

Festival of Neighbourhoods

** Kitchener **

Neighbourhood Activity Guide

Tips and ideas to plan and enjoy neighbourhood gatherings

Festival of Neighbourhoods Founding Partners





John MacDonald Architect care communication construction community



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Thank you for using this manual for tips to bring your neighbours together. You are taking an important step to making your neighbourhood a better place to live. By bringing your neighbours together, you help build relationships that will help foster a healthier, safer and more fun neighbourhood for everyone!



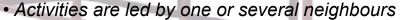
Thank You!

Festival of Neighbourhoods - Kitchener is a supportive incentive program that encourages people in Kitchener to organize inclusive activities that bring neighbours together to get to know one another.

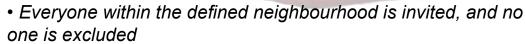


Who We Are

Festival of Neighbourhoods - Kitchener invites neighbourhoods who have held eligible gatherings in Kitchener any time from October 1st to September 30th to register their gathering(s) to be included in the Festival of Neighbourhoods Kitchener Finale draw for the City of Kitchener \$20,000 capital improvement grant.







- The gathering brings the neighbours together face to face and builds social connection within the neighbourhood
- The gathering is free to all



Principles of the Festival of Neighbourhoods







Most tips in this guide can be of use to anyone outside of Kitchener, Ontario, Canada interested in planning a neighbourhood activity. If you do not live in Kitchener, we encourage you to contact your municipality, community organizations and neighbourhood associations to learn what they could offer to support you in holding your own neighbourhood gathering, including information, permits, resources or funding! For neighbourhood organizers living in Kitchener, the Festival of Neighbourhoods' Useful Contacts and Local Resources and the Neighbourhood Activity Trunk are very useful resources.

In Kitchener, Ontario, Canada

Finally, you will find all over this guide many words in green print. Click on them to quickly access the subject matter at hand. If you are reading a hard copy of this guide, you will find much of the back up information in Section 3 -

Templates, Resources & Forms. You can contact

us for further information you may require.



Words in Green



How to Use this Guide



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The Basics of Planning a Neighbourhood Gathering







Bring your neighbours together because you want to:

- Know your neighbours
- Feel safer in your neighbourhood
- Become engaged in your community
- Make your neighbourhood a nicer place to live

Bringing your neighbours together can be as simple or as elaborate as you want. Every neighbourhood can take advantage of its uniqueness to hold activities perfectly suited to its character. The activity you choose must bring neighbourhs face to face. Combine two or more activities together, if one of them doesn't support interaction among people. For example, if you want to show a movie, combine it with a barbecue, and thus ensure that there is a chance for neighbours to talk to each other. Go to Section 2 for specific activities that have proven successful.

Invite everyone in your neighbourhood! A true neighbourhood gathering includes everyone in your neighbourhood. Your neighbourhood can be just the street you live on, or the surrounding streets. It can be the housing complex or the multi-residential tower in which you live.

Be inclusive, by inviting everyone in every household and consider any barriers that might stop them from attending, such as accessibility, language, and special diet requirements. Take the Reach! Challenge for a gathering that is even more inclusive!

Regardless of how you are bringing your neighbours together, whether it is a potluck, a street party, a carnival or a clean up, there will be some key considerations for all gatherings.

This first section outlines some important tasks & considerations that you should take



Festival of Neighbourhoods Basics



Why Bring Neighbours Together?



How Do I Decide What to Do?



Who Do I Invite?



Decide on an activity. You might want to ask a few neighbours what they would be interested in, or you could consider what might work for all ages in your neighbourhood, or maybe there is an issue or a neighbourhood asset you could rally around.



Organize

Set a date. Give yourself some time to bring it all together, and use a calendar to mark your deadlines.



Set a Date

Get others on board. The more people involved in the planning, the more likely they will be to participate and bring others along. You might have another neighbour who will give you support through this period. Approach your neighbours and get them involved as early as possible. Volunteers can help make the event a success. Consider how many helpers (including yourself) you will need to do the following:



Recruit Helpers

Invite everyone. Make and deliver invitations, announcements and posters. Use social media to invite the neighbourhood, where appropriate.



Invite Everyone

Gather all the supplies beforehand, such as food, drinks, games, equipment, etc.



