



NO on PROP 85

Protect the Health and Safety of Our Youth

A Toolkit for Organizations and Activists



Asian
Communities for
Reproductive
Justice

www.reproductivejustice.org



Dear Friends and Allies,

As you know, the people of California defeated Proposition 73 in last year's Special Election. Unfortunately, a nearly identical initiative is back on the ballot this year as Prop 85. Due to new developments in state and national policy, the passage of a parental notification law in California is now more dangerous than ever. Oregon has a similar initiative on their state ballot this year, and the expected passage of the Child Custody Protection Act would criminalize anyone who assists a minor in crossing state borders to avoid parental involvements laws in their state.

Last year, an unprecedented effort was launched to defeat Prop 73, including mobilization of voters by a cadre of reproductive rights advocacy groups, grassroots social justice organizations and immigrant rights groups. Specifically, ACRJ used reproductive justice strategies to help defeat Prop 73 by working with youth to support their leadership in community organizing and voter mobilization, with the larger Asian Pacific Islander community through the media, and with the social justice community at large.

This year we're increasing our efforts. It's critical to get our messages out in communities of color. We have designed this toolkit specifically for organizations and activists who are mobilizing voters in low-income communities and communities of color. We would like to recognize and thank the Campaign for Real Teen Safety for developing many of these messages. In this toolkit, you will find:

- No on 85 one-page summary
- Prop 85 Fact Sheet
- Strategies for staying on message
- A guide to mobilizing your community
- A guide to throwing a house party
- Prop 85 Glossary

ACRJ is your resource for defeating Prop 85. Here are ways for you to get further involved:

Please email Maria Nakae, Alliance Building Coordinator, at maria@reproductivejustice.org to:

- ✦ Have someone from ACRJ visit your school, church, or organization to talk about how Prop 85 is relevant to your community and how to defeat it
- ✦ Volunteer with ACRJ to help defeat Prop 85
- ✦ Receive information on how to plug in to GOTV activities such as phone banking, precinct walking, and literature dropping

Please visit our website at www.reproductivejustice.org for:

- ✦ A downloadable version of the toolkit
- ✦ Research, articles, and additional information on Prop 85 and related issues
- ✦ Updates on ACRJ's upcoming activities and events to defeat Prop 85

Thank you for helping us protect the health & safety of our teens and keep CA a progressive state!

In strength and unity,

Eveline Shen, Executive Director
Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice



Asian
Communities for
Reproductive
Justice

Protect our youth. VOTE NO ON PROPOSITION 85!

Prop 85 would amend the California Constitution to ban abortions for minors until 48 hours after a physician notifies their parents, except in a medical emergency, parental waiver or court approval.

Prop 85 is unrealistic.

- ✦ Parental notification may sound like a good idea, because all parents want to be involved in their children's lives. But in the real world, many teens live in families where they simply cannot tell their parents about a pregnancy because they fear shame, rejection, or abuse.
- ✦ The majority of parents do not talk to their children about sex. In many immigrant families, talking about sex is not appropriate even if teens want to discuss it with their parents.

Prop 85 endangers our youth.

- ✦ Parental notification laws cause pregnant minors to delay counseling and medical care, which results in late-term, high-risk abortions. Some teens try self-aborting, crossing state borders, or seeking illegal, unsafe abortions to avoid parental involvement.
- ✦ Some teens have been rejected or kicked out of the house for having sex or getting pregnant. Teens from violent homes could be further endangered if their parents discover that they are pregnant, especially if a family member caused the pregnancy. Some teens attempt suicide to avoid retribution from their parents.
- ✦ Supporters of Prop 85 say that teens can bypass parental notification by arguing before a judge. But this is not a realistic option for scared, pregnant teenagers, especially if they are not proficient in English or are undocumented.

Prop 85 increases barriers to health care.

- ✦ Doctors know that teens delay or avoid seeking reproductive health services if they think their parents will find out. Prop 85 is especially burdensome for young people of color, who already face tremendous barriers to accessing health care.
- ✦ For youth who don't have health insurance, free and confidential reproductive health services are often their only source of health care. Prop 85 would prevent teens from getting all types of health care, including services to help prevent teen pregnancy.

Prop 85 allows government intrusion.

- ✦ Good family communication can't be mandated. But Prop 85 would let the government tell our families how to communicate. There's no evidence that mandatory parental involvement laws improve parent-child communication or facilitate conversations about matters related to sex.

