grab their headphones and computer charger, and – if they're new to video calls – login a few minutes early.
- Be prepared for facilitation to be more work than usual. You may have to encourage people to mute or unmute and encourage certain people to speak up.

Some Tips:

- Don't be afraid of silence – it's a gift, and it very often will be filled on its own. Don't be overwhelmed by interruptions – often this is because of a delay in someone's internet connection. Send out a confirmation email with instructions on how to join the call.
- Remember your goals for the evening are two-fold: make sure everyone feels connected to one another and to the work of Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood.

SAMPLE EMAIL INVITATION:

Dear Friend,

In this time of physical distancing, it doesn't mean we have to socially distance too! I'd love for you to join me for a virtual happy hour on [DATE] at [TIME] to connect and reflect.

I'm bringing together a small group of friends in support of Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood, an organization that is currently being impacted (as we all are) by the current COVID-19 outbreak. In addition to joining me, I'd like to invite you to give a gift to UHPP in honor of our gathering. You can use [this link](#) to make a contribution.

It's clear that what we need right now is to take meaningful action in our community. Let me know if you can make it – I'd love to see your face!

Here is a link to use to join me: [INSERT LINK]

Warmly,
[NAME]



Upper Hudson
is committed to
providing essential
care to all the
patients who need
us.



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THE GATHERING:

1. **Greet** everyone as they arrive.
2. Once everyone has joined the call, **welcome** everyone and share why you wanted to bring people together this evening: to connect in a time of unknown, and to support the work of Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood. Consider sharing any 'ground rules' that could be supportive to your friends, like encouraging people to stay present to the call and avoid checking their inbox.
3. **Introduce yourself.** Invite everyone to introduce themselves in a fun way. For example, they could share their name and how they got that name. You may want to consider calling on people or inviting people to "popcorn" to someone else once they share.
4. **Make a toast!** Ask everyone to raise their glasses. Here's a sample toast:
I want us to raise a glass to our health care workers who are summoning the courage to keep going right now, to the people whose strength we personally draw on, and to each and every one of us for making the effort to show up on this call and connect right now. Thank you.
5. **Check-in and Connect.** Consider asking the group 1-3 questions as a form of checking in. We recommend modeling by answering each question yourself before encouraging someone else in the group to answer too. Sample questions:
 - How are you? Really.
 - As we think about the importance of access to health care, and we thank those who are tirelessly providing care right now, what is one time you have felt supported and heard by a health care provider?
 - Describe a time when you lived through a period of uncertainty.
 - Is there anything or anyone you're appreciating more than you did before our current crisis?
6. **Share an update on Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood.** We can provide some information that may be helpful to you. Keep in mind, you know your audience best, and you're welcome to customize the update as needed.
7. **Thank everyone for their support of Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood.** As you know, my goal in gathering all of you together this evening was both to connect and invite your support of Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood. Right now, UHPP – like all of us – is seeking to respond to the urgent and changing landscape of health care in the face of this global pandemic. They continue to deliver low or no cost, time sensitive, essential health care to anyone who needs it. This pandemic, if anything, will amplify the need for STI testing and treatment, birth control, and abortion. With increased uncertainty and anticipated increased need for care, they need all of the support they can get. Thank you for supporting Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood. UHPP's staff let me know that collectively, we've raised \$XXXX this evening! I'd also like to invite you to write a note to UHPP's health care providers. They've created a simple Google form you can use: <https://bit.ly/HCThankYou>
8. **Thank you and Closing.** Thank everyone for joining you. Consider one of the following prompts to close out the evening:
 - What is one thing that is bringing you hope in this unprecedented time?
 - What is one thing you will do to build and sustain connection in your community both now and after coronavirus has passed?

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FOLLOW UP THANK YOU EMAIL

Dear Friend,

Thank you for taking the time to connect last night. It was a gift to spend time checking in and talking about what we can do to support our community during this time. I'm inspired by your generosity, and I can't thank you enough for your generous contribution to Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood. Without a doubt, your gift is needed now more than ever.

In case you'd like to pass along either opportunity to other people in your life:

- To give to Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood, [click here](#).
- To send a thank you to their health care workers: <https://bit.ly/HCThankYou>

With gratitude,
[NAME]