Gather Supplies

Set up on the day of the get-to-gether & clean-up and return any borrowed items



Set-up & Clean-up

Run different activities - Someone to barbeque? Games? Music?



Activity Helpers



Tasks for a Successful Gathering



Keep in mind that as you recruit helpers, it is best if you share with them what tasks need to be done and let them choose. They might surprise you by taking on more than you were hoping.



How to Ask Neighbours to Help

The first place to look is within your household! Ask all the members of your household! They might have great ideas.



Volunteers in your household

Ask as well some neighbours that you know well. Knock on their doors and speak to them.



Volunteers in Your Neighbourhood

They can also help you find more volunteers within your neighbourhood by volunteering to send calls for help within the neighbourhood.



Volunteers
Help Find More
Volunteers

This can also be a heads up to your neighbourhood that something is being organized.



Youth

Get youth involved in the planning or tasks. High school students are often looking for volunteer experience to put on their resume. You can also offer community service hours, if applicable to your area, to high school students who are involved in planning and/or helping out with the gathering.

Don't forget that in the planning stages, ideas and contributions from all your helpers can be very valuable and enrich everyone's experience. It is more fun for everyone that way.



Keeping up the Enthusiasm of your Helpers



Getting Neighbours Involved



Decide how to invite your neighbours. Inviting everyone in your neighbourhood is a very important task, and one in which you can use the support of volunteers.



Ask Volunteers to Help with Invitations



Talk it up!

The most effective way to invite your neighbours it to talk to them. Mention it to them when you see them, and also go door to door. Tell them about it and hand them an invitation. It is also a good time to recruit more helpers if you need any more. If no one is home, leave an invitation in the mailbox.



Post Notices

Make some posters and place them where people can see them when they go for a walk. Streetposts, super-mail-boxes, billboards. Remember to place them in the recycling bin after the event day.



Lawn Signs

Lawn signs can also be a good way to advertise. If you are from Kitchener, you may have received lawn signs if you registered your gathering with Festival of Neighbourhoods and attended the Festivale of Neighbourhoods Finale in the past. You can re-use your lawn signs to advertise your next neighbourhood activities, placing them on your lawn where your neighbours can see them.



Freestanding Signs

Is there a business, community centre or a place of worship in your neighbourhood that would be willing to advertise on their street sign?

Sidewalk chalk works great too! Write attractive invitations on the

neighbourhood sidewalks, where everyone can see them.



Sidewalk Chalk



Invite All your Neighbours

 $In vite\, every one\, in\, the\, geographical\, area\, of\, your\, neighbourhood,$ as you defined it. It can be one or several streets, a multiunit building or a housing complex. It is up to you. Count how many households are in your neighbourhood to know how many invitations to print and deliver.



Who to Invite

Information to include on an invitation might be:

The activity that will bring the neighbours together.



The Activity

The date, start and end times. It might also be appropriate to include a rain date.

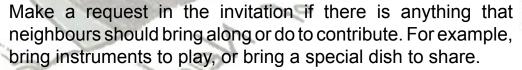


Date

The chosen location. This should be a place where everyone can gather, either indoors or outdoors, and be easily accessible. If a street has been closed to traffic for the occasion, include that too.



Location





The Request

You are welcome to format our generic invitation for your purposes. Make your invitation as attractive as possible. It is more likely that people will read it and keep it if it is made with heavier paper, and in colour with a picture.



Invitation Template



Making Invitations



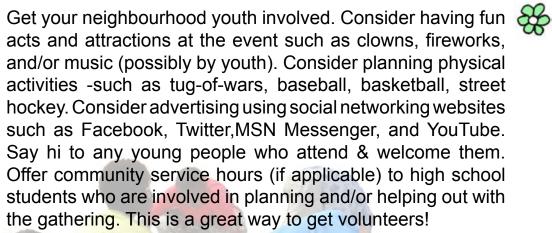
Inviting everyone in your neighbourhood helps to ensure that everyone feels truly welcome and builds a stronger community. Here are some tips to help you have a more inclusive neighbourhood gathering.



Invite Everyone in Your Neighbourhood



Reaching Out to Youth





Reaching Out to People with Disabilities

Consider small things that will make it easier for people with disabilities to participate. For example, is the information about the event being distributed in large font or alternative formats for people with visual impairments or for any reading skills?

Is the location of your gathering barrier free?