Prop 85 is a crucial issue for young people and families in low-income communities and communities of color. It is **our responsibility** to ensure the health and safety of our youth by **speaking out** and **taking action** against this dangerous initiative.

On November 7, we can all make a commitment to protect our youth.

VOTE NO ON PROP 85!



FACT SHEET on PROPOSITION 85:

*What Is It? What's the bigger picture?
What's wrong with It?*

What is Proposition 85?

Definition

- ✦ Prop 85 is a ballot initiative in the 2006 California Election that would amend the State constitution to prohibit young women under the age of 18 from getting an abortion until 48 hours after a doctor informs their parents in writing. The written notification would be delivered in person by the provider, or mailed via both certified and first class mail. The 48-hour waiting period would begin after notification is deemed to have occurred, which is noon on the second day after the written notice is postmarked. Parents would be permitted to pursue civil lawsuits against doctors who fail to provide notification.

Exemptions

- ✦ Parental notification would not be required in the case of a medical emergency when a doctor determines that delaying the abortion would put the teen's life at risk.
- ✦ A minor could also seek a judicial bypass, where she must appear in person in front of a judge at a juvenile court. She must provide clear and convincing evidence of her maturity, that an abortion is in her best interest, and why parental notification is not a viable option (e.g. in cases of incest or fear of physical harm, being kicked out of the house, or other abuse).

Reporting requirements

- ✦ Physicians would be mandated to report every abortion performed on a minor to the State Department of Health Services, and the state would then compile these statistics together into a public report. This public report would include numbers of abortions by month and county, minors' ages, stages of pregnancy, types of procedures, and numbers of emergency procedures.

Financial impact

- ✦ The legislative analysis estimates potential net costs of several million dollars for the state administration, due to reporting requirements and the cost of implementing the judicial bypass. The proposition does not allocate any money for implementation.

What's the bigger picture?

Parental involvement laws in other states

- ✦ Currently, there are 34 states that enforce parental consent or notification laws. Ten states have passed laws that later were enjoined and are therefore not enforced. In most instances, state courts determined that the law violated the state's constitution.
- ✦ Besides Oregon, California is the only state to defeat the passage of a parental involvement law for minors' abortion. In Oregon, parental notification bills have been repeatedly passed by the state legislature, but later vetoed by the governor. This year, Oregon is facing a ballot initiative on parental notification similar to Prop 85. The fact that both states which have previously resisted such laws are simultaneously at risk exemplifies how conservative our country is becoming.

National policy

- ✦ The threat to young people's health and safety is larger than ever because of the potential for the Child Custody Protection Act to soon become federal law. The bill, which passed the Senate in July, would make it a federal crime to transport a minor across state lines for the purpose of evading state abortion parental notification or consent laws. Even grandparents or clergy would not be exempt from federal charges for assisting a pregnant teenager in pursuing a last-resort alternative when telling her parents would put her safety in grave danger. If the bill passes the House, President Bush is sure to sign it. Teens will have no other choice but to turn to illegal and unsafe methods of terminating an unwanted pregnancy.

Increasing state-level restrictions

- ✦ The recent increase in parental involvement legislation is part of larger national efforts to erode access to reproductive health information, products, and services for adolescents and adult women through state-level laws. The extensive list of the 500+ laws includes:
 - Abstinence-only sex education
 - Requiring parental notification for minors receiving contraception and treatment for sexually transmitted infections
 - Allowing pharmacists to refuse dispensing birth control and emergency contraception
 - Mandatory counseling and waiting periods for abortion patients
 - Requiring abortion providers to notify women seeking abortions after 20 weeks gestation that the fetus can feel pain
 - Requiring abortion clinics to obtain special licenses and undergo state inspections

What's wrong with Proposition 85?

Parental notification may sound like a good idea, but...

Prop 85 is unrealistic

- All parents want to be involved in their children's lives. But in the real world, many teens live in families where they simply cannot tell their parents about a pregnancy because they fear shame, rejection, or abuse. Even without parental involvement laws, most teens already do involve their parents in their abortion decision. The ones who don't often have real concerns for their safety.
- Studies have shown that the majority of parents do not talk to their children about sex. Instead of coercive laws like Prop 85, the real solution is to provide parents with the resources they need to facilitate effective family communication about sex.

