

HOW TO  
**HANDLE  
TOUGH TOPICS  
LIKE A PRO**

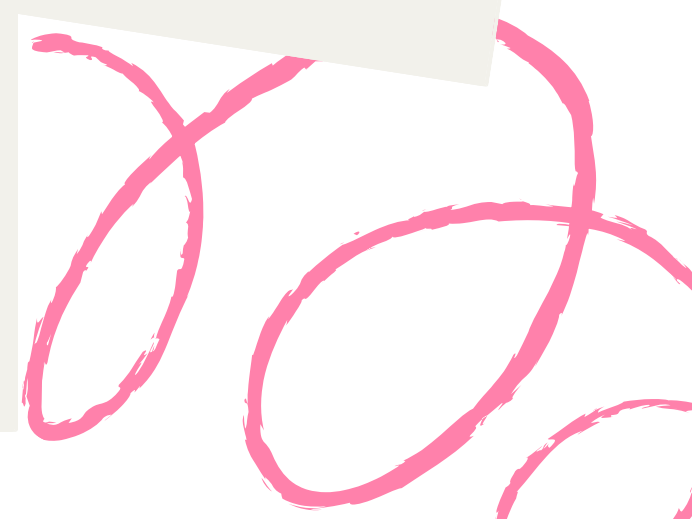
JESS MCINTOSH



# GROUND YOURSELF

## WHO'S ON MY SIDE?

- Facts / Truth / Science
- The vast majority of my community
- The Angels (helping kids is just the right thing to do)

