

Say this, not that

This guidance is pulled and abbreviated from the Liberate Abortion campaign. For full “Say this, not that” guidance, see the [full Liberate Abortion toolkit](#).

Say this	Not this	Why
<p>“Roe is the floor, not the ceiling.”</p> <p>“We are advocating and coming together for a world where abortion isn’t just legal -- it’s accessible, affordable, and destigmatized.”</p>	<p>“Roe is on the line” “Roe is falling”</p> <p>General Roe catastrophizing</p>	<p>We know that <i>Roe</i> has never served all people or guaranteed abortion access. <i>Roe</i> is the bottom rung, and we need to have a more expansive future and not settle. <i>Roe</i> has never been a reality.</p>
<p>“Abortion is safe.”</p> <p>“Let’s work to ensure abortion becomes more accessible and less stigmatized.”</p> <p>“We have the resources and medications, like abortion pills, for people to self-manage their abortions safely.”</p> <p>“Ending the criminalization of pregnancy, abortion, and all aspects of reproduction is essential to affirming the right to reproductive autonomy.”</p> <p>“We don’t always know a person’s circumstances or why they may choose to self-manage their abortion care. For some people, ending their own pregnancy in the privacy of their homes is a safer option that offers the support they need.”</p>	<p>“Make abortion safe.” “Keep abortion safe.” “Dangerous illegal abortions.”</p> <p>References to underground abortion, coathangers, back alley abortions, botched abortions, <i>Handmaid’s Tale</i> references.</p> <p>Imagery: Feel free to use the visionary imagery in the campaign document. Please do not use the above imagery, verbal or visual, that coalition partners have named as harmful.</p>	<p>Abortion is already an incredibly safe procedure and medication abortion is available—something that wasn’t available prior to 1973. Just because something is illegal does not mean it is unsafe. What is risky is the criminalization of people who have abortions.</p> <p>There are many people who are trying to obtain abortions and may choose to self-manage their abortion. We do not want to scare them nor do we want to undermine the availability and safety of medication abortion pills.</p>
<p>Use the word abortion: Liberate abortion, liberate abortion access, funded abortion, accessible abortion, abortion access/ reproductive healthcare access in our communities, our vision for abortion, the abortion experience we’re looking to create for everyone</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>It’s time to move past euphemisms. It’s time to name and ask for what we want. We only destigmatize abortion by using the word abortion. We only liberate abortion from stigma and shame by saying the word abortion. 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.</p>

<p>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</p>	<p>Avoid gendered language designed to exclude trans and nonbinary people.</p>	<p>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.</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>“All abortions and decisions to have an abortion are unique, individual, and deserve respect.”</p>	<p>“Abortion is safer than carrying a pregnancy to term.”</p> <p>“Forced birth is a death sentence.”</p> <p>“Abortion is a difficult decision.”</p>	<p>Having an abortion and carrying to term are not two sides of the same coin. They are different pregnancy decisions that have different outcomes, which are varied by medical access and support in our nation’s healthcare system, often differentiated by racism, classism, and poverty. Pregnancy outcomes vary widely, particularly when it comes to maternal mortality rates of Black women. While abortion can be a chosen course of action during a pregnancy, including when it becomes unsafe, it is not the only solution to pregnancy care and outcomes—ensuring all people have access to healthcare is.</p> <p>Abortion is sometimes difficult, and sometimes not -- there are many nuances around 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>
<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>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</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</p>

<p>“Abortions later in pregnancy.”</p>	<p>more than one abortion.</p> <p>“Late-term abortions” (a made up term by the anti-abortion movement)</p>	<p>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>“All abortion bans and restrictions are extreme and target people already marginalized by our health care system to deprive them of abortion access, shame their healthcare decisions, and put unnecessary hurdles in their way.”</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>“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>“These abortion bans are Sharia Law!”</p> <p>“This is straight out of the Taliban!”</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> <p>Comparing anti-abortion lawmakers or abortion restrictions to Sharia Law are racist, anti-Muslim, and inaccurate.</p>