Prop 85 is an attempt to allow the government to control family relationships

- ✦ Good family communication cannot be mandated, but Prop 85 tries to do just that without providing parents with resources for talking to their teens about sex. Research does not support the claim that mandatory parental involvement requirements for either contraceptive services or abortion improve parent-child communication or facilitate conversations about sex, birth control or related matters.
- ✦ Health care professionals agree on the importance of parental guidance, and encourage teens to talk with their parents about health care decisions. However, since some adolescents are unable to talk with their parents, doctors and nurses believe that laws or policies mandating parental involvement are not in the best interest of adolescent patients. Forcing teens to involve their parents may in fact do more harm than good.

Prop 85 endangers the health and safety of minors

- ✦ Parental notification laws cause pregnant minors to delay counseling and medical care, resulting in late-term abortions that carry higher risks of complication. Teens may also choose to self-abort, cross state borders, or seek unsafe, illegal abortions to avoid notification.
- ✦ For these reasons, every major medical association in California opposes Prop 85. Other states with similar laws have witnessed these trends in dangerous and life-threatening actions.

Prop 85 increases barriers to confidential health care

- ✦ Health professionals knowledgeable about scientific evidence regarding adolescents' access to care unani- mously support the provision of confidential reproductive health services. Parental notification requirements cause minors to delay or avoid seeking other reproductive health services (counseling, contraceptives, STI/HIV testing and treatment) due to fear that their parents might find out.
- ✦ Studies suggest that adolescents will discontinue using most reproductive health services if confidentiality is not guaranteed; however, they will not stop having sex.

Prop 85 adds burdens to an already overloaded court system

- ✦ Prop 85 would require courts to hire workers to explain the proceedings to the minor, help her fill out the paper- work, and appoint a guardian to speak on her behalf. In most cases, courts would also be required to appoint an attorney to represent the minor.
- ✦ Juvenile courts would have to follow these mandates without receiving any additional funding.

Prop 85 will have the greatest impact in low-income communities of color

- ✦ Because teens from low-income communities and communities of color are less likely to have health insur- ance, free and confidential family planning services are their only method of health care. If these teens avoid seeking reproductive health services due to fears of parental notification, they will no longer have access to any health care services or providers.
- ✦ Since sex is an inappropriate topic of conversation in many immigrant families, many immigrant teens can't talk about these issues with their parents, even if they want to. Seeking a judicial bypass is also extremely diffi- cult, especially for teens lacking English proficiency or documentation, which may drive them to take extreme and dangerous measures.

Prop 85 divides our communities

- ✦ Prop 85 is a wedge issue that is meant to divide and weaken our communities as a means of advancing the right's political agenda. Conservatives often introduce politically controversial issues and frame them in a way that pits people in our communities against one another.
- ✦ By making the demand that parents have a "right to know" everything in their children's lives, the proponents of Prop 85 pit parents against their children, who have a right to access confidential health services for sensi- tive issues. They are also attempting to divide communities by claiming that this issue is about abortion, when what is really at stake is protecting the rights of young women to seek the care and safety they need.

References:

- California Adolescent Health Collaborative. Involving parents in reproductive health decisions. www.californiateenhealth.org
- Center for Adolescent Health and Law. Adolescents and parental notification for abortion: What California can learn from health care profes- sionals. www.cahl.org
- Center for Reproductive Health Research and Policy. Adolescents and parental notification for abortion: What can California learn from the experience of other states? <http://crhrp.ucsf.edu>
- Guttmacher Institute. Teenagers' access to confidential reproductive health services. www.guttmacher.org



Tips for talking about Prop 85: Staying on message and dealing with difficult situations

By talking to people about Prop 85, we can effectively impact how they perceive and vote on the initiative. We know from experience that once people understand the issue clearly, they typically agree that it's a bad idea. Even people who initially support it will often change their minds once they realize the severity of its negative consequences. We also know that Prop 85 may raise fears and concerns for our communities. It is a complicated issue that brings up many misconceptions and complexities in discussions. This guide will help you navigate the challenging moments by helping you stay focused and communicate your message clearly.

