Hosting a House Party

is a great way to bring friends, colleagues and family members together to learn about bringing critical theatre programming to incarcerated and court-involved young people and raise funds for Drama Club. This toolkit will help you create a fun and engaging event that introduces new supporters and increases visibility for Drama Club.

We encourage your creativity and resourcefulness in hosting a small or large party, which could take place in your home or office, or at a restaurant or gallery.

Drama Club will provide you with promotional materials, donation/pledge cards, and any guidance you may need in making your event a success.

We will rely on your initiative, contacts, and creativity in moving your house party forward. This includes:

• Thinking about what event will work best for you and identifying your target audience;
• Identifying a space;
• Brainstorming creative ways to market, create and distribute invitations or e-blasts;
• Underwriting the costs associated with the event by asking colleagues/friends/restaurants to co-host and/or help you in planning the logistics; and
• Creating an achievable fundraising goal.

Your support is greatly appreciated and we look forward to hearing your ideas!

The Drama Club House Party Kit includes:

• sample invitation
• sample agenda
• sign-in sheet
• pledge form

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Executive Director Josie Whittlesey
josie@dramaclubnyc.org
917-617-0502.
HELP Drama Club Thrive BY HOSTING A HOUSE PARTY!

**FORMAT**

We recommend a two-hour cocktail party, beginning at 6:00 pm or 6:30 pm. However, you know what will work best for your friends and colleagues. Choose a venue where you and your guests will be most comfortable. This could be at your own home or apartment, or a meet-and-greet at your workplace. You can host the party alone or with a friend or group of friends — if your home is not large enough to host a house party, consider asking a friend who has a great space for a cocktail party to co-host it with you.

House party events can be as formal or as informal as you wish. They can serve as both a friendraiser and a fundraiser. Drama Club is here to support you as a host, whether you want to throw a relaxed get-together, or a more formal event designed for donors who can give at higher levels. Please contact Executive Director Josie Whittlesey at josie@dramaclubnyc.org, so we can work with you directly to plan and implement a fun and successful event.

Consider setting a fundraising goal for the event and announce it to guests when you ask for their support at the event.

**WHAT TO SERVE**

Refreshments can be as simple or as complicated as you like. You could consider seeking help from friends who like to cook or local restaurants who may be sympathetic to our cause, hire a caterer or provide refreshments yourself.

**WHO TO INVITE**

Friends, family members, acquaintances — it’s up to you to decide who to invite, get out the invitations (mail and/or email) and keep track of who is coming, so you will know how many to prepare for. Follow-up emails and phone calls will definitely increase attendance. You’ll find a sample invitation on the next page.

**LOGISTICS**

Think about directions by car or public transportation and where guests can park, and let them know.

Ask a friend or two to serve as greeters, if needed. They’ll answer the door, take coats, make sure people sign in and help collect checks.

Do let us know about your event, so we can send you the materials you need and make sure a Drama Club representative attends, if available, to answer questions about our work, and support you through the process.
SAMPLE INVITATION

This can be as simple as a text email, or we can send you an alterable version of the invitation once you’ve decided to host a party.

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You are invited to a cocktail party in support of Drama Club at my home.

Jane and John Smith
323 xyz street, #4
Your town, Anystate

Monday, November 4, 2020
6:30 to 8:30 pm

RSVP (xxx) xxx-xxxx or jane@jkjkjkjkj.com

Come learn more about the critical ways Drama Club is providing theater training and positive mentor relationships to youth throughout each step of their journey through the criminal justice system: detention, placement and probation.

If you can’t attend, please consider making a gift online at dramaclubnyc.org or mail it to
34-18 Northern Boulevard, Long Island City, NY 11101
SAMPLE AGENDA

Here is a draft timeline for a two-hour evening cocktail party. Times listed are approximate. There’s no need to follow this precisely.

6:30 pm  Guests begin arriving.

7:15 – 7:20 pm  Host welcomes guests, thanks them for coming, explains why they are involved with Drama Club, and introduces the Drama Club representative, if available, who will either be a staff member or board member.

