



Sunday, September 15, 2024

Recognizing the power of grassroots, locally-based action, Meet Your Neighbor Day is a chance to plan something that can bring together your neighbors in that way that works for you! The Ideas section, below, lists many ways you can get involved!

## About

Convened by the Cambridge Peace Commission, Meet Your Neighbor Day is a Cambridge-specific approach to building connections and community in our amazing city. Inspired by the growing need to connect with each other, we have borrowed from two national initiatives, and adapted them to fit the needs of our city!

Meet Your Neighbor Day is built on the foundation of two nationwide efforts — Welcoming America’s “Welcoming Week” and the “National Neighborhood Day” initiative — and organized in collaboration with another City of Cambridge partner —the Citizens’ Committee on Civic Unity

National Neighborhood Day inspires, builds, and sustains the neighborhood relationships that provide the foundation for civic action and the building of stronger, more caring and effective communities. Welcoming America’s Welcoming Week brings communities together long-time residents, newcomers, and everyone in between in a spirit of unity to raise awareness of the benefits of welcoming everyone – including new Americans.

## Ideas for Residents

### Fun stuff:

- Neighborhood party
- Welcome new neighbors
- Yard sale
- Outdoor movie screening
- Arts and crafts festival
- Share resources (for example, extra produce from garden, tool sharing)
- Assemble "Party Buckets" with bubbles, sidewalk chalk, etc.
- Provide a basket of kids' books with a neighborhood theme
- Kids performance or play

### Games/ ice breaker activities:

- Charades
- Board games

- Dominoes
- Other games with themes of unity

### Food and Drink:

- Potluck
- Barbecue
- Dessert party/ice cream social
- Picnic
- Pizza party
- Lemonade stand
- Cookie exchange

### Neighborhood Projects:

- Neighborhood service project, followed by a fun gathering
- Neighborhood walking tour
- Make a photo scrapbook or video of your neighborhood

## Ideas for Community Agencies and Local Businesses:

- Partner with a local arts organization to highlight cultural diversity
- Invite local nonprofit organizations to come with information about their services
- Involve local businesses to have an open house, or use their facilities for an event
- Invite the community health center to set up a resources table at your gathering, hand out information and brochures, answer questions, discuss services, etc.
- Invite neighborhood firefighters and/or police officers to your gathering -great way for you to meet and learn the names of the people who protect and serve your neighborhood - plus kids love it when the fire truck comes to a gathering!
- Ask local businesses to get involved – provide a coupon for a discount on services or products, donations: trees, flowers, food, drink

### Thanks to the following organizations for gathering ideas:

- [www.welcomingamerica.org](http://www.welcomingamerica.org)
- [www.neighborhoodday.org](http://www.neighborhoodday.org)
- [www.bettertogether.org/150ways](http://www.bettertogether.org/150ways)

## Frequently Asked Questions about Meet Your Neighbor Day

### What is a gathering?

- A party, potluck, service project, neighborhood clean-up – whatever is fun and easy for you and your neighbors to plan and carry out. You decide what works best in your neighborhood. See Ideas for Your Gathering from [www.neighborhoodday.org](http://www.neighborhoodday.org).

### How is a “neighborhood” defined?

- It’s however you choose to define it!
  - Your street or block or surrounding blocks
  - Your apartment or condominium
  - Your floor at your apartment building
  - The area surrounding your nearby school or place of worship
  - Houses along your part of the street
  - Your local park
  - Your local square or business district

### Why just one day – Sunday, September 15 – for Meet Your Neighbor Day?

- We recommend a single day to serve as a rallying point for people across the City of Cambridge – and it’s an easy reminder to annually “refresh” neighborhood connections.
- The third Sunday in September is a day that works well with many annual calendars and fits with most school schedules. And the weather is usually nice!
- But...the most important thing is to connect! You can pick another day if that works for you, your neighbors, or your community!

### This sounds familiar – isn’t there already something like this?

- Barbecues, Fourth of July, Halloween, days of service, problem solving discussions, neighborhood barbecues – these are all good things! Meet Your Neighbor Day is a day that may be used to promote and increase involvement in any number of other local activities. The more connections, the better neighbors come to know each other, the more good things happen organically (community service, collaboration, emergency preparedness, youth/adult mentor relationships, etc.)
- Meet Your Neighbor Day is about neighborhood relationships: building relationships and inspiring activities, methods and tools for deliberately making connections that make a difference to individuals, neighborhoods and the larger community.

### Does Meet Your Neighbor Day support any political causes?

- No. We are non-political and non-sectarian.