

*Wildflyer* COFFEE

*House Party*  
PLANNING KIT

# House Party

## PLANNING KIT

### What is a house party?

House parties are informal fundraisers organized by supporters who love the work Wildflyer Coffee is doing to end youth homelessness and who want to help sustain our efforts. They are one of the most common ways that our supporters raise money to support our programs and services, as these parties are a great way to catch up with friends while supporting the work Wildflyer Coffee is doing. Parties come in all shapes and sizes, and can be formal, informal, include a full meal or just snacks. Whatever you choose, the purpose of the party is to connect with friends and loved ones while learning more about youth homelessness and Wildflyer Coffee!

### Why throw a house party for Wildflyer Coffee?

- To raise critical support for Wildflyer Coffee's employment program working to end youth homelessness
- To help Wildflyer Coffee reach out to new individuals who care about youth, ending homelessness, social enterprise, and of course, coffee!
- To participate in a social enterprise movement
- To have fun and meet other like-minded individuals

### STEPS TO A "WILD" HOUSE PARTY

**1) Pick a date:** Consider things like the theme or type of party you want to have, as well as season. If you want to have a "coffee party" and have us set-up the cart, consider a Saturday or Sunday morning/afternoon, so your guests don't lose a night of sleep! A word of caution on hosting parties during the summer or the holidays. Summer tends to be difficult as many people are out of town, and holidays can be overwhelming with other events and family obligations. However, we've also had successful Christmas parties thrown on our behalf, so don't hesitate to capitalize on holidays and events where your guests may be inclined to be more generous. You know your networks better than we do. Once you've settled on a date, confirm it with Carley Kammerer at [carley@wildflyercoffee.com](mailto:carley@wildflyercoffee.com) or 262-271-5576.

**2) Build a guest list:** Invite your friends, neighbors, coworkers, and members of groups you're involved in. Recruit co-hosts to help you spread the word and invite their contacts. The general rule is to ask four times as many people as you expect to attend (really!). In the past, events with co-hosts have done the best. This is because you'll have some help with planning and handling details, and you can invite a more extensive network of individuals.

**3. Plan the party:** Think about details like:

- Give easy directions to your home or the party location
- Clearly indicate your house for the day of the party
- Where will your guests park?
- Where is the most comfortable to accommodate the group?
- Provide enough seats for your guests
- Where food and drink will be located?

Consider a theme to encourage a fun, exciting atmosphere, house parties don't have to be boring! Some ideas include a barbeque during the summer, using the coffee cart to host a "coffee party" on a weekend morning/early afternoon or a simple wine and cheese gathering in your home. One September, a group of donors threw an Oktoberfest themed party complete with brats, German potato salad, German-styled beer, and themed decorations. These parties can be an entertaining, creative way to get people together for a good cause!

Food and drink are up to you, but food that can be eaten while standing is always an easy option. Finger foods that don't require utensils like hors d'oeuvres, cheese and crackers, veggies, cookies, and brownies work well. It doesn't have to be anything fancy. The point is to have fun and support Wildflyer Coffee, not stress yourself out trying to be host of the year.

**4. Send invitations:** Use Evite.com, email, and social media instead of paper to save trees and time!

Be sure to specify on the invitations that this will be a fundraising event! The purpose of the party is NOT to ambush your friends. But, to let them know that youth homelessness and Wildflyer Coffee are important to you and you want to share this with them. Some ways to do this are adding phrases such as "donations gratefully accepted" or, if you're blunt, "bring your checkbooks."

A great way to start the invitation is by sharing your personal connection to Wildflyer Coffee. Consider talking about the following:

- What is your connection to the founders or how you came into contact with Wildflyer
- A personal relationship you may have had with homelessness (did you or someone you know experience housing instability)
- Why do you donate to Wildflyer?
- A story of an experience you had with Wildflyer Coffee that changed, challenged or inspired you.

Create an emotional connection and share your own involvement first, and your friends will get on board. We will work with you to create the invitation, so don't worry about this part!

You should also indicate at what time there will be a presentation about Wildflyer Coffee, to ensure that as many people as possible will be in attendance for this portion of the evening. Include date, time, location, directions, your own message, and any other additional information about your party (theme, what will be served, etc.). See the second to last page for sample invitations. Consider asking each guest to bring a guest!

You should send out your invitations at least a month before your party. When you send them out, you should also include a donation envelope or a link to donate through the web site. This means that even your friends who are unable to attend will be able to make a contribution if they wish to. Be sure to mention that all donations are tax-deductible.

Using online tools, such as Facebook, can be a quick way to invite your community. Using your personal Facebook profile, create a Facebook event invitation and invite everyone you are connected to on Facebook. This invitation will be the home base for getting people interested in attending your party. Consider using Facebook's message feature to send a personal message to a handful of your closest friends. This message should be personal, so they know it's coming from you, not from a faceless organization.

**5. Reminders:** Make follow-up phone calls and send Evite.com reminders to invitees who haven't responded. A week or so before the party, you should call those guests who have not already submitted an RSVP. Remind them about the party. The best-attended house parties are typically the result of the host or hostess making a reminder call to the guest.



**6. Make a pitch plan:** Make a plan for presenting your guests with information about the organization and making the pitch for support. Wildflyer Coffee staff and/or board members will be present to make a presentation about the organization and partner with the host to create the perfect pitch. We are happy to help you develop your pitch ahead of time, just ask!

**7. Enjoy your party:** Have fun! Raising funds for and awareness of a coffee company that is also ending youth homelessness is pretty cool.

