

New Voices Pittsburgh
WOMEN OF COLOR FOR REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

Reproductive Health, Rights, and Justice Frameworks: An Introduction

Reproductive Health: The Reproductive Health framework addresses the reproductive health needs of women, focusing on the disparities and inequalities in healthcare. It aims to eliminate these things by creating and developing progressive health care clinics and agencies, and ensuring that women have access to full reproductive health services and education. By creating low or no-cost health clinics, it works to level the playing field for women's access to healthcare.

Reproductive Rights: The Reproductive Rights framework addresses women's legal rights surrounding reproductive health care services. Specifically, it focuses on keeping abortion legal and family planning clinics open. Through advocacy, politics, and legal means, it works to maintain a woman's "right to choose" and "right to privacy."

Reproductive Justice: The Reproductive Justice framework addresses the histories of reproductive oppression and abuse in all communities and how these histories have created structural inequalities. It uses the organization of women and girls creating change for themselves to empower women, specifically women of color by focusing on many issues - including reproductive health, reproductive rights, environmental issues, equal rights, etc. - rather than one specific issue. Women are empowered to take control and responsibility for their own bodies and lives.

	Model	Issues	Key Players
Reproductive Health (RH)	Health-Care Delivery	Access to full range of reproductive health services; Low/no-cost and culturally competent quality care; Comprehensive sexuality education; Contraception; Prenatal/pregnancy Care; Abortion Services; Cancer Prevention; Health Insurance	Healthcare Providers: Medical Professionals, Community and Public Health Educators, Researchers
Reproductive Rights (RR)	Legal Systems	Abortion; Contraception; Privacy	Lawyers, Judges, Public Policy Makers; Advocacy Groups
Reproductive Justice (RJ)	Movement-Building	RH and RJ + Human rights, Systemic oppression; Self-Help; Intersectionality	Community Organizers; Women of Color; Marginalized Groups

- Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice, *A New Vision for Advancing Our Movement for Reproductive Health, Reproductive Rights and Reproductive Justice*, 2005

CONDITIONS OF REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

By Rickie Solinger

Reproductive Justice recognizes women's right to reproduce as a foundational human right.

The right to be recognized as a legitimate reproducer regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, economic status, age, immigrant status, citizenship status, ability/disability status, and status as an incarcerated woman encompasses the following:

Women's right to manage their reproductive capacity:

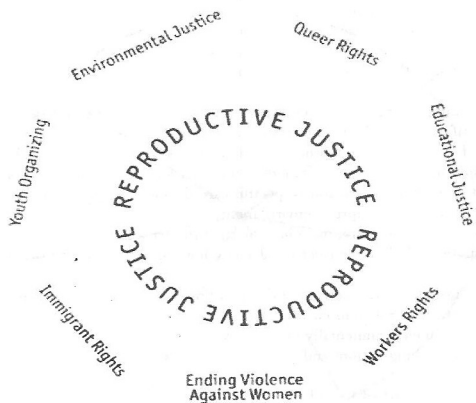
1. The right to decide whether or not to become a mother and when;
2. The right to primary culturally competent preventive health care;
3. The right to accurate information about sexuality and reproduction;
4. The right to accurate contraceptive information;
5. The right and access to safe, respectful, and affordable contraceptive materials and services; and
6. The right to abortion and access to full information about safe, respectful, affordable abortion services;
7. The right to and equal access to the benefits of and information about the potential risks of reproductive technology.

Women's right to adequate information, resources, services and personal safety while pregnant:

1. The right and access to safe, respectful, and affordable medical care during and after pregnancy including treatment for HIV/AIDS, drug and alcohol addiction, and other chronic conditions, including the right to seek medical care during pregnancy without fear of criminal prosecution or medical interventions against the pregnant woman's will;
2. The right of incarcerated women to safe and respectful care during and after pregnancy, including the right to give birth in a safe, respectful, medically-appropriate environment;
3. The right and access to economic security, including the right to earn a living wage;
4. The right to physical safety, including the right to adequate housing and structural protections against rape and sexual violence;
5. The right to practice religion or not, freely and safely, so that authorities cannot coerce women to undergo medical interventions that conflict with their religious convictions;
6. The right to be pregnant in an environmentally safe context;
7. The right to decide among birthing options and access to those services.

A woman's right to be the parent of her child:

1. The right to economic resources sufficient to be a parent, including the right to earn a living wage;
2. The right to education and training in preparation for earning a living wage;
3. The right to decide whether or not to be the parent of the child one gives birth to;
4. The right to parent in a physically and environmentally safe context;
5. The right to leave from work to care for newborns or others in need of care;
6. The right to affordable, high-quality child care.



Intersectionality of Reproductive Justice
with Social Justice Issues

Source: Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice

Who is New Voices Pittsburgh?

New Voices Pittsburgh: Women of Color for Reproductive Justice is deeply committed to building a local movement for Reproductive Justice and we intend to elevate the powerful voices of women of color on human rights, reproductive oppression and the totality of our experiences as women of color.