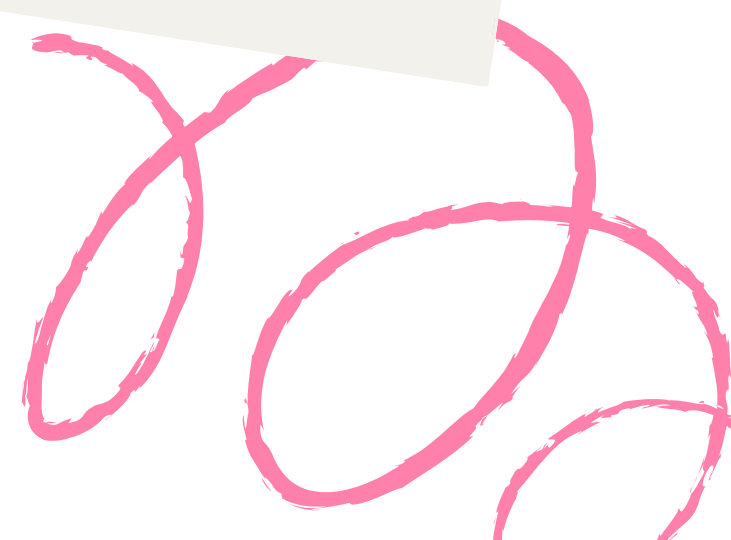


# GROUND YOURSELF



## WHO'S ON MY SIDE

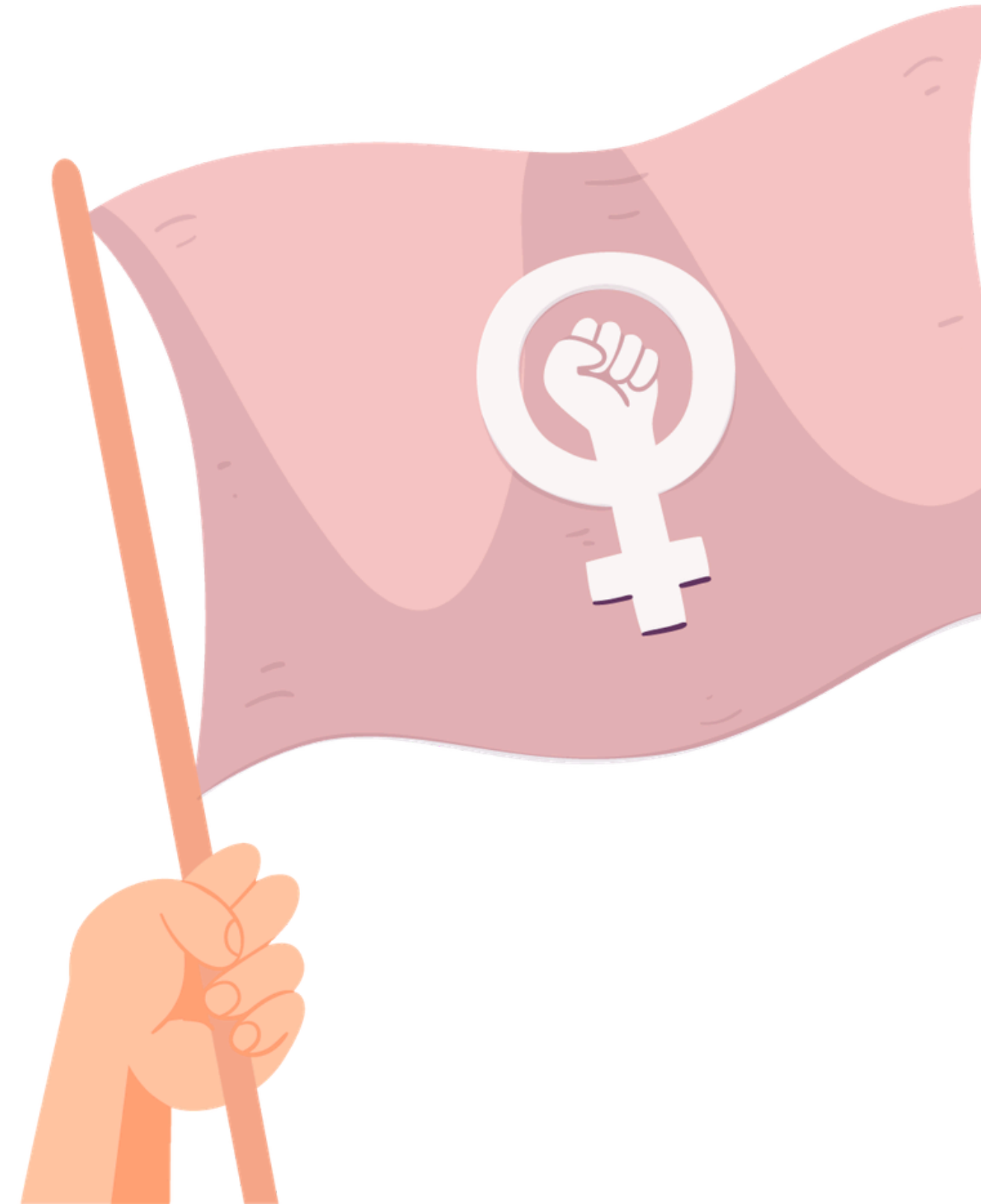
- More than 60% of Americans oppose banning LGBTQ+ lessons in school.
- 83% do not support banning books critical of U.S. History
- 87% do not support banning books that discuss race.
- 64% believe transgender people should be protected from discrimination (willing to bet if you change people to kids and discrimination to bullying, that number is even higher)
- 80-90% support sexual health education in schools.



# YOU ARE THE MAJORITY

## REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

- **60%** of voters support legal abortion (only 6% support total bans.)
- **91%** support legal birth control.
- When abortion rights are on the ballot — they tend to **win even in red states.**



# YOU ARE THE MAJORITY

## GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

- **56%** of voters think gun laws should be more strict.
- **93%** favor background checks.
- Over **52%** favor a ban on assault weapons.



# STANDING UP FOR YOUR BELIEFS



- Every one of our schools includes students who are LGBTQ+. Multiple studies have shown that learning that everyone deserves respect creates a safer environment for all kinds of students — whether or not they identify as LGBTQ+.
- Gun violence is the leading cause of death for children under 18. It's common sense to keep guns away from violent people. Keeping our kids safe is more important than politics.
- Everyone knows and loves someone who's had an abortion. Women should have the freedom to decide when and whether to grow their family without politicians getting involved.

# ANATOMY OF A **DISINFO** CAMPAIGN

Goal: Political power

Strategy: Undermine public education

Tactics:

- Demoralize the good guys
- Create chaos to obscure the strategy
- Flood the zone so the truth doesn't stand out



# WHO ARE THEY?

Some outside groups and politicians are heavily invested in **confusing and scaring** parents to:

- Score partisan points
- Gain political power



MOMS *for*  
★ LIBERTY ★



The   
*Heritage Foundation*



*Promise to America's*  
CHILDREN



  
ALLIANCE DEFENDING  
FREEDOM  
FOR FAITH. FOR JUSTICE.



 FAMILY WATCH  
INTERNATIONAL



 PACIFIC JUSTICE  
INSTITUTE  
Defending Religious Freedom, Parental Rights, And Other Civil Liberties Without Charge



  
MEDICAL INSTITUTE  
FOR SEXUAL HEALTH



 Family  
Policy **ALLIANCE**

# HOW TO FIGHT DISINFORMATION



## #1 - DON'T REPEAT DISINFORMATION

- Multiple studies have shown that statements like “No one is taking your guns away — we just want background checks” are actually counterproductive.
- What people remember is the salacious charge, not any accurate information that follows.

**INSTEAD USE A LINE  
THAT PROVIDES  
TRUTHFUL  
INFORMATION:**

“I support basic common sense reforms like background checks for firearm purchases and raising the age to buy an assault rifle.”

# THE “CHANGE MY MIND” GUY

It's ok to ignore the opposition – in fact, it's important to.

Remember: Their goal isn't to change your mind, it's to waste your time.



# HOW TO FIGHT DISINFORMATION



## #2 - DON'T IGNORE THE DISINFORMATION

- The truth is outside groups and some politicians are heavily invested in confusing and scaring parents to score political points.
- But we believe our kids are more important than politics.

**INSTEAD USE A LINE  
THAT  
ACKNOWLEDGES  
DISINFORMATION:**

“There is a lot of bad info out there — we want to set the record straight.”

