

How to talk about voting in AAPI communities

Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) voters are the fastest growing electorate and the electoral margins of victory. A [2022 survey](#) shows that most AAPIs trust their close friends and immediate family members as sources of information about social issues. We're reaching out to our sisters, mothers, aunts, neighbors, and loved ones this election season because we all have power—to influence one another and drive systemic change. We're mobilizing voters to create the political conditions under which we will continue organizing our communities beyond this election.

Voting might not be a common conversation topic for a lot of us, but the more we talk about it, the more we can connect with AAPI women on the issues they care about most. These conversations can happen virtually or face-to-face, and still be effective no matter which organizing tools we use.

Who to talk with

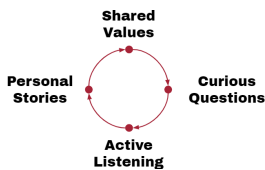
Ask yourself these questions:

1. Do I feel safe?
2. Can I build power?
3. What do I hope the outcome of this conversation is?

How to have this conversation

When you have a conversation about voting, you want to weave these 4 elements throughout the conversation:

- Shared Values
- Curious Questions
- Active Listening
- Personal Stories



You'll implement these in different orders, often starting and returning to shared values. It's important to recognize your & others' humanity to respond to people's worries & beliefs.

Find your shared values

The reasons why people decide to vote are often rooted in their personal values, which connect to the issues that are more important to them.

People care about the well-being of themselves, their families, and their friends. Historically, AAPIs have been a community with the lowest rates of voter registration and turnout, but these numbers have increased significantly over the years. AAPIs are reshaping what it means to have political power, and that starts with understanding our values.

Ask curious questions

To move people, we have to be curious about their underlying **beliefs, experiences, and feelings**. When they feel heard, they're more likely to talk with us about their actual experiences that underlie those beliefs, and we can start challenging those beliefs without the person shutting down. Sample questions:

- What has your experience been with voting?
- What are you worried about when it comes to voting?
- What are the issues you care about as an AAPI person? What led you to care about those things?

Share personal stories

We share personal stories because they're the most powerful tools we have. They're an avenue through which we can talk about our own experiences and relationships. Share your own experience with voting. For example:

- A time you felt empowered when talking to AAPI community members about voting
- Your experience voting for the first time
- An issue that you feel connected to and how voting has impacted it

Listen actively without judging

We want to create and model a non-judgmental space of trust and empathy, meaning we don't want to accuse people of not knowing enough about voting or not caring enough about certain issues.

Instead, we can ask about their thoughts and feelings on the topics at hand. They might share certain concerns or questions with you, and examples of these are in the following section.

Common Questions & Concerns

Community members might have concerns or questions related to voting, and that is okay! These conversations can be nuanced and specific to our cultures and personal experiences. Just as it's okay for you to ask curious questions, this is a space where your friend or family member might ask you some, too. What's most important is that we can create and model an empathetic, non-judgemental space. Below, we've listed some potential concerns and ways you might respond.

Concern	Response
<i>"I'm not represented in politics or our government. They don't know what I care about."</i>	We want our elected officials to deliver on the issues that affect us, and when we vote, we can have a say in who is representing us. Whether it's a local or federal election, voting can give us power to decide where resources go based on the issues most important to us.
<i>"My vote won't make a difference. I'm only one person."</i>	It might not seem like it, but we have more voting power than we think. AAPIs have shaped and influenced elections, especially in recent history. In the 2020 election, we had historic voter turnout, which was connected to decades of AAPI organizing around issues we care about - including voter representation and turnout. Elections can be won with as few as 1,000 votes! In many areas with really close races, we have the number of AAPI women voters needed to decide an election.
<i>"English isn't my first language. I'm not sure if anyone can help me when I vote, or if my vote will be counted correctly."</i>	When you vote, you have the right to bring someone to the voting booth to help you vote who can help you with English. You also have the right to vote without anyone harassing you or denying your right to vote because of your accent or English proficiency.
<i>"I don't see how voting impacts my everyday life. I don't see any changes when I vote."</i>	I see where you're coming from; we need change now, but it's not happening fast enough. Our elected officials make decisions on issues that impact our everyday lives. Communities also take part in organizing to advocate for the issues we care most about. There are many steps that need to be taken when change is made, but it starts with voting.

Additional Resources

- On our website at napawf.org/vote:
 - NAPA WF Voter Guides - [Texas](#), [Florida](#), & [Georgia](#)
 - [Why We Vote \(video\)](#), with subtitles in Bangla, Burmese, Chinese, Tagalog, Hindi, Korean, Urdu, and Vietnamese
- [Check your voter registration](https://napawf.org/vote/confirm) at napawf.org/vote/confirm
- AAPI Vote's [Multi-Lingual Voter Hotline](#): 1-888-API-VOTE