

The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics

Host a Safe Cosmetics Party!

Hosting a safe cosmetics party is a great way to get involved in the growing movement to make consumer products safe. Most people don't know that the \$50 billion cosmetics industry is unregulated and that many cosmetics ingredients are linked to serious health problems. Your party is an opportunity to educate friends, offer tips for choosing safer personal care products, and make change by contacting companies and elected officials- all while having fun!

You can host a Safe Cosmetics party as a private event with your friends, or you can work with local community organizations, women's groups, parents' groups, book clubs, environmental groups, teen groups or faith groups to host the event together.

Suggested Party Plans

Be creative with your party plans- these are some ideas to get your party planning wheels turning. On our Web site, look for our Makeover Kit, which contains DIY cosmetics recipes, sample letters, talking points, poster art and more (Get Involved -> Materials -> Makeover Kit).

- **Make non-toxic cosmetics** together as a group, or make cosmetics ahead of time to give as presents in goody bags with copies of the recipes.
- **Sign the petition** for safer cosmetics online (safecosmetics.org/petitiontocongress), or the paper copy in the Makeover Kit. (Please send completed forms back to the Campaign- the address is on the bottom of the petition!)
- Ask people to **bring their cosmetics bags** or favorite personal care products so you can check out the safety of the ingredients together in the [Skin Deep database](#).
- Have a **book club event** using Stacy Malkan's light-yet-informative book, *Not Just a Pretty Face: The Ugly Side of the Beauty Industry*. Plan the party well in advance so guests can purchase the book (via a link on our homepage). At your party, you can watch/listen to our recorded Book Club webinar, and use our discussion questions to get your conversation flowing afterward.
- Use the **Campaign's 20 minute Powerpoint Presentation (PPT)** and sample script to give a mini-lecture to your group, and then have a joint discussion. You can feel free to add your own slides and personal talking points to the presentation too. Email Genevieve at groja@breastcancerfund.org to obtain the PPT.
- **Write to cosmetics companies** that have not signed the Compact for Safe Cosmetics, and urge them to make this public commitment to safety.
- **Write to your elected officials**, asking them to support legislation that would regulate the cosmetics industry, and ensure the all personal care products are safe. You can use our [Legislator Lookup](#) in the Get Involved section of the website to find the contact information for your officials, and the short and sweet letter text in the Makeover Kit.

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www.SafeCosmetics.org

info@safecosmetics.org



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- Work together on a letter to the editor or an **opinion piece for your local paper**. (See "Writing a Letter to the Editor")
- Plan grassroots activities for the near future, such as:
 - meeting with your elected officials when they are home on recess- we have materials to make a Lobby Kit- please email Mia@safecosmetics.org for more information!
 - visiting local retailers, spa owners and makeup artists, and asking them to sign the Supporting Business pledge;
 - tabling at a health fair (See "How to Table" in the Makeover Kit).
- **Work on an art project!** Using heavy-weight paper and beauty magazines, make collage postcards to send to cosmetics companies that have not signed the Compact for Safe Cosmetics, or to your state representatives. Or, make educational posters to hang in community centers, high schools or health food stores. Direct them to safecosmetics.org to learn more. **Spread the word!**
- **Take photos** of your gathering and add them to our Facebook wall! [Facebook.com/safecosmetics](https://www.facebook.com/safecosmetics)
- **Tweet** about your party and this issue- spread the word!
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Step 1: Pick a date

If you want to have a larger party—say 15 or more people—or if you are going to host the party with a community group, begin planning one to two months in advance. If you want to have a smaller party, you may not need as much advance notice.

Note: If you do not have access to health food stores or herb shops and want to make cosmetics for the party, allow plenty of time to order ingredients online and have them delivered. See the Get Crafty section of www.safecosmetics.org for more info.

Step 2: Pick a location

A safe cosmetics party can be a simple gathering where you talk about the issue of toxins in personal care products. Or, it can be more hands-on: you can write letters, plan events or make your own cosmetics. The space you choose will need to accommodate your needs.

