



GROWING COMMUNITY



TIPS FOR CREATING A COUNTER-STORYTELLING COMMUNITY

“At the heart of the Storytelling Project Model is the deliberate and purposeful creation of a community of diverse members in which stories about race and racism can be openly shared, respectfully heard and critically discussed/analyzed.” (pg. 16)

Consider Power and Positionality: Recognize your own social position and its influence on the space you create.

Set Clear Terms of Engagement: Establish community agreements that respect diverse perspectives and aim to foster courageous dialogue and methods for managing conflict.

Acknowledge Power and Privilege Differences: Design interactions to encourage inclusive and courageous story-sharing.

Practice Ongoing Self-Reflection: Continuously develop self-awareness to better facilitate a space that honors all voices and reduces bias.

These practices help create a safer and more equitable storytelling environment.

Adapted from Storytelling for Social Justice

A decorative graphic of a plant branch with several leaves, rendered in a light green color, is positioned in the bottom right corner of the page.

This toolkit is designed to help birthworkers, reproductive justice advocates, and social workers find and engage with their communities to address issues of reproductive and birth justice.

How to get started?

- Attend local events
- Use social media
- Join advocacy groups
- Host a meet-up or even a workshop - the library usually has community space
- Partner with established organizations
- Find artists and storytellers who might be interested in collaborating
- Start a group at your school, internship, or job
- Participate in webinars or conferences
- Volunteer

**TIP: YOU MAY HAVE TO
STEP OUT OF YOUR
COMFORT ZONE!**



Identify Local Networks and Organizations:

- Start by finding organizations, groups, and individuals in your community already working on reproductive justice issues.
- Reach out to local reproductive justice collectives, birth justice advocates or birthworkers, and other local organizations to build a network.
- Research and attend community events, join online forums and use social media to connect with like-minded individuals.

Host Community Conversations:

- Organize small group events or storytelling circles to share personal experiences related to birth and reproductive justice.
- You might find “birth sharing circles” in your local birth community.
- These conversations can create space for healing, advocacy, and mutual support.
- Provide prompts that encourage participants to reflect on issues of birth justice and their own experiences with reproductive health care.
- Make the space welcoming and inclusive, ensuring all voices are heard.

Stories and Artwork!

Gather folks to encourage participants to share their stories through various mediums—whether written, spoken, or visual storytelling. You can facilitate story-sharing events, create zines or digital storytelling projects, and provide opportunities for people to document and share their birth and reproductive stories publicly or within safe circles.



Building a Sustainable Community

Empower Through Education and Connection:

- Include educational materials on reproductive justice issues, such as articles, podcasts, and books.
- Invite guest speakers to share their knowledge with the community.

Create Action Plans and Community Agreements:

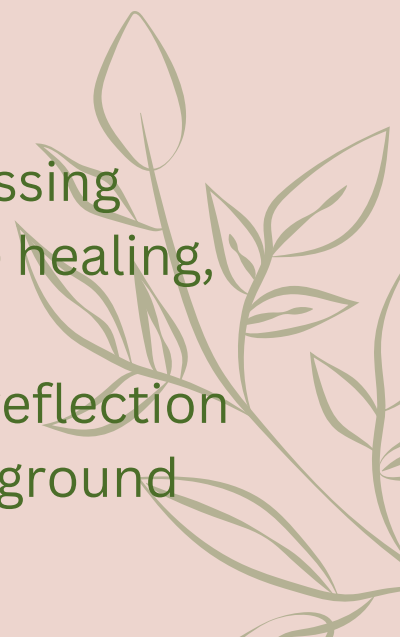
- Mobilize community members by creating action plans and community agreements based on shared goals.

Develop Online Platforms:

- Use online platforms to maintain connection if your community is geographically spread out.
- Host virtual workshops or share art projects through social media platforms and virtual galleries.

Healing through Community Building:

- Art and storytelling offer space for processing reproductive harm, engaging in collective healing, and building long-term support systems.
- Integrate practices like mindfulness and reflection into your workshops to help participants ground themselves and build resilience.



Engaging in art and storytelling
for reproductive justice allows
for dismantling harmful
narratives and building new,
empowering ones.

This toolkit provides a starting
point for advocates and
birthworkers to create a more
just and compassionate
approach to reproductive and
birth justice in their
communities.

Please continue to build on
these ideas and share the
knowledge gained in your
journey.



Where to find inspiration...

Why community matters so much — and how to find yours - VOX

How to find your people - Stanford Magazine

99 Ways to Find IRL Community - the good trade

Community Birth Directory - The Virtual Birth Collective

Be brave, stay positive, find your tribe: three climate activists explain how to get started - The Guardian

How to get locally involved in activism - LinkedIn

Community Organizing 101 - How to start a social movement - Medium