# HAVING THE CONVERSATION:

## THE OPPOSITION

- Don't engage
- Don't waste time & energy
- Only fight “in front of the kids”



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# HAVING THE CONVERSATION:

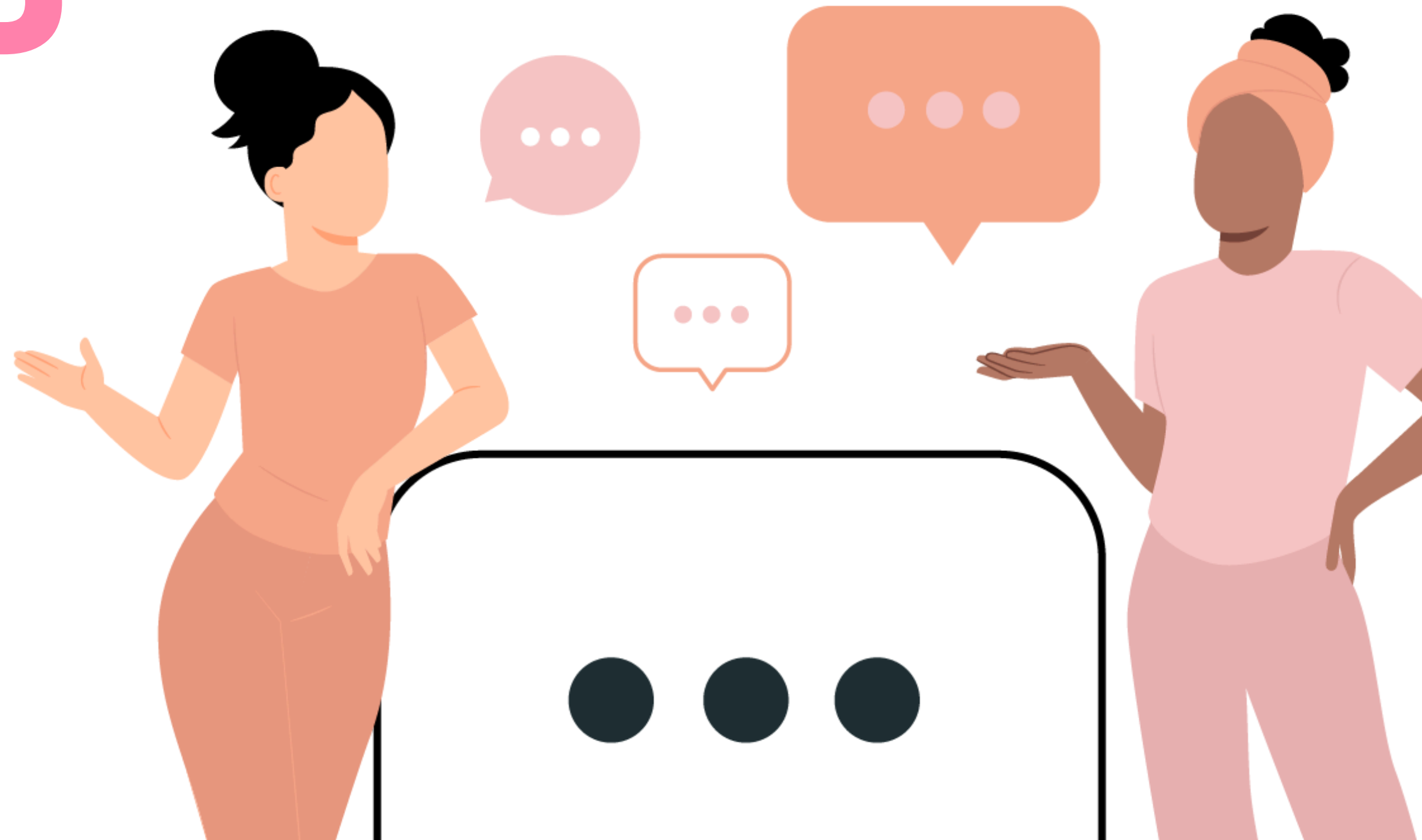
## YOUR NEIGHBORS WHO DISAGREE / PEOPLE SCARED BY THE DISINFO

- Find Common Ground — Turn “but” into “That’s Why”
- We all want students to feel safe at school and have opportunities for learning that’s why I don’t want to ban books about race or gender.
- I am also deeply concerned about violence and crime, that’s why I support common sense efforts like background checks.

# HAVING THE CONVERSATION:

## THE ALLIED

- Make it urgent
- Make it local
- Recruit!



# HAVING THE CONVERSATION

## STAY FOCUSED

- It's about your town, not Washington D.C.. It's about your kids, not partisanship.
- Ask questions! "There's so much bad info out there — what is it you're concerned about?"

## THEN REMEMBER:

- Say "no" or "that isn't true" and move on to the facts
- Find common ground — you share their concern, that's why...
- Acknowledge the bad actors. "There are a lot of people trying to confuse and scare parents. But our kids are worth more than politics."