



ABORTION SUPPORT NETWORK FUNDRAISING TOOLKIT

This fundraising toolkit is to inform and assist individuals and organisations that would like to support and help Abortion Support Network (ASN) with the thing we need most – fundraising.

Abortion is illegal in the Republic of Ireland and severely restricted in Northern Ireland. ASN helps women in Ireland access safe and legal abortions in England by providing accommodation and financial assistance.

Founded in 2009, ASN is currently the only organisation providing financial help for women travelling to England for an abortion. We are an all – volunteer organisation and are funded entirely through donations.

ASN was inspired by the National Network of Abortion Funds (www.nnaf.org), a network of abortion funds and practical support organisations in the US (where abortion, while legal, is often not accessible.)

This toolkit is for individuals and organisations who want to fundraise on behalf of ASN to help women from Ireland access safe legal abortions.

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Introduction

Introduction to Abortion Support Network

What would you do ... if the condom broke? If your pill hadn't worked? If you had been raped? Or if you were faced with an unplanned, unwanted pregnancy? What would you do? What if you lived in a country where abortion was illegal? And you had no money? In Great Britain, women can access safe, legal abortions in most circumstances on the NHS. Unfortunately, this is not the case for women in the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland, where abortion is illegal in almost all circumstances. ASN – a small but growing all volunteer organisation – is dedicated to providing accommodation and financial assistance to these women.

What ASN has achieved so far

Women travelling from Ireland to England for an abortion must pay privately for the abortion, on top of additional costs that can include last minute travel fares, accommodation costs and childcare. This can cost anywhere between £400-£2000, depending on circumstance and stage of pregnancy. ASN strives to help each and every woman who makes contact. Without constant fundraising this will prove impossible. Every contribution – large or small – helps to make a real difference to women's lives. With your help, we will continue to provide information and financial and emotional support to women in desperate need.

Who can help ASN

Everyone who believes that women have the right to control their own bodies and fertility can help women exercise this right by supporting ASN. If you believe that women living in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland should have access to safe, legal abortions, you are already an ASN supporter. And it would be even better if you helped us to raise some much needed cash!

Fundraising for ASN is something you can fit into your life, however much spare time you have - any time spent fundraising is extremely valued and appreciated

If you are interested please contact us! We look forward to hearing from you.

Contact information

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"Thank you so much; you have been of so much help and we greatly appreciate it."

40 year old mother of four and her husband

Fast Facts on Abortion

If you would like to know more about reproductive rights for women in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, here are some facts to assist you:

- In 2009, at least 5,545 women travelled from Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic to access abortions in England (Department of Health)
 - 76 per cent of the UK population are pro-choice
 - The 1967 Abortion Act was never extended to Northern Ireland. This has created an increasingly ambiguous situation. A woman is technically able to access an abortion if she has a serious medical or psychological problem that is endangering her life if she continues her pregnancy; doctor's detect abnormalities in the foetus and in some cases, women will be offered an abortion if they have become pregnant as a result of rape. In practice, permission to have an abortion is almost never granted, even if a woman's life is in danger. Until the law changes, women must seek an abortion in another country.
 - Women in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland seeking an abortion face immense difficulties and hardship. They have to find the money to pay for the cost of the trip and procedure, lose money by taking time off work, and sometimes have the added expenses of overnight accommodation and childcare for children left at home. These costs can range from £400 to upwards of £2,000. Many women have the additional burden and stress of maintaining secrecy about their abortion back home. As a result, the women ASN supports are often incredibly isolated and many travel alone.
 - Between January 1980 and December 2008, at least 137,618 women travelled from the Republic of Ireland for abortion services in Britain.
 - A 2004 Crisis Pregnancy Agency study reported that 90% of 18-45 year olds support abortion in certain circumstances, with 51% stating that women should unconditionally have the right to choose an abortion. In 2007, an Irish Times Behaviour and Attitudes Poll found that 54% of women believe the Government should take steps to permit abortion. In a 2010 poll in the Irish Times, 60% of 18-35 year olds were in favour of legalising abortion.
 - Worldwide, **68,000 women per year DIE because of unsafe abortions – countless more are severely injured. These deaths are preventable.**
 - Remember, even if your friends, course mates, or family in England do not class themselves as being pro-choice, they are guaranteed a choice. Women in Ireland are not.
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ASN Case Studies

To demonstrate exactly how valuable fundraising for ASN can be, please find below case studies of the women who have benefited from ASN's support.

