



ORGANIZER TOOLKIT

TOGETHER ACROSS AMERICA

Everything you need to start conversations,
host events, and build your local movement
— **one neighbor at a time.**



Have a Conversation

pp. 2–3



Host an Event

pp. 4–5



Your Role

pp. 6–7



Know Your Rights

pp. 8–9

Inspired by Hands Across America — building a people-powered movement, neighbor by neighbor, coast to coast.

■ THE GOLDEN RULE

Every great conversation starts here

LISTEN 80%

TALK 20%

Your job is not to win arguments — learn what matters, name what's happening, invite a next step.

■■ THE CONVERSATION FLOW

Seven steps — from hello to a committed next step

1 Open (10 seconds)

"Hey, can I ask you something? I'm helping build a local TAA group — I'd love to hear what's been weighing on you lately."

2 Discover — Ask, then listen

Use open questions to understand their world.

"What's gotten harder lately?" / "Do you feel more connected or more alone?"

3 Agitate — Name the truth

You're not stirring drama. You're naming reality.

"What do you think happens if nothing changes?"

4 Name Responsibility — No party blame

Connect their pain to systemic choices, not to neighbors.

"A lot of this isn't random — it's decisions that protect powerful interests and leave everyday people competing with each other."

5 Offer Hope — Hope is a plan

Hope is not a slogan. It's a plan that comes from action.

"We're building a place to meet face to face, locally, and decide on one practical action together."

6

Ask for a Specific Commitment

Don't accept vague support. Get a calendar commitment.

"Can you come to a 90-min community coffee this week?"

"Can I text you the details?"

7

Close and Follow Up (within 24 hrs)

Confirm. Reconnect. Keep the momentum going.

"Appreciate you. Here's the time and place. Are you in?"

■ RED FLAGS TO AVOID

These kill conversations fast

- ✗ Debating ideology or party identity
- ✗ Shaming or lecturing people
- ✗ Trying to "educate" someone too early in the conversation
- ✗ Over-explaining or rambling — keep it short
- ✗ Leaving without a concrete next step agreed upon

■ AFTER THE CONVERSATION

Write these down before you forget

CAPTURE

- What they care about
- What they're willing to do
- When you'll follow up

FOLLOW UP

- Within 24 hours
- Text or call
- Confirm the next step

■ COMMUNITY COFFEE & CONVERSATION

Your first event — easy to host, high impact

10–40 people

90 minutes

Library · Community center · Union hall · Church hall · Park · Backyard

- 1 **Welcome + Purpose**
Set the tone. Read ground rules aloud. (5 min)
- 2 **Pair Share**
"What's gotten harder lately?" — 10 min, in pairs only.
- 3 **Group Themes**
Gather what came up — no debate, just listening. (15 min)
- 4 **Small Groups**
"What do we want to rebuild locally?" — 20 min.
- 5 **Pick One Next Step**
Form a small action team. Collect commitments. (35 min)

CLOSE SCRIPT

"We're not leaving here with a slogan.

We're leaving with a next step and a follow-up date."

■■ SERVICE DAY + CIVIC

Build trust through doing — then invite ongoing action

Neighborhood cleanup

Food distribution

Mutual aid drive

Park restoration

Senior assistance

- **Do the work (60–90 min)**
Serve together. Let trust build naturally through shared action.
- **Circle Conversation (20 min)**
"What did today remind you about your community?
What's one thing we could do next month?"
- **Recruit Before People Leave**
Collect names, numbers, and emails. Schedule the next event right then.

■ PUBLIC GATHERING

Rally, vigil, or unity circle — done safely and lawfully

BEFORE YOU GO

- Check permit needs early
- Set start & end times
- Assign all roles
- Know your exit plan

PROGRAM (45–60 MIN)

- Welcome (2 min)
- 2 personal stories (10 min)
- 3 shared truths (5 min)
- The ask + close (4 min)

Keep speeches short and human. Make sign-up visible and easy.

■ PICK YOUR ROLE

Every event needs all of these — pick one and own it



Host / Facilitator

Opens & closes.
Keeps tone steady.



Greeter

Welcomes people.
Makes newcomers
feel seen.



Sign-In Lead

Collects contact info.
Keeps follow-up
list accurate.



Timekeeper

Keeps segments moving.
Prevents one voice
dominating.



Note Taker

Captures themes,
ideas, and
commitments.



Safety Lead

Water, first aid,
exits. De-escalates
calmly.



Media Lead

Photos & clips.
Always asks consent
for close-ups.



Follow-Up Lead

Texts/emails within
24 hrs. Confirms
next meeting.

■■ TRACKING YOUR PEOPLE

Write this down after every conversation and event

For each person you connect with, record:

- ✓ Name, phone number, and preferred contact method
- ✓ What's their "why" — in their own words
- ✓ Top issues they care about most
- ✓ What values showed up (dignity, family, community, fairness, faith...)
- ✓ What they are realistically able to contribute (time, skills, space, networks)
- ✓ What they committed to do next
- ✓ Follow-up date and who is responsible for following up

Commitment Levels

- | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|--|
| 1 | Leader | Will take responsibility and actively recruit others |
| 2 | Supporter | Shows up consistently and follows through on tasks |
| 3 | On the fence | Needs follow-up, encouragement, and a personal ask |
| 4 | Not interested | Move on respectfully — no pressure, no guilt |

YOUR RIGHTS IN PUBLIC

General information only — laws vary by state and city

✓ You generally have the right to:

- ✓ Speak, hold signs, and protest peacefully in public spaces
- ✓ Gather with others for lawful expression
- ✓ Record government officials including police doing their jobs in public (without interfering)

Rights are strongest in traditional public forums:

Sidewalks

Streets

Parks

PRIVATE PROPERTY IS DIFFERENT

A sidewalk is usually public. A store parking lot is usually private.

If asked to leave private property and you refuse, you may be arrested for trespassing.

IF POLICE APPROACH

Stay calm. Know these words.

1 Ask calmly:

"Am I being detained, or am I free to go?"

2 If free to go:

Leave calmly and do not engage further.

3 If detained:

Ask why. You can say you do not consent to a search.
You may remain silent.

!

If arrested, say clearly:

Do not resist physically.

"I am going to remain silent. I want a lawyer."

PERMITS — WHEN YOU NEED ONE

Check early — rules vary by city

USUALLY NEED A PERMIT

- Marches blocking traffic
- Amplified sound
- Large crowds in certain parks
- Street closures

OFTEN NO PERMIT NEEDED

- Small sidewalk gatherings
- Quiet park meetups
- Private property events

When in doubt, call your city hall or parks department before the event.

■ TAA EVENT STANDARDS

Say these before every gathering

- ★ **We are peaceful, disciplined, and lawful.**
- ★ **We do not dehumanize.**
- ★ **We do not escalate conflict.**
- ★ **We do not put participants in avoidable legal risk.**