If the event is outdoors, is the ground level enough for people with mobility issues to travel across it?

Look for tips on the internet or contact your local government for tips on how to make your neighbourhood gathering barrier free.



Being Inclusive



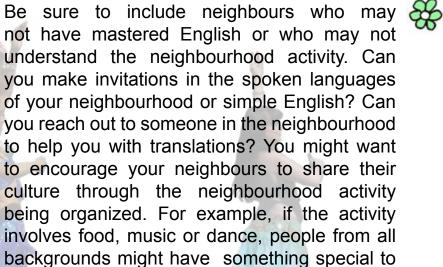
Consider ways to include seniors and support senior participation in neighbourhood events. Seniors might have mobility issues or other barriers to participating. Be attentive to their needs, offer them a comfortable chair if they want to sit, bring the food or the activity to them, or simply ask if there is anything that they need.



Reaching Out to Seniors



People of Diverse Cultural Backgrounds



If food is involved, be sensitive to the diet preferences of your neighbours by ensuring that there is a variety of food choices.



Varied Diets



Being Inclusive



share.

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Ideas for Neighbourhood Activities

Section 2





There are many ways to bring your neighbours together. In the following pages you will find some tips on how to organize specific activities. There are many more activities, and your imagination is the limit. No matter what you choose to do, we encourage you to organize activities that are inclusive of all your neighbours, connects them face to face and builds social cohesion within the neighbourhood.

Note: Some activities may require permits or licences (eg. road closures, serving food, selling goods, loud music) Check with your local authorities for the local by-laws and requirements. For Kitchener residents, access the Festival of Neighbourhoods' Useful Contacts and Local Resources.

- **Festivals**
- Campfires
- Tree plantings
- Fun fairs
- **Tobogganing parties**
- Potlucks
- **Fireworks**
- Neighbouhood Halloween pumpkin displays
- Neighbourhood mini golf
- Neighbourhood flash mobs
- Talent shows
- Neibourhood tapas
- Neighbourhood scavenger hunts
- Neighbourhood Olympiad



Introduction



More Activities to Bring your Neighbours Together









Get to know your neighbours better while enjoying the outdoors by organizing a nature walk in or near your neighbourhood!



What

Identify different types of birds, insects, trees, flowers, pick up garbage or make a mud pie!

Works well all year round, as the changing seasons offer new things to discover.



Choose to go for a walk at any time during the day or night.

Your neighbourhood, park, nearby trails or natural 🎇 areas.



Determine if the walk is wheelchair accessible and be sure to note it in the invitations & posters (ie. "This nature walk is/is not wheelchair accessible).



Heads up!

Set a rain date for the Nature Walk. Note the kind of weather that would cause the date to be moved. Give walkers plastic bags for picking up garbage.

It might be a good idea to bring insect repellent. Be mindful of bringing dogs along for the walk.

Sharing their knowledge of the natural features of the area and all the living creatures in it, as well as tips to protect and support them.



Ask your neighbours to help by...



Nature Walk



Mingle with your neighbours and get to know those who live around you a little bit better at a block party! Include food and games. With potlucks everyone contributes and shares the costs.



In the spring and summer, or anytime that the weather permits it. Soup or chili work well for winter gatherings.



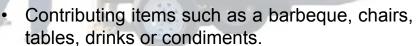
On your street or in your yard. Set certain areas for different activities (e.g. games, food, etc.) You might consider arranging to have your street closed to traffic.



Set a rain date for the Block Party



Heads up!





Helping to cover costs in the invitations and posters.

to help by...

Ask your neighbours

- Organizing fun activities such as three-legged race, limbo contest, street hockey, face painting, time capsule (just to name a few!).
- Providing name tags for all participating neighbours.







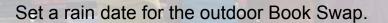
Give old books a new life with a neighbourhood **book** swap. Organize the swap by exchanging tickets for books received and books taken, or by selling donated books to raise money for a charitable cause, or to cover expenses for neighbourhood activities, or by imposing no limits to the numbers of books customers can take.

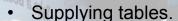


Any time of the year if there is an available indoor venue such as a nearby community centre, church hall or school.

When & Where

In the spring and summer it can be held in a public outdoor space, such as a park, or your own street. You might consider arranging to have your street closed to traffic.