Key Messages

The main message, or meta-message, is that **Prop 85 endangers the health and safety of young women**. Four supporting messages for why we should vote No on Prop 85 are:

Prop 85 is unrealistic

- ✦ Most parents don't talk to their teens about sex
- ✦ Some teens can't talk to their parents because they have real concerns for their safety
- ✦ The judicial bypass option is frightening for pregnant teens

Prop 85 will put young people at risk

- ✦ Causes teens to take desperate measures – self-aborting, crossing state borders, seeking unsafe & illegal abortions
- ✦ Teens may be rejected from families, kicked out of the house, or physically abused by parents who find out about the pregnancy

Prop 85 increases barriers to health care

- ✦ Pregnant teens will delay or avoid seeking counseling and medical care
- ✦ Teens will avoid seeking other reproductive health services

Prop 85 allows government intrusion

- ✦ Good family communication can't be mandated
- ✦ Prop 85 tries to force communication without providing parents with the resources to help them talk to their teens about sex

How to Get the Conversation Started

In some communities, it is difficult to just bring up issues of reproductive health, especially matters related to abortion. When talking to people who have never discussed reproductive justice issues or who have strong beliefs against abortion, here are some tips on how to begin.

Starting the conversation

Start by meeting people where they are. Think about the following: What issues do they care about? What is important in their lives? What are their main concerns? What are they passionate about? Begin by talking about these issues to engage them in the conversation.

Making the transition

Prop 85 is about the health and safety of young women. Keep this in mind and figure out how to make the connection between the issues that people care about and the health and safety of young women. Use this connection to make the transition to your messages about Prop 85.

Example of starting point & transition:

Issue of importance: The need for public assistance for low-income communities

Start: With the gutting of Medicaid and all these funding cuts, it's getting harder and harder for folks in our community to get adequate health care. This is especially a problem for young people, who are often uninsured at higher rates than adults are.

Transition: Did you know that there's an initiative on this year's election ballot that creates even more barriers to health care for young people? Let me tell you about it...

What to avoid

If you are unsure about your community's feelings toward this issue, or know that it is a controversial or difficult topic for folks, you may not want to begin the conversation with the issue of abortion. It's not likely to hold people's interest, and may even turn people off. Rather, start the conversation with something that will hold their interest, and then transition to the issue at hand. This way people will see how these issues are all interconnected, and are likely to see Prop 85 as something that is relevant to their lives and their community.

Also, remember to engage in the conversation without being judgmental or defensive. Judging people on their personal views tends to make them argumentative, and acting defensive can be perceived as hostility and may incite conflict. Remain calm, hear people out, and focus on your message.

Using Values to Frame Your Messages

Making a solid and convincing argument depends on framing the issue in a way that resonates with your audience. Sometimes the most effective way to get your audience to support your point of view is to communicate messages that align with their personal values. Regardless of how much scientific evidence supports your position, the information needs to be understood within the context of people's lives in order to be convincing. In other words, we need to not only ask what the facts are, but also why they matter to us.

People believe in values such as fairness, opportunity, trust, freedom, community, protection and responsibility. Circumstances in which these values are infringed upon are perceived as morally unacceptable and often incite people to take action. Therefore when framing our arguments we must ask, "What is morally acceptable?" For example, someone who does not support abortion rights can assert that terminating a pregnancy is not morally acceptable to them. However, the same person may value the health and safety of young people, and reason that forcing a pregnant teen from a violent home to disclose a pregnancy to her parents is morally unacceptable.

To integrate values into your messages, use these three steps:

- 1) **Identify the values that your community holds** – "As adults, we are morally responsible for making sure that our children are safe in all situations."

- 2) **Think about how Prop 85 goes *against* those values** – “Mandatory parental notification may drive young women who are scared to tell their parents about their pregnancy to put themselves in harm’s way. They may try self-aborting, traveling to other states, or obtaining an abortion illegally, all of which can jeopardize their health and safety.”
- 3) **Think about how access to confidential reproductive health services for teens *upholds* those values** – “When teens know they can confidentially obtain information and services from counselors, nurses, and doctors about private matters, they will be more willing to get the help they need.”

Now you’re ready to communicate your message. When you talk with your community, focus on the values that will be

TIPS: Dos & Don’ts When Talking to Your Community

- ✦ Start where people are
- ✦ Engage without judging
- ✦ Make issue relevant to your audience
- ✦ Allow people to fully express their feelings and opinions
- ✦ Stay on message - try not get distracted by irrelevant points
- ✦ Don’t start the conversation with abortion
- ✦ Don’t be defensive or judgmental

infringed upon if Prop 85 passes to clarify the reasons why it should be defeated. By clarifying the underlying moral reasons for opposing Prop 85, we not only shed light on the consequences of parental notification laws, but more importantly why these facts matter to people’s lives. For more examples of integrating values into your messages, please refer to the appendix.