As these cases show, women are faced with a number of factors and circumstances when they make the decision to have an abortion. ASN is a vital, and in some cases the sole, source of support to the women who contact us. We do not discriminate by age, race, religion, sexuality or personal circumstance. Most importantly, no woman needs to justify their decision. We exist to support women in the decisions they make.

A 37 year old single mother who was recently relocated by a domestic violence organisation to escape an abusive partner. Struggling to find work and make a life in a new place with no social support, she then realised she was pregnant by her former partner. ASN was able to help her with a grant towards her £590 procedure.

A young student who contacted us at first in the early stages of pregnancy but was then incorrectly informed by her doctor that she was no longer pregnant. Several months later she got back in touch after finding out that she was over 22 weeks pregnant. ASN helped her with booking her flights, overnight accommodation and a grant towards her procedure.

A woman in her 30s who was pregnant as a result of rape. She had £250 to her name and no passport. ASN was able to help her with the balance of her procedure and her plane ticket.

"Though my child will have to do without Christmas presents this year, at least the children of the friend I no longer have to borrow money from will have gifts. Thank you very, very much."

27 year old single mother

Basic Fundraising Rules

Being passionate about a cause is what puts the “fun” in fundraising. Fundraising is the backbone behind any charity or organisation; ASN itself would not be here today without it!

ASN is not expecting to raise huge sums (although this would be great!). The reality is that grassroots fundraising brings in small but crucial amounts. And every donation received is greatly appreciated! ASN is grateful for any time individuals feel they can dedicate, whether it is a one off event or an activity held on a regular basis.

Fundraising activities achieve more than just raising money; they help to increase awareness and support. You will be surprised to find out how many people did not know that abortion is broadly speaking illegal in the Republic of Ireland and that women in Northern Ireland do not share the same rights as those in Great Britain. Through fundraising activities, we are able to publicise ASN’s work, build new networks and get more people involved. These are just some of the things that can be achieved through the wonderful efforts of those fundraising on behalf of ASN!

*** The golden rule to grassroots fundraising is to make the most of your local amenities. ***

Tapping into the vast amount of local meeting places is critical. This includes, but is by no means limited to:

- Office conference rooms
- Pubs
- Houses
- Libraries
- University halls and classrooms
- Local halls/buildings

The main theme here is anywhere which is **free!** There are plenty of places around that will allow events and meetings to be held for free (particularly if you tell them it’s for charity) and this has the added bonus of maximising your profits.

Another important rule to follow when fundraising for ASN is not to shy away from using the word **abortion**. We must not obscure the fact that our fundraising aim and goal is to assist women access safe and legal abortions.

“I don’t feel like I can carry a pregnancy to term and not sure if my parents will understand. Thank you so much for your help.”

18 year old student

Fundraising Ideas

There are numerous ways in which fundraising can be fun and also productive. Abortion is a serious topic but this does not mean that fundraising for ASN has to be of a serious tone or nature by any means.

Fundraising can easily fit around your life and does not have to be a huge commitment. You can spend as little or as much time as you like fundraising for ASN as there are various fundraising things you can do – from putting out a bucket to planning and devising your own event – which allow you to tailor fundraising to your circumstances.

Simple Fundraising: Movies, Books and Raffles

Simple fundraising ideas which allow you to raise money quickly and effectively and incur no costs include:

- Having that spring clean you have promised yourself you would do and selling your unneeded items on Ebay or at a car boot sale
- Arranging abortion themed movie nights and book clubs
- Raffles and auctions
- Having a jolly good house party – all in the name of reproductive rights!