- Setting up, organizing books
- making and posting price list signs (if "selling")
- cleaning and transporting remaining books to a second hand store.
- Supplying plastic bags for book shoppers.
- Setting up a comfortable reading corner.
- Organizing a children's book corner with colouring books and crayons.



Heads up!



Ask your neighbours to help by...







Have fun while caring for the environment. Bring your neighbours together to collect garbage and do a neighbourhood clean-up.



As soon as the snow retreats in the early spring. Consider When making it part of Earth Day/Month in April.



Choose a locations that is important to the neighbourhood, Where such as a park, community trail, or school yard.



Make safety a priority. Posters can encourage people to dress according to the weather, wear closed-toes foot wear, etc. Be aware of potential hazards (i.e. poison ivy), avoid roadways or shorelines. Leave behind heavy items and items you are not comfortable picking up. Supply bags and gloves - Contact your municipality for supplies, if applicable. Plan to dispose of collected garbage.



Being clean-up group leaders, advising everyone not to pick up sharp, unfamiliar or very heavy objects, answering questions and offering help.



Ask your neighbours to help by...

- Running a station with name tags, water, and clean up supplies that helpers can access.
- Setting up a crafts corner to make art with interesting and reusable waste; supervising children.
- Donating and running prize draws to reward helpers.



Neighbourhood Clean-Up



Get to know your neighbours with a skating party at the ice rink and skate the day away!



What

Hold the activity in the winter if you are gathering at an outdoor rink. Indoor rinks might be open year round. Contact them for available times and fees



When & Where

Note on the invitations that everyone must come dressed for the weather and if skates will be available to borrow. Set a rain date for the outdoor skating party.



Heads up!

Note on the invitation that temperatures must be below 0° C to hold the activity outdoors. Choose a place for everyone to warm up afterwards, such as a neighbour's home or a local coffee shop.



Ask your neighbours to help by...

- Making hot chocolate or hot apple cider.
- Supplying cups, ladles & thermoses.
- Setting up a table where skaters can help themselves.
- Providing name tags.
- Providing extra skates for those who might not have any.



Ice Skating



Bring your neighbours together by screening a movie approppriate for an all-ages audience.



Show movies outdoors on a summer night. It will be dark enough half an hour after sunset (around 9pm in Southern Ontario) Show movies indoors any time of the year.



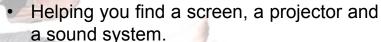
To bring together a small group, consider a private screening at home, either indoors or in the backyard.

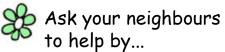


Ensure there is an electrical power outlet. Ask your neighbours to bring chairs or a blanket, mosquito repellent and their own popcorn.



Set a rain date when showing movies outdoors.





- Doing a test run well before hand to make sure that everything works.
- Making pop corn.
- Helping with set-up and clean-up.

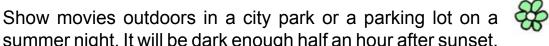


Movies - Private Screenings



Bring your neighbours together by screening a movie What approppriate for an all-ages audience.





When & Where

summer night. It will be dark enough half an hour after sunset, (around 9pm dulring July and August in Southern Ontario) Show movies any time of the year inside a community center.



Contact the film distributor of your chosen film. Fees for the Heads up! rights range broadly starting at around \$175.

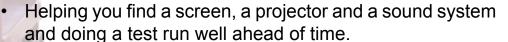
If showing a movie at a parking lot, ask for permission from the property owner... and don't forget to invite him!

Contact your municipality if showing a movie in a park or community center.

Ensure there is an electrical power outlet.

Ask neighbours to bring chairs, blankets, mosquito repellent and money if seeking donations.

Set a rain date to show movies outdoors.





Raising funds to cover expenses, ie. pass a hat for donations during intermission, sell popcorn, or find a donor by asking businesses, local associations or local movie theatres.

Helping with set-up and clean-up.

Ask your neighbours to help by...



Movies - Public Screenings



Bring neighbours together with your neighbourhood plant exchange or sale seedlings, seeds, roots, previously loved pots and garden tools & decorations.



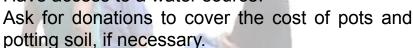
April or May, Mother's Day, Earth Day, or early in the Fall.



Someone's yard, in the park, or on a community trail.



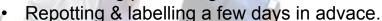
Have access to a water source.

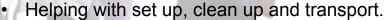




Heads up!







