

NEIGHBORWORKS

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*There's why & how to
get involved in your
community*

Living in a community is both a responsibility and an opportunity. You have the responsibility to keep your property maintained to enhance the value of the neighborhood. You have the opportunity to make great friends and to shape your community for years to come.

A neighborhood becomes your place in this world and allows you to establish roots in the community that will enrich your life and the lives of your family members by giving them a sense of belonging. Take a chance and get involved – you can make more than friends, you can make a difference!



Why Get Involved:

Here are some reasons why some people get involved:

To solve a problem that affects them: For example, if you are concerned about your children's safety because people are driving too fast through a school zone, neighbors with children can work with the local police to improve signage, install speed bumps and find other ways to alert and slow down drivers.

To meet people and make friends: If you are new to an area, then getting involved in something as simple as a neighborhood meeting, clean-up or block party can be a great way to meet your neighbors.

To use their talents and skills: If you have skills such as gardening or photography or catering, then you could volunteer your talents for community events and make new business contacts.

To be part of a community and have a sense of belonging: We all want to feel safe and welcome in our neighborhood. Getting involved is the first step towards building better community.

Things You Can Do to Get Involved in Your Community:

Whether you want to join activities or take a formal leadership role, there are many ways to get involved in your community. It can be as simple as baking for a block party or as complicated as serving on the board of a local community organization. Decide how you want to get involved. Here are a few ideas:

Low-level involvement:

- Attend neighborhood association or crime watch meetings to find out about issues.
- Write a letter to the director about something happening in your community.
- Welcome new neighbors when they move into your community.
- Help translate at a community meeting.
- Keep an eye out for elderly neighbors.
- Pick up trash on your morning walk.
- Watch the neighbor's house while they are away.
- Report a street light outage or graffiti.
- Clean up after your pets.

Medium-level involvement:

- Join your local block club, neighborhood association or crime watch group and participate regularly.
- Be a coach or mentor to local youth.
- Host a "coffee chat" at your home to introduce your neighbors and talk about neighborhood issues.
- Speak at a homebuyer education class about your experience buying a home.
- Organize a neighborhood clean-up drive, dumpster delivery, and/or mulch delivery for your street.

High-level involvement:

- Become an officer of the local block club, neighborhood association or crime watch group.
- Join the board or a committee of a local nonprofit organization.

Section Highlights

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Resources

Volunteering Opportunities:

National NeighborWorks Week:
Your chance to get involved in
your community!

Find a NeighborWorks
Organization near you to seek
volunteer opportunities

HUD Volunteering Information

Get Involved with Habitat for
Humanity

National Night Out Campaign

Serve.gov

United Way

Volunteer Match

Volunteering in America

Community Involvement Resources:

Finding the Right Neighborhood

About Communities

Tips for Neighborhood Meetings

- Lead an issue campaign to address a problem facing your neighborhood.
- Run for political office to address policies affecting your neighborhood.
- Write a letter to the City manager or your Council representative.
- Speak to a news reporter about neighborhood issues.

A Word About Being a Good Neighbor — It's a Two Way Street

A part of living in a community is being a good neighbor and encouraging others to do the same. The following are good goals for everyone in the neighborhood:

- Keep houses painted and in good repair. This maintains property values and encourages other neighbors to do the same.
- Make sure lawns are mowed regularly.
- Instead of keeping old cars in a yard, donate them to charity.
- Bring in trash containers right away after pick up.
- Keep the noise from parties and social events down so it doesn't bother anyone.
- Dog owners should control barking and pick up after their dog.
- Get to know your neighbors, offer to keep an eye on their houses and yards and ask them to do the same for you.
- Treat neighbors respectfully. If there is an issue, be polite and suggest ways to solve the problem. Show that you are willing to listen to their concerns and they will be willing to cooperate.

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