



Newtown Conversations Planning Guide

Organizing a conversation with those you care about to discuss the *Newtown* documentary is not very different from organizing a gathering of your friends or family for a book club discussion. This Planning Guide contains a sample checklist to help you prepare for your conversation, a sample invitation, and tips for creating your invite list and assuring good participation.

Planning Checklist

Use this checklist as a guide to help you plan and prepare for your conversation:

Two to Three Weeks Before Your Conversation

____ Register your conversation by signing up at <http://www.sandyhookpromise.org/newtownconversations>.

Tips:

- Before you register, you will need to determine the location for your conversation. **The *Newtown* documentary airs Monday, April 3rd at 9 p.m. ET/PT, 8 p.m. CT/MT, on PBS.**
- The *Newtown* documentary lasts 80 minutes. Following the documentary, we encourage you to host a conversation. The average conversation will last between 30 - 45 minutes. We encourage you to view the documentary together, and have your conversation afterwards. If that isn't possible, you can have your conversation within a few days after the viewing.
- If you have a DVR, you may want to record the documentary. This enables playback and review of scenes that may be useful in your conversation.

____ Download the *Newtown* Documentary Conversation Questions Guide at <http://sandyhookpromise.org/newtownconversations>

____ Download the *Newtown* Documentary Sample Invitation at <http://sandyhookpromise.org/newtownconversations>

____ Create your guest list.

Tips:

- You will want at least three or more people to participate in your conversation, not including yourself. This means you will want to invite at least double the number of people you want to join you. Start by inviting those closest to you and whom you feel the most comfortable around and build from there. Consider your friends, family members, colleagues or neighbors.

- Ask your friends, family members, colleagues or neighbors to help you recruit others to join your conversation. Connect with other people within your organization or community, as well as your personal and professional connections. Ask them to help you identify others to invite and/or to encourage them to bring a friend
- Request a commitment. Ask people to RSVP and keep asking those who don't respond to your invitation the first time around. Explain to them why this is an important conversation and why you want them to join you. Ask if you can count on them to be there - persistence conveys importance.

____ Send invitations to your guests. Please feel free to use the Sample Invitation in this guide to send to your guests. This invitation can be customized and sent via email, social media, flyer or a handwritten invitation.

One Week to Three Days Before Your Conversation

____ Make a list of what you will need and gather all necessary materials. Your list should include:

- A room with a television and seats for your guests
- Name tags if your guests don't already know each other
- Refreshments if you are choosing to serve them
- Necessary copies available of the *Newtown* Documentary Sample Questions at <http://sandyhookpromise.org/newtownconversations>

____ Review the agenda and the *Newtown* Conversation Sample Questions at <http://sandyhookpromise.org/newtownconversations>. Prepare your welcome and introduction and review the materials.

____ Follow up and remind your guests. A small reminder can go a long way. Remind your guests the time, date and location of your conversation. This could be a personal reminder the next time you see them, a phone call, text message, social media post or email.

Day of Your Conversation

____ Smile, breathe and relax. Remember, you are talking about something you care deeply about to the people you care deeply about. Your guests will want to support you!

____ Be sure to have a laptop, computer or notebook with internet access close by. Following the documentary viewing and conversation, ask your guests to Make the Promise at <http://www.sandyhookpromise.org> before they leave.

Following Your Conversation

____ Sandy Hook Promise will send you a short survey after April 3. Please let us know if you were able to host a documentary viewing and conversation and how it went by completing the short survey.

____ Please send a short thank you to your guests. Thank them for joining you for this very important conversation and for Making the Promise.