- Gathering old newspapers, sealable bags and old pots for transporting seeds, roots or seedlings.
- Helping out during the plant exchange.
- Ask a neighbour with a Green Thumb to be availabe to answer questions at gardening information booth.



Ask your neighbours to help by ...



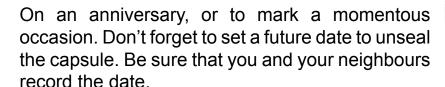
Plant Exchange



Bring your neighbours together to celebrate the present by making a time capsule with items that are significant to the neighbourhood at the present time or a chosen period.



What





When

Have the event at the location you choose to store the capsule. Time capsules can be buried or hidden, or a neighbour could be the capsule keeper.



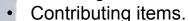
Where

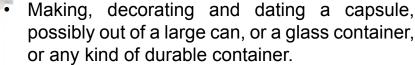
Include durable items that can easily fit in a capsule. Paper items preferably should be acid free.



Heads up!







Making an exhibition of the items as part of the capsule sealing celebration.



Ask your neighbours to help by ...



Time Capsule



Bring your neighbours together while selling your old trinkets and discovering some of theirs at a neighbourhood yard sale!



Any Saturday or Sunday when the weather allows it. Traditionally, May is the most popular month. Set the date and time and get the word out approximately six weeks in advance, so neighbours can plan to join in.



When

The garages, driveways and front yards of all participating neighbours.



Find a way to include actually meeting your neighbours, such as a scavenger hunt during the day or a wrap up lunch. Collect reusable items such as books, records, household & kitchen items, sports equipment & clothes that you no longer want.



Heads up!

Use tape and a marker to label items with prices.

Making signs and connecting through social media to advertise the neighbourhood yard sale, and noting the addresses of participating households. Consider making maps if more than one street is involved.



Ask your neighbours to help by...

- Encouraging kids to set up a lemonade stand!
- Sharing advertising expenses.
- Transporting unsold items to a scond hand store.

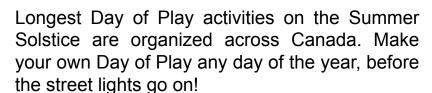


Neighbourhood Yard Sale

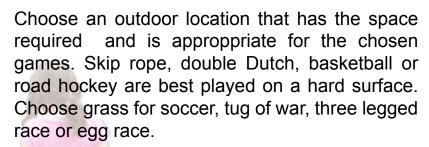


Bring your neighbours together with games for all ages. Try games that others can join in on the fun!











Check the grass surface for ground holes or hidden glass or any sharp objects. Don't have games so close to the road that balls or frisbees might end up crossing a car's path of travel.



Heads up!





Organize games and be cheerleaders, coaches & referees all at once!

Ask your neighbours to help by...

Bringing their favourite backyard games, such as badminton or games of toss.



Outdoor Games



Share neighbourhood stories and learn all about your neighbourhood by holding a Jane's Walk. Jane's Walk is a movement of free, citizen-led walking tours inspired by Jane Jacobs. The walks get people to tell stories about their communities, explore their cities, and connect with neighbours. To learn more and register your walk, go to www.janeswalk.org



At the beginning of May. The Jane's Walk website will announce the date of the weekend long event.

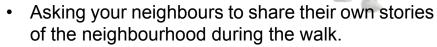


Choose a route in your neighbourhood that is full of stories, or places that you enjoy.



Register your walk in the Jane's Walk website. Also, to encourage your neighbours to come out, drop off an invitation in their mailboxes two or three weeks ahead.







- Providing name tags for all participating neighbours.
- Handing a plastic bag to neighbours who are ok with picking up the garbage in the neighbourhood during the walk.

Ask your neighbours to help by...







This event requires a low level of planning for a high level of fun! Get your neighborhood socializing around an "all are welcome" pop-up popsicle stand. A pair of organizers can collect donations of popsicles and freezies and set up a stand to hand out free cool treats on a warm day. Get your neighbors involved in the event by having them spread the word of the pop-up stand.



A warm spring or summer day, out on the sidewalk of the street or in the neighbourhood park.



Set a rain date for the Pop-up Popsicle Stand



- Supplying popsicles or freezies
- Supplying coolers and scissors
- Advertising (social media, posting signs, invitations in mail boxes)
- Decorating the stand
- