



## **HOST A HEART TO HEART HOUSE PARTY**

Children's HeartLink is thrilled you decided to throw your own Heart to Heart House Party. The time and effort you are dedicating is sincerely appreciated and will have a lasting benefit for Children's HeartLink and kids around the world. We are here to help you make your event enjoyable and informative for everyone involved.

By hosting a party, you can help us raise funds to support lifesaving work. Equally important, you can help us raise awareness in your community; organizations like Children's HeartLink depend on the dedication and generosity of supporters like you and we are always interested in talking to new friends about the need for sustainable health programs in underserved regions of the world. A well-planned house party can be an excellent way to accomplish all these goals with your friends and family.

Included in this packet are facts and figures about congenital heart disease, the need for pediatric healthcare in the developing world, and Children's HeartLink's work. You will also find information, sample documents and helpful tips for making your party a huge success. Feel free to use as many of these resources as you want to make your event a fun way to support important work and kids across the globe.

On behalf of Children's HeartLink, thank you for your commitment. It is the support we receive from individuals like you who allow us to continue to build quality programs around the world that will heal the hearts of children for years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth P. Sweeney". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Elizabeth Perlich Sweeney  
President



## Preliminary Planning Points

### GOALS

1. Educate attendees about Children's HeartLink
2. Raise awareness about congenital heart disease in developing countries
3. Raise monetary donations

### TALK TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Contact friends or family members who might like to help you plan your party. These folks will be able to contribute contacts and connections that could be useful during the planning process and when you're sending invites. Even a couple helpers will save you a lot of time and will ultimately benefit your event as a whole. There are many potential ways for others to help you:

- See if one person would ask retail stores for in-kind donations (i.e. food for dinners, local band for concert, coffee/tea for tea party)
- Another friend can help with invitations, mailings and follow up calls
- Ask another person to help plan the food and décor

### VENUE AND THEME

The event could be held right in your own home or in another venue. You could make a reservation at a local restaurant, reception room, coffee house, church or any other place of gathering.

We have included different themes and ideas to help get you started.

Brunch	Concert Event
Tea and Coffee Cake	Art Exhibit
Wine and Cheese	Fashion Show
Appetizers and Drinks	Raffles and Silent Auctions
Dinner Party (Formal)	Talent Contest
Dinner Party (Casual)	Children's Birthday Party
Cocktail	Sporting Event



*Continued...*

#### GUEST LIST

Think outside the box. Use your committee members for more contacts.

- Family members
- Friends
- Neighbors
- Social acquaintances (old friends, classmates, teachers, etc.)
- People from your church, temple, mosque or other spiritual affiliation
- People from your work community
- Members of your community groups (ex: social clubs, organizations you volunteer with, block association, PTA, food coop, dance class, gym, book club, etc.)
- Community leaders with whom you have connections (school board members, local elected officials, community activists)
- Professionals you know personally or businesses you frequent (store managers, doctors, lawyers, teachers, pharmacists, café owners, accountants, local celebrities, etc.)

#### RESOURCES FROM CHILDREN'S HEARTLINK

Let us know you are planning a Heart to Heart House Party. Please email Katie Heinemann, the Event Manager, at [katie@childrensheartlink.org](mailto:katie@childrensheartlink.org). We can also provide you with assorted Children's HeartLink marketing materials. Examples include:

- Heartbeat Newsletter
- Annual Report
- Informational DVD
- Bookmarks
- Heart to Heart campaign materials
- Blank note cards



Below are some useful steps other party planners have offered to help you get ready for your event. We suggest giving yourself plenty of time to plan, but the timeline below probably won't match your process exactly. Not every point will apply to your event and you'll probably have other ideas not listed here. You can use this as a tool to get started as much or as little as you see fit.

## **CHECKLIST**

### **4-6 weeks out**

- Contact Children's HeartLink and let us know you are hosting a house party
- Contact friends and family who can help you plan
- Choose a location, date and time – check to make sure your date/time doesn't conflict with any other event or party your friends might attend
- Decide on the type of event or theme you want to have
- Determine who to invite with age in mind (adults, or adults and children)
- Write out an action plan and a to-do list with personal deadlines
- Establish your fundraising goal
- Reserve any equipment you're planning to use (Ex: projector and/or sound system)
- Create invitation list
- Mail invitations with directions and ask for RSVP

### **Two weeks prior**

- Plan food and/or refreshments
- Purchase or get donations of beverages and supplies
- Prepare your presentation
- Make sure all guests have directions

### **One-week prior**

- Personally contact guests to remind them of the event
- Follow up on any invitees that have not responded with a RSVP

### **Day before event**

- Obtain rented or borrowed equipment
- Prepare make-ahead food
- Set up the decorations and any other materials or displays
- Set up an area with DVD showing. Test all equipment ahead of time

### **Day of the event**

- See sample agenda

### **Follow up**

- Fill out the Feedback Form at the end of this packet
- Mail feedback form and all donations to Children's HeartLink  
5075 Arcadia Avenue, Minneapolis MN 55436
- Send thank you letters to guests



## Communication

### FACTS AND FIGURES

The following information about Children's HeartLink and congenital heart disease can be the foundation of any presentation or speech you give at your event. It can also help you answer questions your guests might have.