New Voices Pittsburgh (NVP) was founded in 2004 to mobilize women of color in Southwestern Pennsylvania to attend the March for Women's Lives. New Voices Pittsburgh is a boldly innovative organization using the Reproductive Justice framework to build a powerful local movement with young women of color and allies in the Greater Pittsburgh Region.

New Voices Pittsburgh: Women of Color for Reproductive Justice is the only Human Rights and social change organization for women of color, led by women of color and about women of color in Pittsburgh. NVP is deeply committed to building a local movement for Reproductive Justice.

Reproductive Justice is:

- (1) a *social change movement* to ensure that all women have all choices about our bodies, sexuality, labor and reproduction;
- (2) a *Human Rights-based community organizing framework* that seeks to ensure our: Sexual Rights, Pregnancy Rights, Birth Control & Abortion Rights; Birthing Rights and Parenting Rights free from individual, family and state-sanctioned violence;
- (3) the affirmation of *our identities* and the end of all forms of oppression;
- (4) the *complete* physical, emotional, spiritual, political, economic, environmental and social *well-being* of women and girls; and
- (5) a positive means to transform ourselves, our families and our communities through the healing practice of *self-help*.

Vision

To achieve Reproductive Justice in the Greater Pittsburgh Region

Mission

To connect women of color with the Reproductive Justice Movement, to educate communities of color about Human Rights and to develop new voices for leadership in Pittsburgh

Statement of Purpose

New Voices Pittsburgh exists to elevate Human Rights through Reproductive Justice educating ourselves, our families and communities. To change our social and economic condition, we will address the multiple issues we face as women of color and assert new, progressive, political voices in the public sphere.

Theory of Change

New Voices Pittsburgh serves women of color primarily ages 12-35 through social change activism, civic engagement and leadership development.

Being an Ally...

- **Allies** work continuously to develop an understanding of the personal and institutional experiences of the person or people with whom they are aligning themselves. If the ally is a member of a privileged group, it is essential that she or he also strives for clarity about the impact of privileges on her or his life.
- **Allies** choose to align themselves publicly and privately with members of target groups and respond to their needs. This may mean breaking assumed allegiances with those who have the same privileges as you. It is important not to underestimate the consequences of breaking these agreements and to break them in ways that will be most useful to the person or group with whom you are aligning yourself.
- **Allies** believe that it is in their interest to be allies and are able to talk about why this is the case. Talking clearly about having the privilege to be able to step in is an important educational tool for others with the same privileges.
- **Allies** are committed to the never-ending personal growth required to be genuinely supportive. If both people are without privilege it means coming to grips with the ways that internalized oppression affects you. If you are privileged, uprooting long-held beliefs about the way that the world works will probably be necessary.
- **Allies** are able to articulate how various patterns of oppression have served to keep them in privileged positions or to withhold opportunities they might otherwise have. For many of us, this means exploring and owning our dual roles as oppressor and oppressed, as uncomfortable as that might be.
- **Allies** expect to make some mistakes but do not use that as an excuse for inaction. As a person with privilege, it is important to study and to talk about how your privilege acts as both a shield and blinders for you. Of necessity, those without privileges in a certain area know more about the specific examples of privilege than those who are privileged.
- **Allies** know that those on each side of an alliance hold responsibility for their own change, whether or not persons on the other side choose to respond or to thank them. They are also clear that they are doing this work for themselves, not to "take care of" the Other.

- **Allies** know that, in the most empowered and genuine ally relationships, the persons with privilege initiate the change toward personal, institutional, and societal justice and equality.
- **Allies** promote a sense of inclusiveness and justice in the organization, helping to create an environment that is hospitable for all.
- **Allies** with privilege are responsible for sharing the lead with people of color in changing the organization and hold greater responsibility for seeing changes through to their conclusion. *Sharing* the lead is very different from *taking* the lead. When we take the lead we get to keep ourselves central and see ourselves as riding in to fix everything. Sharing the lead requires that we are in alignment and partnership with people who are working toward the greater good of all of us.
- **Allies** are able to laugh at themselves as they make mistakes and at the real, but absurd, systems of supremacy in which we all live. As many oppressed people know, humor is a method of survival. Those with privilege must be very careful not to assume that we can join in the humor of those in a target group with who we are in alliance.
- **Allies** understand that emotional safety is not a realistic expectation if we take our alliance seriously. For those with privilege, the goal is to "become comfortable with the uncomfortable and uncomfortable with the too-comfortable" and to act to alter the too-comfortable.
- **Allies** know the consequences of not being clear about the Other's experience. Some of these are: lack of trust, lack of authentic relationships, and lack of foundation for coalition

- Source

How to be an ally if you are a person of privilege?

Frances E. Kendall, Ph.D. © 2003

<http://www.scn.org/friends/ally.html>