



Hosting a House Party

For more information, contact:

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What is a House Party?

House parties are informal fundraisers hosted by supporters who want to raise awareness and help sustain Raphael House of Portland. Simply put, it is a party at a location of your choice with your friends, co-workers, neighbors or family members!

Beyond raising funds and giving us the opportunity to meet potential new supporters, house parties are a great way of fostering community connections. By throwing a party for us, you and your guests support the work and mission of our organization.

A house party can take many different forms: it doesn't just have to be drinks and hors d'oeuvres with friends. Be creative in planning your event! Clothing swaps, house concerts, costume parties: any of these ideas (or anything else you can come up with) will help you raise essential support for Raphael House and have fun!

Why throw a House Party for Raphael House?

- To raise support for Raphael House of Portland's essential programs and services.
- To help Raphael House reach out to new supporters and potential volunteers who care about social justice and bringing an end to domestic and sexual violence.
- To participate in the movement to end domestic and sexual violence.
- To have fun and foster a community-based response to domestic and sexual violence.

Steps to a Successful House Party

Pick a date: The best times to schedule house parties are Wednesday and Friday evenings and Sunday afternoons. Once you've set a date contact Amy Williams (awilliams@raphaelhouse.com or 503.222.6507 x308).

Build a guest list: Invite friends, neighbors, members of your book club or faith community - anyone who you think will be interested in learning more about Raphael House. The general rule is to invite four times as many people as you expect to attend (really!).

Plan the party: Think about details: easy directions to your home or the party location, clearly indicating your house for the day of the party (think balloons on the mailbox), where your guests will park, where in your home is comfortable to accommodate the group, providing enough seats, where food and drink will be located, etc. Consider a theme to encourage attendance and fun! Costume party, birthday party, clothing swap, craft party or whatever works for you. Make sure, though, to be clear that fundraising for Raphael House is a priority!

Send invitations: Use Evite.com or Facebook instead of paper to save money and trees! Please use the following text on whatever invitation you choose:

- **Party title:** Raphael House of Portland Fundraising Party
- **Text:** Please join me to learn more about how we can help and support a great organization: Raphael House of Portland, a local domestic violence agency providing shelter, resources, education and support for people experiencing domestic and sexual violence. Bring your checkbooks and contribute to ending domestic and sexual violence!

* **Note:** It is important to use this text to make it clear that this is a fundraising event for Raphael House. We can send you a digital image of our logo for the invitations - just let us know! Include date, time, location, directions, your own message, and any additional info about your party (theme, what will be served, etc). Consider asking each guest to bring a guest!

Reminders: Make follow up phone calls and send Evite or Facebook reminders to invitees who haven't responded.

Make a pitch plan: Make a plan for presenting your guests with information about Raphael House and making a pitch for support. Raphael House is happy to send a representative to make a presentation about our organization and coach the host in making the perfect pitch. If we can't make it, we will send organizational materials to distribute and Amy will talk you through the pitch process by phone or email before your event (awilliams@raphaelhouse.com or 503.222.6507 x308).

Enjoy your party: What better way to celebrate with your friends than by raising awareness for a worthwhile cause!

Sample Party Timeline

Be creative in organizing your party! Whether it be a clothing swap, a dinner party, a car wash or a masquerade ball, your support is essential for Raphael House. Here's an example of a possible party timeline:

6:00 - 6:30 Host welcomes arriving guests. Guests sign-in (see sign in sheet at the end of this document) so that we can keep them updated about Raphael House in the future.

6:30 - 7:00 Guests mingle, enjoy food and drink.

7:00 - 7:30 Host addresses group, welcoming them and introducing the representative from Raphael House who makes a 5-10 minute presentation, explaining Raphael House's mission, goals, programs, etc. If a representative is not available, a host can discuss the organization (we will help you prepare!).

7:30 - 7:35 Host explains why he or she supports Raphael House and asks guests to make a financial contribution. Amy will talk you through the pitch and the best way to do it at your party.

7:35 - 8:00 Host and RH representative thank guests for their support. Host invites guests to have more to eat and drink.

RH Will Provide

- An engaging representative to talk with your guests about Raphael House
- Guest sign-in sheets, Raphael House newsletters, pencils and buttons
- Donation envelopes (so guests can use their credit cards) and opportunities for you and your guests to get involved, take action and further support Raphael House

Party Supply List

Food and Drink: Food preparation can be as simple or as elaborate as you like (Trader Joe's has some great frozen hors d'oeuvres!). Finger foods usually work best.

Savory: Veggie platters, chips and dips, cheese and crackers, pita and hummus, etc.

Sweet: Fruit, cookies, brownies, cupcakes, etc.

Beverages: Your guests will appreciate alcoholic and non-alcoholic options

Supplies: Plates, cups, napkins, utensils, garbage bags, theme supplies

FAQs

How many people should I invite?

Determine how many people fit comfortably in the party space. Invite four times as many people as you hope to attend. This might sound outrageous, but it's a proven party-planning formula.

Should I have a co-host?

A co-host's primary purpose is to expand and diversify your guest list while helping with set-up and prep. If you have a large space, but not a great guest list - or a great guest list, but you live in a studio apartment, co-hosting may be the perfect solution.

Who should I invite?

Everyone you know! Family, neighbors, coworkers, friends, acquaintances - anyone you think would be interested in learning more about Raphael House who has the potential to become a supporter. Keep in mind that while having a few people who already love Raphael House in attendance can build excitement, the primary purpose is to reach out to a new group of supporters who aren't familiar with our work.

What's in it for Raphael House?

Beyond raising funds and having the opportunity to meet potential new supporters of our work, house parties are a great way of fostering community connections. By throwing a party for us, you and your guests support the work and mission of our organization.

What's in it for me and my guests?

You and your guests will have the opportunity to become engaged in the social justice movement and help to change the way our community thinks about and discusses domestic and sexual violence.

What's involved in being a host?

A host is responsible for making the pitch for support - explaining to guests why he or she personally supports Raphael House and then asking guests to join in supporting the organization (we will help you in choreographing this pre-party). The host should be a supporter of Raphael House, as a pitch is not generally successful unless it is made by someone who is invested in the organization's work. Besides this, the host and any co-host(s) take on the usual party planning responsibilities: choosing a date, inviting friends, preparing refreshments, planning the event and enjoying the party.