How to Deal with Challenging Situations

When talking about Prop 85, there may be times when you feel stuck about how to respond to a judgmental statement or difficult question. This might happen when someone says something that you know is not true, asks questions which you do not know the answer to, or says something that diverges from the real issue at hand – the health and safety of young women. These moments can make us lose focus, get distracted, and get defensive or argumentative, all of which we want to avoid.

In these difficult situations, we recommend using a messaging strategy called **ATM: Answer** the question, then **Transition** to your **Message**. The goal of ATM is not to argue, but to hear people out and transition to your meta- and supporting messages. When using ATM, it's important to remember.

- ❖ Your objective is not to debate views on abortion, but to provide voters with the information they need to make educated decisions about this initiative.
- ❖ Be empathetic to the other person's viewpoint. Being judgmental will likely provoke a defensive response that will make it more difficult for your message to be heard.
- ❖ No matter how argumentative the other person may get, remain calm and stay on message.

Here are some examples of how to put ATM to use. Please keep in mind that these are simply examples of how you can respond when faced with difficult questions, so use your discretion to give the most appropriate response in each situation.

* The ATM messaging tool was developed by Reproductive Health Technologies Project (www.rhtp.org).

Statement: “Having an abortion is against my religion”

A: I understand that you have strong feelings about this issue...

T: ...as most people do. And we live in a country that makes room for these differences.

M: So even if we disagree, it’s better that each person makes this decision for themselves rather than politicians telling us what is best for our families.

Statement: “I support abortion only if...(exceptions)”

A: I understand you have strong feelings about this issue, and I respect your position.

T: But Prop 85 is not about abortion, it is about endangering the safety of young women.

M: Young people should have the right and access to confidential medical services so they can turn to qualified professionals when they cannot talk to their parents. We must make sure that young women who cannot talk to their parents, for WHATEVER reason, receive the support they need to make healthy decisions and stay safe.

Statement: “Parents have the right to know what is happening in their children’s lives. It is their responsibility to be involved/be in control.”

A: I understand that you, as a parent, want to be involved in your child’s life. As a parent, I want the same for my child (OR If I were a parent, I would want the same for my child).

T: But not all teenagers are able to talk to their parents about sex because sensitive issues like these are not openly discussed in many families.

M: And what parents want most is to keep their children safe. Doing so is their responsibility. This means giving their teenagers the option to seek confidential medical services when needed. In some families, if a young woman’s parents find out she is pregnant, she can face severe consequences that can threaten her safety, and even her life. And if she cannot tell her parents, she may put herself in danger by taking matters into her own hands. Either way, Prop 85 would jeopardize the health and safety of young women in difficult situations.

Statement: “We need the judicial system/government to help keep children in line.”

A: I understand that you worry about your children and their safety.

T: But what Prop 85 will do is put the safety of young women at risk.

M: If the proposition passes, young women who cannot talk to their parents or who are not willing to go before a judge will take the matter into their own hands, putting their safety at risk. What young people need is more education and resources to make healthy decisions, and counselors and doctors to give them confidential advice and services – not a judge who doesn’t even know them, telling them what to do.

Statement: “We don’t want our kids to have sex.”

A: All parents care about their children and how they are doing.

T: For young people to make informed, healthy decisions about their lives, they need support, counseling and accurate information.

M: Prop 85 creates more barriers to young people’s access to safe & confidential counseling and medical services. It does not help them understand the risks that are involved in the decisions they may be making.

Statement: “Just because a teenager has sex and gets pregnant doesn’t mean she is able to make a mature decision about abortion.”

A: Many adults agree that a teenager should not make a decision about abortion entirely by herself.

T: That’s why having safe and legal access to confidential counseling and medical services is important for a young woman who needs sound advice, but cannot go to her parents because she is afraid of what might happen if they find out.

M: Prop 85 would make it impossible for teenagers to receive confidential counseling or medical services, causing them to delay seeking care. Taking away a young woman’s right to these services puts her health at risk, and she may take the matter into her own hands.

Statement: “Parental notification could facilitate improved family communication and decision-making.”

A: It might seem like parental notification will help families communicate and make decisions together.

T: But the government cannot mandate good family communication. If a teenager really does not want to talk to her parents about sensitive issues like this, not even a law can make her do so.