Of course, it is handy to put out a donation bucket and ask people to pop in some spare change – it is all for a good cause! These events are not only a sure fire way of raising money for ASN but promise to be fun at the same time; you cannot achieve any of this without the help of your friends and family, so bring on the good times!

For Film Nights, you may already own some movies which deal with abortion: for example Vera Drake; Revolutionary Road; Dirty Dancing; Riding in Cars with Boys; If These Walls Could Talk, The Cider House Rules and 4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days. For a book club, you could read a book a month with an abortion-related storyline. We can supply you with suggestions of books and films which feature abortion and most will be accessible from your local library. Of course, don't forget to bring along the handy donation bucket!

You may even want to hold a raffle to raise some money, and ask your friends, family and work colleagues to donate items to raffle off. Anything goes from a bottle of wine to a box of chocolates and you may want to approach local businesses and even your own employer to donate something. If you have willing friends, you could even have a human raffle where you sell a friend's talent to the highest bidder i.e. a friend who is good at cooking or beauty treatments etc to raise funds for ASN.

"I just don't feel financially ready to have a child."

23 year old student

These fundraising ideas are a fantastic way to introduce your friends, family and work colleagues to ASN. You can hold these events at a number of free places including houses, libraries, your work place or pubs and student unions.

Event Fundraising: Open Mic Nights and Quiz Nights

Events are a great way to raise money and include the local community in your fundraising if you have the time to plan and manage them. This could be an excellent option for a group of friends or university students. Events such as quiz nights and open mic nights are easy and popular – you can raise money through charging entry and putting the infamous donation bucket out.

Planning an event like this is dependent upon using the free amenities in your community. If you choose to hold it in a pub or bar, it is a good idea to declare that your event is for charity as they may reduce or even waive the cost of holding it on their premises. When advertising for performers for open mic nights there are no rules! Use every available avenue you have. If you are a university student, your uni will probably have a central email where you can contact the administrator to send an email around informing students that you are looking for performers. You can also use posters and flyers. We have provided some sample posters in this pack to give you a few ideas, but we are able to supply you with posters, flyers, case studies and anything else you may need to help make your event a great success. Networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Myspace etc are also invaluable tools. Remember you can also use raffles; bake sales, etc at these events to maximize on your donations.

Get in touch with us if you need any materials, such as flyers; posters; case studies; movies or book suggestions; facts and figures. Depending on the size and location of your event, we may even be able to send an ASN representative along to speak. We can also provide you with donation forms, contact details and standing order forms for your events.

These of course are not the only fundraising activities you can do: be imaginative and design your own events! We ask that you provide only as much time to fundraising for ASN as you can or wish. There is no pressure to commit to any particular amount of events or activities, and you may fundraise in any way you see fit. From one – off coffee morning event to a monthly pub quiz event, every effort is greatly appreciated.

“These people [protesters outside family planning organisations in Ireland] don't know anything about me or my situation. And for the Irish government to make me travel and go into debt and sneak around like a criminal is just disgusting.”

Mother of three

Publicising Events

Successfully publicising your ASN fundraising events is crucial. Without a good turnout of people at your event you will have a hard time raising money or support. And if you want people to attend they, of course, need to know what's going on! Remember to always include a signup sheet, where you can record the details of people interested in supporting ASN – or volunteering to help with your next fundraiser!

There are many ways to publicise an event, and some of the most effective are:

- 1) Posters and flyers
- 2) Email
- 3) Networking sites
- 4) Word of mouth (tell your friends!)

These are by no means the only ways in which you can publicise your events, but they are probably the simplest, most successful and cost effective.

1) Posters and flyers

Eye-catching posters and flyers are an effective way of publicising and getting word around about your fundraisers. We can provide you with language and logos to help you create materials and have also included examples if you want to develop your own.

Places to put up your posters that will get most attention are communal places such as local hang outs, eateries, libraries, work notice boards and even on the inside of the stall doors in the ladies loos. Flyers are also incredibly useful as you can hand them out, put them on tables and at places such as your local coffee shops, meeting places or student lecture halls or post them on memo boards.

ASN OPEN MIC NIGHT!



