

Say This, Avoid That Guidance

Adapted from the [National Network of Abortion Funds](#)

SAY THIS	NOT THIS	WHY
Use the word abortion: Abortion access, funded abortion, accessible abortion, abortion access/ reproductive healthcare access in our communities	Avoid euphemisms: Choice, pro-choice, access to choice, the right to choose, a woman's right, reproductive rights, <i>Roe</i> as a euphemism for abortion access, "camping" as a euphemism for abortion care	We only destigmatize abortion by using the word abortion. It's time to move past euphemisms. It's time to name and ask for what we want. Additionally, using phrases like "reproductive rights" as a euphemism for abortion, without an expansive definition that explicitly highlights all reproductive choices, erases the discrimination and barriers that particularly BIPOC people face when making the choice to parent.
Use inclusive language when talking about people who have abortions: People have abortions, folks who have abortions, those of us who have abortions, abortion patients, people seeking abortion care, abortion fund clients	Avoid gendered language designed to exclude trans and nonbinary people (ex. A woman's right to choose).	Abortion access and reproductive healthcare include people of all gender identities; all people have reproductive healthcare needs; including access to prescriptions for sex and sexual health, IVF, etc.

SAY THIS	NOT THIS	WHY
<p>“All abortions and decisions to have an abortion are unique, individual, and deserve respect.”</p> <p>“All people should be trusted to make the reproductive healthcare decisions that are best for them – including abortion, on their timeline, and with the resources they need.”</p>	<p>“Abortion is a difficult decision.”</p> <p>“Abortion is safer than carrying a pregnancy to term.”</p> <p>“Forced birth is a death sentence.”</p>	<p>Abortion is sometimes difficult, and sometimes not – there are many nuances around having an abortion.</p> <p>Having an abortion and carrying to term are not two sides of the same coin, and the many problems with how Black people, in particular, have to give birth are not solved by having an abortion.</p>
<p>Fund local independent abortion clinics, abortion funds, and support people who’ve had and need abortions</p>	<p>Starting a new Jane Collective</p> <p>Starting a new Underground Railroad</p> <p>Starting a new clinic.</p> <p>Starting new abortion funds to provide abortions/abortion access.</p>	<p>This work already exists and has existed for decades. The people who do this work on the ground are experts and need support, funding, and attention in order to keep providing abortions, getting people to their abortions, and getting them the funding they need.</p> <p>Using the phrase “Underground Railroad” is a racist co-opting of the very real horror of chattel slavery that the United States has still not reckoned with.</p>

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<p>The only thing to compare abortion to is abortion.</p> <p>Abortion is healthcare.</p> <p>Abortion is a medical procedure.</p> <p>Abortion is a human right.</p>	<p>Avoid comparing abortion to things that are not abortion or unhelpful hypotheticals.</p> <p>"If men could get pregnant there would be a clinic on every corner/available like Starbucks."</p> <p>"We should ban Viagra!"</p> <p>"We should make men get vasectomies."</p> <p>Compare abortion access to guns.</p>	<p>People of all gender identities have sexual and reproductive health needs, such as miscarriage management, abortion care, infertility, contraceptive needs, and more. Abortions and sexual healthcare should be widely available, on every corner, and fully funded. Historically, our nation has forced sterilization on people of all genders, particularly because of their race, disabilities, and gender identity—we do not take that lightly and it is not a joke. Reproductive healthcare and medicine shouldn't be taken away from anyone.</p> <p>When we compare abortion access to gun control we're creating a false equivalency — we need more restrictions on guns and less on abortion and other reproductive healthcare.</p>
<p>"All abortion bans and restrictions are extreme and target people already marginalized by our healthcare system to deprive them of abortion access, shame their healthcare decisions, and put unnecessary hurdles in their way."</p>	<p>"They're passing archaic laws."</p> <p>"These abortion restrictions are from the Medieval Times/Dark Ages."</p> <p>Comparisons to the Handmaid's Tale (which are actual things that happened to Black and Brown people in this nation)</p>	<p>This isn't factually accurate. People were having and managing their own abortions throughout history with no regulation or restrictions. Abortion restrictions and criminalization began in the United States in the 1860s and have become progressively more extreme throughout recent history. In the grand scheme of the thousands of years abortions have been around, restrictions are actually quite new and modern.</p>

SAY THIS	NOT THIS	WHY
<p>Let's end the stigma:</p> <p>"People should be able to have abortions when they want them."</p> <p>Abortions (plural)</p> <p>"Abortions later in pregnancy."</p>	<p>Don't repeat the stigma:</p> <p>Don't lean on "before most people know they're pregnant" for six weeks messaging;</p> <p>Don't just say one abortion or stigmatize people who have more than one abortion.</p> <p>"Late-term abortions" (a made up term by the anti-abortion movement)</p>	<p>Nearly 60% of people do find out they're pregnant before 6 weeks, however most are unable to reach a clinic by the 6 week mark due to barriers and restrictions—focus on the barriers.</p> <p>Half of abortion patients have already had at least one abortion for a variety of reasons. Let's not stigmatize those who have more than one.</p> <p>Abortions happen at all points in pregnancy for many reasons, including legal, political, and social barriers to care. People should always be able to get an abortion when they need it, when they're ready, and with all the resources they need to make it happen—regardless if this is their first abortion or they've had more than one, or when in pregnancy they are getting it.</p>
<p>"These abortion bans are racist and will make access to reproductive healthcare for people of color and those working to make ends meet even more difficult."</p>	<p>"These abortion bans are Sharia Law!"</p> <p>"This is straight out of the Taliban!"</p>	<p>Comparing anti-abortion lawmakers or abortion restrictions to Sharia Law are racist, anti-Muslim, and inaccurate.</p>
<p>"We need safe, accessible abortion care for everyone."</p>	<p>Do not use coat hanger imagery.</p>	<p>Coat hanger imagery is a scare tactic and can be extremely upsetting for some people who may have had or know someone who had an abortion before abortions were safe. Coat hangers are a symbol of a dark past, and</p>

		we do not want to imply that people seeking abortions will ever have to consider unsafe options.
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Hard to Answer Questions

- For some questions, you may be able to point folks to Abortion Fund of Maryland's Website: abortionfundmd.org
- You might be asked questions you don't know the answer to when fundraising for AFM. It's always okay to admit you don't know something, and you can direct questions to the AFM staff and board via email at development@abortionfundmd.org.
- **If someone is being rude, inappropriate, or inflammatory, you do not need to respond or interact with them.** Reach out to development@abortionfundmd.org for support if this occurs at an AFM event.