M: In order to facilitate healthy family communication, we must provide parents and families with the tools that will help them talk to their teens about sex. Prop 85 forces teenagers to talk to their parents without providing families with any resources to have these discussions about sensitive issues.

Statement: “Parental involvement provides children with vital information that would help avert medical risks and complications.”

A: It’s true that some parents may have the medical knowledge and open communication with their teenagers to help them through a pregnancy.

T: But most parents never talk to their children about sex, and Prop 85 would not provide parents with the resources to promote family communication.

M: In fact, other states that require parental notification have found that these laws do not increase parental involvement, and can put teenagers at increased risk. In California, most teenagers already do involve their parents in decisions about abortion. The ones who don’t often have very real concerns for their safety, such as family violence. Furthermore, parental notification laws can cause teenagers to travel to other states or delay seeking medical services, which puts their health and safety at risk. For California’s teenagers to stay safe, they need access to confidential counseling and health care. That’s why every major medical association in California is against Prop 85, and the most prominent medical associations in the country oppose parental notification laws.

Statement: “For teens who can’t talk to their parents, can’t they just get a judicial bypass?”

A: Yes, Prop 85 does have a judicial bypass alternative.

T: But the judicial bypass option is only included in the proposition because otherwise, the Supreme Court would consider parental notification laws unconstitutional.

M: It’s completely impractical to expect a scared, pregnant teenager to navigate the judicial system and make her case before a judge, when even most adults are intimidated by the courts. It could even be dangerous for young women living in small towns where the judge or people working at the court may know her family. And having to get a judicial bypass will cause her to delay seeking counseling and medical services, which will put her health at risk. A judicial bypass is not a realistic option for teenagers facing an unintended pregnancy. It’s just one more obstacle in an already difficult situation. A pregnant teenager needs a counselor, not a judge. That’s why California’s juvenile court judges are against Prop 85. They also argue that the proposition would impose substantial burdens on an already overloaded court system.

Statement: “Minors can’t get an aspirin at school, get a tattoo, or pierce their bodies without parental consent. Why should abortion be any different?”

A: I understand that abortion is a serious issue, and it may seem like it should be given the same consideration for parental involvement as aspirin or tattoos.

T: But if a teenager really wants to get an aspirin, she will find a way to do so without her parents finding out. Or, for tattoos or piercings, she can just wait until she turns 18.

M: If a teenager needs to get an abortion and can’t tell her parents, the current law will protect her health and safety by allowing her to have safe and legal access to confidential counseling and medical services with trained physicians who will be responsible for her. If Prop 85 passes, however, and a teenager needs to get an abortion but cannot tell her parents, she will have to take illegal, unsafe measures, with no adults to take responsibility for her safety. Also, pregnancy is a time-sensitive issue that can put a teenager at increased risk if she delays seeking care even for a few weeks. And waiting until she’s 18 is obviously out of the question.

Statement: “If abortion is so accessible, women will use it as contraception.”

A: I understand your concern that women may use abortion for a purpose it’s not intended for.

T: But studies show that most women having abortions were using contraceptive methods such as the pill or condoms during the month they become pregnant.

M: The best way to prevent abortions is to make sure young women have accurate information about contraceptive methods and are informed about how to use them correctly. For this to happen, young women need to have safe and legal access to confidential reproductive health services. Prop 85 will only add obstacles to obtaining these important services for young women who often have misinformation and little access to accurate information. An unintended pregnancy is a difficult situation for any woman to deal with, especially for a teenager who is not ready to become a mother. In the face of so much judgment from adults, a young woman might not seek the help she needs. Parental involvement laws cause teenagers to delay seeking much needed counseling and medical services. She may also travel to other states to seek care, or attempt to terminate the pregnancy herself. Furthermore, parental involvement laws in other states have not significantly lowered abortion rates among minors.

