

Abortion Rights Advocacy: Student Group Guide

Amnesty International upholds that access to abortion is a [human right](#). Reproductive autonomy is critical to the full realization of human rights for women, girls, and people who can become pregnant. The Supreme Court's ruling on the *Dobbs* case overturned *Roe v. Wade*, ending federal protections for abortion in the United States. As a result, individual states now determine whether their residents have the right to abortion, which has led to dangerous regulations and outright bans. The new landscape of abortion activism requires action at the local level. **We need to take action now to protect abortion rights and prevent dangerous bans!**

Key Ways to Get Involved

1. **Search for bills from your state legislature and/or city council**
 - a. Supporting and passing local pro-abortion legislation is an essential step towards the re-establishment of federal abortion protections.
 - b. Check out AIUSA's new [abortion advocacy toolkit](#) and your state's legislative website for active bills.
 - c. Email us at gsi@aiusa.org if you find bills you think we should support or oppose for our feedback.

2. **Collect signatures to send to your legislature**
 - a. Build a petition that demonstrates your community's support for abortion access. Here is a [sample petition](#).
 - b. Send the signed petitions to AIUSA's Washington D.C. office and we will forward them to your governor, state legislators, and relevant committees.
 - c. Address:
 - Amnesty International USA
 - ATTN: Tarah Demant
 - 600 Pennsylvania Ave, SE, 5th Floor
 - Washington DC, 20003
 - d. Note: Some states allow citizens to propose constitutional amendments after collecting enough signatures from community members.

3. **Engage in conversations with your community**
 - a. Most anti-abortion stigma is fueled by misinformation. Hosting an event to educate your community on abortion is an easy and valuable way to participate in human rights activism.
 - b. Host an educational event at your school or local community center; you could invite healthcare professionals, abortion providers, abortion storytellers, or mental health professionals to share their stories and expertise.
 - c. Some resources for conversations:
 - i. [Abortion Advocacy Issue Framing Exercise](#)
 - ii. [Heart-to-Heart Abortion Conversations Guide](#)
 - iii. [Guide to Rights-Based Messaging](#)
 - iv. [Abortion Access Fact Sheet](#)



4. **Organize a sit-in, walkout, rally, or other form of protest**
 - a. Protesting is a visible way to denounce restrictions on abortion. If possible, plan your protest around significant events in your community (ex: legislative debate on an abortion ban, local elections, release of a court decision).
 - i. This [guide](#) provides more details on the most effective way to plan a protest.
5. **Social media campaign**
 - a. Show solidarity and support for abortion rights using social media. Some ideas:
 - i. Schedule a “fill the feed” day. This is a specific date when all participants post similar pro-abortion graphics on their social media. Find AIUSA graphics on the [abortion toolkit](#) under messaging > shareable posts
 - ii. Host a [twitter storm](#). This is a specific date when there is a huge increase in discussion around a certain topic. Make sure to use a related hashtag!
 - iii. Create a filter that anyone can use to show their support for abortion access.

Target Audiences and Goal-Setting

If you want to support abortion access in your state, you should clearly define your goals. Some questions that will help you to clarify your goals include:

- **Who do you want to be involved?**
 - Just club members? The entire student body at your school? Community members?
- **Who is your target audience?**
 - Who are you trying to convince? Local politicians? State legislators? Your mayor? Your state’s Supreme Court?
- **What do you want to accomplish?**
 - Pass a bill that would protect abortion access? Codify abortion access in your state’s constitution? Publicly demonstrate widespread public support for abortion?

Messaging

Make sure your discussion of abortion is respectful and inclusive. There is a lot of inflammatory language relating to abortion, so you should always be mindful when discussing abortion to ensure you avoid any stigmatizing terms. Some common examples:

Say this	Not that
Abortion	Any other phrases or euphemisms – it’s important to destigmatize the word “abortion” and use it directly
Pregnant person or people who have abortions	Gender exclusive language that only references women and girls
End a pregnancy or have an abortion	Abort a child
Choose to continue the pregnancy	Keep the baby or keep the child
Abortion provider, provider of abortion care, or healthcare provider	Abortionist
Unsafe abortions	Back-alley abortions or coat hanger abortions
Anti-abortion	Pro-life



Promote choice	Promote abortion
Embryo or fetus	Baby or unborn child
Abortion in second/third trimester, or abortion at X weeks gestation	Late term abortion
Intact dilation and extraction ("D&E")	Partial birth abortion
6-week ban or 6-week ban bill	Heartbeat ban or heartbeat bill

- Remember to use gender inclusive language when discussing people who have abortions. Amnesty uses the phrase “women, girls, and people who can become pregnant.” Transgender, non-binary, and other gender expansive individuals can get pregnant and have abortions; it’s vital that they are included in conversations about abortion.

Resources

- Other resources for having productive discussions about abortion can be found in our state-based abortion advocacy [toolkit](#).
- Learn about how abortion is grounded in human rights at <https://www.amnestyusa.org/abortionrights/>
- If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out at gsi@aiusa.org