Come and support the Abortion Support Network!
DATE **PLACE**

Any performance welcome or just come along for a fun night!

To take part contact:

_____ **Contact Details** _____

2) Email

A great way to publicise your event in bulk is through Email.

Make sure you put down all the relevant information about your event!

This is also a great way of recruiting performers for Open Mic Nights and signing people up for Quiz Nights. It is quick, easy and efficient.

3) Networking Sites

Don't forget that you probably already have a way to reach your friends easily through Facebook, Myspace and Twitter. They are also great ways to quickly update and advertise your activities and news.

Below is an example of a poster that you may find useful.

"Thank you so much for all your help. Words cannot express how much you have helped me."

38 year old woman

A_{ct}

S_{UPPORT}

N_{OW}

Abortion Support Network is an all volunteer organisation helping women in Ireland obtain safe and secure abortions in England. If you would like to know more contact (your email here)

Information for Students

We know how important the student body is to any campaign. We would like to work with any University societies, faculties and individuals as well as student unions who support abortion rights.

Although we are not a campaigning organisation, we can provide students with a chance to experience grassroots fundraising, while supporting women in Ireland to access safe and legal abortions. You would also be given the opportunity to work with an organisation which is not only unique and growing, but one which also includes some very influential people in the field of reproductive health and rights. Our core team is made up of women who have worked, or are now presently working for organisations such as Marie Stopes, Education for Choice, and Haven Coalition. This would give you an excellent chance to gain fundraising and event management while doing some prize networking.

What we ask of you is to dedicate only a few hours a week to our cause. We can provide you with all the materials and resources you will need to be able to research, plan and manage fundraising events. These events do not have to be huge; we are looking to increase awareness about our work as much as we are looking to raise money.

We know that universities are great places to raise funds – because of the abundance of free venues there are for holding events and activities, the close-knit nature of campuses and the amount of willing, energetic and liberal – minded students there are!

In return for your work, you will be rewarded by being able to put on your CV work experience which is distinctive and unique. We can also provide you with a certificate and a reference! And on top of that you'll be helping to make a real difference to the lives of the women we support.

"I want everyone to know how helpful ASN was to us: they helped us with all our travel and my daughter was on the phone to them nearly every day. She found ASN so easy to talk to which she really needed at the time. We would both like to thank [the ASN host] for putting us up in her home and making us very welcome."

Mother of a 14 year old girl assisted by ASN

Thank You

Finally, thank you for taking the time to read this toolkit and considering fundraising for ASN.

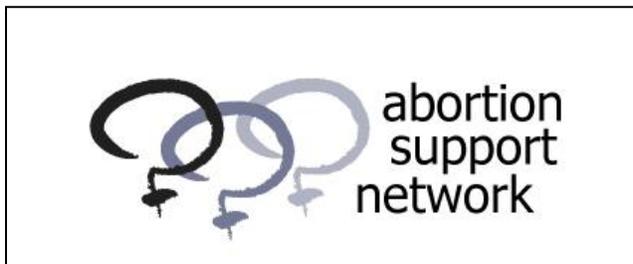
We hope that this toolkit has given you an understanding of ASN's work and answered your questions, while providing you with lots of fundraising inspiration and ideas.

If you have decided to fundraise for ASN we would really like to hear from you!

If, instead, you would prefer to support us in other ways, any donations are desperately needed and gratefully received. We have attached a standing order form, with all the information on it for those who would like to donate to ASN.

Thank you in advance for helping to support more women and best of luck for your fundraising!

The Abortion Support Network Team



STANDING ORDER MANDATE



To the Manager of [Your Bank Name]:

Your Bank Address:

Your Bank Account Number:

Your Bank Sort Code:

Please Pay:

HSBC/BIRMINGHAM NEW STREET
 Abortion Support Network
 Sort Code: 40-11-18
 Account Number: 64409302

Payment Amount:

Frequency:

Date of First Payment:

Reference:

Your Details

Name:

Address:

Signature:

Date:

Print Name:

This form should be completed and forwarded to

YOUR OWN BANK