7:20 – 7:30 pm  Discuss Drama Club’s current goals, objectives and programs.

7:30 – 7:40 pm  Q&A.

7:40 – 7:45 pm  Host thanks Drama Club representative, thanks guests for their attention, encourages them to visit the website and asks them not to leave without filling out a pledge form. (“Please sign up to support Drama Club. You can give tonight using these donor pledge forms [hold one up], or take one with you, or donate online at dramaclubnyc.org.”)

7:45 pm  Party resumes.

8:30 pm  Guests depart.
SAMPLE TIMELINE

Six Weeks Out
• Decide upon format, place and time for your house party.
• Decide if you need or want a co-host(s).
• Let Drama Club know about the event, so we can get you everything you need in the way of materials, and schedule a representative to speak at your event and support you throughout the evening, if we can.
• Consider if you need or would like food and/or beverage donations and reach out to potential in-kind donors.

Five Weeks Out
• Create your invitation mailing list.
• Create your party invitation.

Four Weeks Out
• E-Mail and/or send hard copy invitations.

Three Weeks Out
• Ask a friend or two to serve as greeters. They’ll answer the door, take coats, make sure people sign in and help collect checks.

Two Weeks Out
• Call or email everyone who has not RSVP’d. Ask if they’re coming and keep a list of who is attending.

One Week Out
• Decide who will speak about Drama Club.
• Review our website, Drama Club.org, and information packet so that you’re able to answer questions.
• Make sure you have all the materials you need from Drama Club, including donor pledge forms.

Week of Event
• Remind greeters of their duties and the time they need to arrive.
• Purchase and prepare refreshments.
• Print enough sign-in sheets to accommodate your estimated number of guests.

After the Event
• Please send the gifts collected and the sign-in sheet(s) to Drama Club within 24 hours.
• Once Drama Club receives the contributions, we will send your guests thank you letters.
• If you can, please send one yourself – an email or handwritten thank you note – to add a personal touch.
• Post event pictures on your Facebook page or other social media profiles, send the link to everyone you invited and remind them that it’s not too late to donate or host a house party of their own.
• Pat yourself on the back and know how much we appreciate all the work you’ve done to raise critically needed funds for Drama Club!
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BENEFITS FOR GIVING

Friend - Up to $249
  • Our undying thanks
  • Subscription to e-news

Mentor - $250
  All of the above, plus:
  • Invitations to special events
  • Listing in our Annual Report

Teacher - $500
  All of the above, plus:
  • Limited edition Drama Club t-shirt

JOIN THE DRAMA CLUB SOCIETY
WITH AN ANNUAL GIFT OF
$1,000 OR MORE.

Drama Club Society - $1,000
  All of the above, plus:
  • Recognition on our website and e-news
  • Special recognition at our events
  • Opportunity to attend Drama Club performances

Cameo - $2,500
  All of the above, plus:
  • Named Giving and Sponsorship Opportunities

Star of the Show - $5,000 or more
  All of the above, plus:
  • Special briefings from the Executive Director
  • Exclusive Named Giving and Sponsorship Opportunities

JOIN THE YES AND… CIRCLE
WITH A MONTHLY GIFT.
  • Our undying thanks
  • Subscription to e-news
  • Special quarterly updates
  • Advance notice on events

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name as you would like it to appear

Address

City/State/Zip

Phone

Email

☐ This gift is anonymous.

PAYMENT METHOD

☐ Enclosed please find a check made payable to Drama Club in the amount of $____________

☐ Please charge my credit card
  ☐ One Time or ☐ Monthly in the amount of $ ______________

Card Number

Expiration date  Security code

Name on card

Signature

Please contact me about:
  ☐ hosting an event in my home/workplace
  ☐ volunteering
  ☐ making a gift of appreciated stock
  ☐ my employer matching my gift
  ☐ other potential funders of Drama Club

For more information, please contact Executive Director Josie Whittlesey at josie@dramaclubnyc.org or 917-617-0502. Drama Club is a 501(c)(3) organization, and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Donate online at dramaclubnyc.org