APPENDIX

Examples of messages based on other common values:

- ✦ *Value:* Our families should be free from government interference. *Specific message:* The government should not interfere with family communication by mandating when & how parents and children talk to one another.
- ✦ *Value:* We should help teenagers in trouble, not judge them. *Specific message:* A teenager who is experiencing incest, rape, or family violence should be able to get confidential help from counselors and doctors, not have to argue in front of a judge.
- ✦ *Value:* The laws should protect vulnerable teens, not endanger them. *Specific message:* The law should protect teens who are vulnerable to physical, mental or emotional abuse from their families, not further endanger them by forcing them to disclose their pregnancies.
- ✦ *Value:* Doctors, not judges, should be the ones teens turn to about their reproductive health. *Specific message:* The decision about what's best for the health of a young woman should be made by doctors, not in courts that are becoming increasingly conservative.
- ✦ *Value:* Barriers to health care must be eliminated, not increased. *Specific message:* Parental notification requirements increase barriers to health care for teens, which is especially detrimental to those from low-income communities and communities of color, who already face numerous barriers to accessing health care.

Tips for messaging to targeted groups: Know your audience!

Using the two strategies of knowing the facts and focusing on values, you can develop and communicate targeted messages for specific groups of people.

- ✦ *Men:* Messages should focus on their roles, responsibilities & identities as fathers, grandfathers, uncles, or brothers. Men often feel it is their responsibility to protect their families and ensure their safety, above all else. While male parents want to be involved in their children's lives, their most important concern is knowing that their children are safe.
- ✦ *Immigrants:* Messages should focus on the specific concerns of immigrant communities. Since many immigrant parents aren't comfortable talking with their children about sex, we should make sure young women have safe places in which to get the help they need. It is frightening to think that our daughters would have to stand before a judge if they cannot talk to their parents, despite English proficiency or immigration status.
- ✦ *Young people:* Messages should focus on fairness, rights, and confidentiality. For young people whose rights are already limited, it is unfair to impose laws that pit their own rights against those of their parents. For young people, confidentiality is a key factor in accessing reproductive health services, and parental notification laws would impact their decision about whether or not to get health care, including services that prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.
- ✦ *Religious/faith community:* Messages should focus on the morality and ethics of putting young women in dangerous situations. Although many people may be opposed to abortion, this proposition is more about protecting the safety and lives of young women. It is morally wrong to allow young women to be put in harm's way because of personal beliefs about abortion.
- ✦ *Politically moderate:* Messages should focus on the bigger political intent of this initiative. Prop 85 is part of a larger strategic effort by the religious right to diminish the reproductive rights of women & girls in the U.S. State and national legislation that limits access to abortion, contraception, and other reproductive health services has increased dramatically over the past several years. This is also part of an extensive long-term plan to politically shift our country to the far right (e.g. restricting stem cell research, racial profiling, negligent environmental policies).



How to mobilize your community to defeat Prop 85

Here are some actions you can take to mobilize your community to defeat Prop 85.

Daily actions you can take on your own:

- ✦ Educate yourself – Read ACRJ’s Prop 85 fact sheet (See attached or check out www.reproductivejustice.org); go to the No on Prop 85 website www.Noon85.com; read materials from the list of resources on parental notification (See Appendix).
- ✦ Educate others – Take every opportunity to spread the word. For example, waiting in line at the grocery store is a perfect opportunity to talk to one, two, or a group of people about Prop 85 and tell them to vote NO. You can also distribute or leave copies of No on Prop 85 materials at public events, libraries, schools, or community meetings.
- ✦ Wear your No on 85 buttons – Wear them on your clothes, put them on your bags so they are visible. They are great conversation starters (*What’s that on your button, Prop 85?*).
- ✦ Submit an Op-Ed or letter to the editor about why California voters must defeat Prop 85.

Activities and events you can organize on your own or with others:

- ✦ Register voters in your community. You can do this by setting up a table (ironing boards work too!) outside a grocery store, school, church, or at community events. You can go door-to-door in your neighborhood too. This is also a great opportunity for you to educate voters about Prop 85. You can find voter registration cards at any post office.
- ✦ Hold a kitchen table discussion. Invite friends, family, and neighbors to your house and have an informal discussion about how Prop 85 will impact your community.
- ✦ Organize an educational forum at your school, organization or with community members.
- ✦ Throw a No on Prop 85 House Party (See attached *How to Throw a House Party*).

TIP: Invite unlikely supporters to your events – people you normally wouldn’t expect to be engaged around issues of parental notification, such as men who aren’t fathers, religious leaders, or elders.