**8. Follow-up:** Expressing gratitude is one of the most important things you can do. At minimum, send a thank you email to those who attended and donated. Sending handwritten cards is incredibly effective and will really relay your gratitude. Your friends came out and spent their time and money supporting an organization you love, it's important to recognize and thank them for that. Wildflyer will send out its own thank you, but it's best practice that you express gratitude personally as well. We will provide you with a list of those who donated during the party.

### **What do we do during the party?**

Organize your party in whatever way you think will work best --be innovative and creative. Should you want a guideline, here is a party timeline (for a 6pm to 8pm event) you can use:

- **6:00-6:30** Host welcomes arriving guests. Guests sign-in (we will provide a sign-in sheet) so that we can keep them updated about Wildflyer Coffee in the future.
- **6:30-7:00** Guests mingle, enjoy food and drink.
- **7:00-7:30** Host addresses group, welcoming them, and introducing representative(s) from the organization who makes a 5-10 minute presentation about the organization, explaining the mission, goals, programs, etc. The host explains why they support the organization and asks guests to make a financial contribution to the work
- **7:30-8:00** Host and Wildflyer Coffee representative thanks guests for their support. The host invites guests to have more to eat and drink.

## **We'll Bring:**

- An engaging representative or several to talk with your guests about Wildflyer Coffee, this is typically the founder and Executive Director, as well as 1-2 board members.
- Guest sign-in sheets, Wildflyer Coffee, printed materials, coffee if requested
- Donation envelopes, subscription forms– opportunities for you and your guests to get involved, take action, and support Wildflyer Coffee

## **FAQs**

**How many people should I invite?** Figure out how many people fit comfortably in the party space. Invite four times as many people as you hope will attend. We know this sounds crazy, but this equation has been tested and found to hold up.

**Should I have a co-host?** A co-host's primary purpose is to expand and diversify your guest list along with helping to plan and prep. If you have a great space but not an extensive guest list or a great list but a studio apartment, then co-hosting may be an excellent idea.

**Who should I invite?** Family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, folks in other groups you are a part of. Anyone who you think would care or be interested in learning about the mission of Wildflyer Coffee. Just keep in mind that the primary function of a house party is to reach out to a new group of supporters who aren't familiar with our work.

**What's in it for Wildflyer Coffee?** Beyond raising funds and having the opportunity to meet a new group of potential supporters of our work, house parties are an excellent way to foster community connection. By throwing a party for us, you and your guests are supporting the work and mission of the organization.

**What's in it for my guests and me?** You and your guests will have the opportunity to get involved in ending youth homelessness, learn about how to use coffee as a force for good, and have fun while doing it!

**What's involved in being a host?** A host is responsible for making the pitch for support. You'll share with your guests why you financially support Wildflyer Coffee and then ask your guests to join you in supporting the

organization. Don't be nervous, we'll help you in choreographing this pitch pre-party. The host should therefore be a donor to Wildflyer Coffee, as a pitch is not generally successful unless it is made by someone who is also investing in the organization's work. Besides this, the host and any co-host(s) take on the usual party planning responsibilities: pick a date, invite your friends, prepare refreshments, plan out the event, and enjoy your party.

**What is Evite?** Evite.com is an electronic invitation service that can be distributed and responded to via email—easy! Feel free to use whatever type of invitation you prefer, however.

### Sample Invitation

**TITLE:** Backyard Oktoberfest Fundraiser on Saturday, September 14th at 4:00pm.

**MESSAGE:** Through our efforts to help launch the Conscious Capitalism Community here in the Twin Cities, we have had the pleasure of getting to know Carley Kammerer of Wildflyer Coffee. Wildflyer was started 2 years ago by Carley, a licensed Social Worker who works with homeless youth. One of the gaps she recognized in dealing with homeless teenagers was that they don't have some of the basic skills to hold down a job. She started Wildflyer as a non-profit coffee-cart business that teaches skills such as time management, customer service and financial management to the youth with whom she works. However, she is currently limited in the number of teens she is able to mentor because she can't offer enough hours for them with her coffee-cart business. This is where we come in. Carley is launching a capital campaign to raise funds to open a storefront coffee shop. Here, she will be able to coach many more homeless youth and offer them consistent work hours during which to train. With the hope that this effort will change the lives of young people in a very positive way, we want to raise awareness and funds by hosting a Backyard Oktoberfest on Saturday, September 14th at 4:00pm.

Please join us at the home of X to help support this great cause. There is no commitment required - just come listen and have a beer! Food and drink will be provided, but no kids please as this is an adult-only gathering. There will be a brief presentation by Carley around 6:30pm. Please RSVP to me at X If you are not able to make it but would still like to donate, please go to [www.wildflyercoffee.com](http://www.wildflyercoffee.com) and click on the donate button. Please feel free to bring any guests you think might want to attend or forward this email onto others you feel would want to contribute!!

Let's have fun and get the Wildflyer storefront off the ground!  
We hope to see you on Sept. 14th!!

## **THANK YOU!**

We're so grateful you are taking the time to consider planning a house party to end youth homelessness. This will be a fun way to support a good cause, and we'll be with you every step of the way to offer advice and support. Please reach out to us if you have questions, or want to move forward with planning your own Wildflyer Coffee party!

### **For more information, contact:**

Carley Kammerer, Executive Director  
262-271-5576 or [carley@wildflyercoffee.com](mailto:carley@wildflyercoffee.com)