- For 40 years, Children's HeartLink has been dedicated to the prevention and treatment of heart disease in underserved regions of the world.
- Every day of the year, a child in the developing world gets better health care by local professionals who benefit from support from Children's HeartLink.
- Children's HeartLink currently works with partners in nine countries: Brazil, China, Ecuador, India, Kenya, Malaysia, South Africa, Ukraine, and Vietnam.
- Children's HeartLink sends volunteer medical teams from around the world to partner sites to train, teach and perform lifesaving heart procedures on needy children.
- Each year, approximately 100 of the finest doctors and medical staff volunteer their time, services and expertise to Children's HeartLink.
- The impact of medical missions not only save the lives of children, but also empowers the hospitals to assist more children when the missions are complete.
  
- Across the globe, **one in 120** children are born with a congenital heart defect.
- Approximately **90 percent** of children in developing countries don't have access to adequate cardiac care.
- There are no cultural, religious, racial or political boundaries in the operating room. Only shared humanity and shared concern over the heart of a child.
- Children's HeartLink is based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. It is a registered 501 c(3) nonprofit organization, funded by private donations from corporations, foundations and individuals.



## Sample Agenda

This is a sample agenda you may choose to use as a guide when planning your event. Every party is different, but these basics can help you get started.

- 6 p.m. House Party is ready to begin.
- 6-6:30 p.m. Guest begin to arrive. Ask them to take a look at the informational materials you have set out. This will also serve as a time to socialize with other guests and get comfortable.
- 6:30 p.m. Let your guests know the presentation will begin shortly and they can continue to mingle and socialize.
- 7 p.m. Gather your guests in the presentation area.
- 7:15 p.m. Introduce yourself and why you chose to host a party.
- 7:20 p.m. Show the Children's HeartLink DVD or slideshow. Pictures and music are a great way to engage your guests.
- 7:25-8 p.m. Begin your presentation. Facts and Figures are included in this packet. For more information refer to our website: [www.childrensheartlink.org](http://www.childrensheartlink.org).
- 8-9 p.m. Encourage your guests to stay and enjoy the entertainment, food, and refreshments. Catch up with your guests and ask them what they thought of the presentation.

Before guests leave:

- Be sure to collect any donations.
- Point out the information sign up sheet if guests don't want to contribute but would like to learn more.
- Let them take home any informational materials.



## Sample Invitation



You are invited to my Heart to Heart House Party  
to benefit Children's HeartLink  
Thursday, February 11 at 7:00 p.m.

Host: Jane Doe  
123 Street North  
Minneapolis, MN 55555

Food and refreshments will be served with a brief  
presentation about Children's HeartLink.

Please RSVP by Monday, February 8  
(555) 555-5555  
jane.doe@childrensheartlink.org

### MAIL INVITATIONS

If you decide to mail your invitations, feel free to use the template we have provided. You can download the Microsoft Word version and fill in the specific details of your event.

### EMAIL INVITATIONS

If you would rather email invitations, try using a service like [www.evite.com](http://www.evite.com). You can choose the design based on the theme or type of event you plan to have. These sites even offer tips and party suggestions for food, refreshments, and decorations.



## *Sample Thank You Letters*

To those who did attend and did make a donation:

Dear [Name],

Thank you very much for coming to my Heart to Heart House Party. Your gift of [\$\_\_\_] to Children's HeartLink was extremely generous and will go a long way to helping kids with congenital heart disease. I appreciate you taking the time to come to my event and support this important cause. If you would be interested in hosting your own Heart to Heart House Party, please let me know. On behalf of the children and families who's lives will be changed by your kind heart and generosity, thank you.

Warm regards,  
[Your name]

To those who did attend but did not make a donation:

Dear [Name],

Thank you very much for coming to my Heart to Heart House Party. I appreciate you taking the time to come and learn more about Children's HeartLink. You can still make a donation to this important cause. Visit the Children's HeartLink website at [www.childrensheartlink.org](http://www.childrensheartlink.org) or just let me know and I can get you a donation card. On behalf of all the children and families who are reached by your kind heart and generosity, thank you.

Warm regards,  
[Your name]