Some things to keep in mind when choosing a location:

- If you choose to make cosmetics you'll need an area that is large enough to accommodate your group and tolerate a spill or two, like your kitchen. Kitchens at local community centers or churches might be available to use as well.
- Internet access and a place to project images (if you have access to a projector) will ensure that everyone can partake in the Skin Deep research. Or, you can gather around one or two laptops to conduct your Skin Deep searches.
- The location should be accessible to everyone you're inviting- think about public transportation, parking spots, distance from home, wheelchair access, etc.

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Step 3: Invite people

Once you know the time and place, send your guests an invitation well in advance. You can make or buy invitations and mail them to people, post a flyer if you want to make it open to the public, set up a private or public Evite (www.evite.com) or send an e-mail.

Step 4: Learn more about the issue

You don't need to be an expert on all the ingredients in cosmetics (there are 12,500 unique ingredients in cosmetics!). However, it is always helpful to do a little research ahead of time so you can answer commonly asked questions and provide your crew with resources they can refer to after the party.

The best place to get started is on the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics Web site, where you'll find:

- **Campaign materials:** For a basic Campaign for Safe Cosmetics overview of cosmetics safety issues, as well as other useful documents, like [Frequently Asked Questions](#), go to Get Involved > Materials. Most of our materials are free and downloadable (like the popular Unmasked flier), so print as many copies as you need!
- **Recent news about safe cosmetics:** For links to articles published about cosmetic safety and the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics, see our Campaign Newsroom.
- **Companies that have signed the Compact for Safe Cosmetics:** The campaign asks cosmetics manufacturers to sign the Compact for Safe Cosmetics, a meaningful pledge to end the use of ingredients linked to health concerns. Navigate the Companies section of the website to learn more about the Compact and which companies have signed on. Skin Deep also notes in its product reports if a company has signed the Compact.
- **Talking points:** In Get Involved > Materials you'll find a Talking Points document that can help you articulate some of the key problems and solutions that the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics works toward.
- **Skin Deep:** If you have Internet access, we highly recommend you spend time using the Skin Deep database, an inventory of over 40,000 personal care products and ingredients. In addition to allowing consumers to search for the safety score of a personal care product or ingredient, the database contains a scientific bibliography, fact sheets (What Not to Buy, www.cosmeticdatabase.com/special/, is especially useful) and a Frequently Asked Questions page. You can access Skin Deep from our homepage.
- **Campaign for Safe Cosmetics petition to Congress:** Please have your guests sign our petition to Congress, asking the FDA be empowered to regulate the cosmetics industry. Signed sheets can be mailed to the address at the bottom of the form.

You can also contact Mia on the east coast (mia@safecosmetics.org), Jamie in the middle of the country (jamie@womenandenvironment.org), or Genevieve on the west coast (groja@breastcancerfund.org), for hardcopies of the Campaign's Little Blue Compact brochure. Small quantities are free for community organizing purposes. (Please give us two+ weeks to get the brochures to you. Thanks!)

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Step 5: Choose your recipes and activities

See the Get Involved > Get Crafty section of the Web site for sample recipes and feel free to search the Internet or local health food stores for more ideas, or email the above contacts for hardcopies of the recipes.

We recommend trying the more in-depth recipes ahead of time to make sure you are comfortable presenting them to your guests. Also note that if you melt substances like beeswax, the dish or pan you use may be difficult to restore to food-cooking condition.

Step 6: Buy your party supplies

If you are going to make cosmetics, it is best to get all your supplies plenty ahead of time. Don't forget the containers to put the homemade cosmetics in (like little pots or tubes), and small funnels for pouring cosmetics into containers. From an environmental health perspective, glass is always preferable to plastic, but it can sometimes be difficult to find the proper glass containers.

Determine other supply needs (paper, magazines, pens, clipboards, etc).

Step 7: Send your group a reminder

Give your group a phone or e-mail reminder three or four days before your party date. Having a head count will also help you ensure that you are fully stocked for the party.

Step 8: Just before the party, prepare the site

- If you have access to a projector and the Internet you can project Skin Deep onto a wall or a white sheet. Or, you can set up one or two Internet stations so guests can inventory products at the computer together.
- You can decorate your space with Campaign for Safe Cosmetics ads (printable from our Web site, under Get Involved > Materials) or copies of articles about the Campaign (Newsroom).

Step 9: Have a party!

In addition to having a blast and educating one another, we hope that a few folks at your party will want to become more involved with the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics moving forward.

Gauge the level of interest and the availability of your participants. Should you have a follow-up meeting to make plans moving forward?

Let people know how they can get involved in the campaign! Please ask them to sign up for our email updates (online or via the petition), and let them know where to find the above-mentioned resources.

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Step 10: Follow up

After the party is over...

- Send thank-you notes to your guests, and send completed petitions to the address at the bottom of the forms.
- Let us know how it went! If you take pictures, we would love to see them. Please e-mail them to mia@safecosmetics.org, or post photos on the Facebook wall

Sample Invitation

Dear _____,

Did you know that cosmetics products we use daily, like shampoo, fragrances, makeup and even baby lotion contain ingredients with known links to serious health concerns such as cancer and birth defects? And did you know that it is perfectly legal for companies to do this in the United States?

Please join me for a Safe Cosmetics house party! We will learn about the ingredients in the products we use regularly, how to make safer purchases, how to make our own healthy cosmetics and what we can do to bring this issue to the general public and to our elected officials.

All you need to bring is a couple of the personal care products you use most often (or a list of them) and an interest in learning more. Snacks are also welcome. I hope you can make it!

Where:

When:

What:

Please RSVP to:

Sample Supply List

- All materials for making cosmetics (including funnels for pouring newly made cosmetics, containers for the products, printed recipes...)
- Campaign fact sheets, Unmasked fliers, petitions/sign up sheets, sample letters to elected officials
- Campaign Ads for decorations (from Web site)
- Icebreaker form (from Makeover Kit)
- Goody bags, if desired
- Computers/projectors, if needed
- Snacks, drinks, serving supplies

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- Pens and paper, art supplies if needed
- Cleaning supplies

Sample Discussion Questions

- What is our society's image of beauty? How has this changed over time, and what changes do you think we'll see in the future?
- The personal care product industry is virtually unregulated—no government agency makes sure that these products are safe for long term use. Why do you think this is, and what are the implications?
- While we are living longer in this country, the number of people with health problems like cancer, obesity, attention deficit disorder and reproductive problems is growing. Many scientists and advocates have linked chemicals to this increase. How does this make you feel, and what do you think we need to do to change this unhealthy trend?
- What do you think it will take to make sure that cosmetics and other consumer products are safe for people and the environment?

Sample Thank-you Letter

Dear _____,

Thank you for attending my Safe Cosmetics house party! It was a great time.

Please continue to spread the word about the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics. If you haven't already, please visit the Web site (www.safecosmetics.org) and sign up to receive action alerts, news and updates on campaign activities.

Feel free to contact me for ideas on how to get involved in the campaign, and thanks again for helping make the party a great success.

Sincerely,

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Useful Links and Contact Information

Campaign materials and resources:

<http://safecosmetics.org/article.php?list=type&type=31>

Signers of the Compact for Safe Cosmetics:

<http://safecosmetics.org/section.php?id=51>

The Skin Deep database:

Use the link on the bottom left of the homepage: safecosmetics.org

Organizations that endorse the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics:

http://safecosmetics.org/about/compact_supporters.cfm

Copy of EU ban on dangerous substances in cosmetics:

<http://www.safecosmetics.org/docUploads/OJ%20implementation%20CMR%20ban%202004%5F93%20EN%2Epdf>

A quick breakdown of cosmetic-related laws:

<http://safecosmetics.org/article.php?list=type&type=30>

Have a great time!