Think Outside the Box

There are several ways to find people to educate and mobilize to defeat Prop 85, and many of them are right in your neighborhood or community:

- ✦ Ethnic/local media, including TV, radio, newspapers – Submit Op-Eds or letters to the editor, approach a journalist you know to write an article, call in to radio shows
- ✦ Ethnic/cultural organizations and events – Set up a table or give a short presentation
- ✦ Neighbors – Go door-to-door in your community
- ✦ Neighborhood & community groups, youth programs, and PTAs – Have a discussion during a regular meeting or hold a special forum
- ✦ Social justice organizations – Include reproductive justice in political education
- ✦ Schools – Talk with peers and teachers; ask teachers to hold a class discussion
- ✦ Colleges/universities – Campus organizing with student groups; host a lecture or panel
- ✦ Churches/faith-based organizations – Talk to your pastor to see if s/he will talk about Prop 85 during a sermon; bring up the issue during church group meetings or Bible study



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How to throw a House Party to defeat Prop 85

House parties are an effective way to educate and mobilize friends and neighbors around issues that impact your community. Because the people you're inviting know and trust you, you can have a lot of influence over their decision-making about important issues. Anyone can throw a house party, and you can throw one any way you like. This guide will help make your No on Prop 85 house party a success!

Why throw a house party?

The main reasons for hosting a Prop 85 house party are to:

- ✦ Inform people about Prop 85 and its potential impact on your community
- ✦ Share thoughts, feelings, and opinions about parental notification laws
- ✦ Activate people to take action to defeat Prop 85

Who do I invite?

You can invite friends, family, neighbors, colleagues, and anyone who could benefit from discussing and learning about Prop 85 as well as how it will impact all of our communities. You can invite as many or as few people as you want. It's valuable to invite people who you usually wouldn't expect to be engaged around the issue, and would add unique perspectives to the discussion.

When should I throw a house party?

It's best to organize a house party close enough to the election so that people are interested, but early enough before the election so they have time to take action. We recommend that you throw a house party sometime in October, no later than a week before Election Day.

What happens at a house party?

Just like at any other party, a house party is a time for people to relax, eat, drink, and enjoy each other's company. However, the main purpose of a No on Prop 85 house party is to learn about and discuss the issue, then activate people to take action to defeat Prop 85. A simple agenda would be 1) have social time, 2) give a short presentation on Prop 85, 3) hold a discussion where all guests can participate, and 4) talk about ways for people to get involved in defeating Prop 85. You can also register voters, distribute materials, and sign up volunteers for the No on Prop 85 campaign.

How do I throw a house party?

As a host, you will need to provide a space (most likely your house), set a date, invite guests, and provide refreshments. You will also need to plan when and how the discussion will begin, proceed, and wrap up. It's a good idea to have a sign-in sheet to get people's contact information so you can send them information and updates about Prop 85.

How can ACRJ help?

ACRJ is committed to helping you host the best house party possible. We're happy to provide materials, technical assistance, and ideas for how to start the discussion. We can train you to give a presentation or we can send someone from our staff to be a guest speaker. For more information, please call ACRJ and ask for Maria or email her at maria@reproductivejustice.org. You can also visit our website at www.reproductivejustice.org for more information, materials, and resources to help you with your house party.



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Prop 85 Glossary

Reproductive oppression is the controlling and exploiting of women and girls through our bodies, sexuality, and reproduction. It is a strategic pathway to regulating entire populations that is implemented by families, communities, institutions, and society. The regulation of reproduction and exploitation of women's bodies and labor is both a tool and result of systems of oppression based on race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, age and immigration status.

Reproductive justice exists when all people have the economic, social and political power and resources to make healthy decisions about our bodies, sexual and reproduction for ourselves, our families and our communities.

Parental notification is a written, signed and dated notice by a physician that is addressed to a parent or guardian of a minor, informing the parent or guardian that she is pregnant and seeking an abortion.

Medical emergency is when a doctor decides that an immediate abortion is necessary for the minor to save her life or prevent irreversible damage to a major bodily function.

Judicial bypass would allow a minor to be exempt from parental notification. She must appear in person in front of a judge at a juvenile court and provide clear and convincing evidence of her maturity, that an abortion is in her best interest, and why parental notification is not a viable option.

Constitutional amendment is a change to the constitution of a nation or state. Once the change had been made, another constitutional amendment is needed to reverse it or change it again.

Child Custody Protection Act (S. 403) is a federal bill that would allow federal charges to be filed against any individual who transports minors across state lines for the purpose of avoiding state parental involvement laws. Exceptions would be made for abortions necessary to save the life of the minor. The bill has passed the Senate. If it passes the House and is signed by the President, it will become law.

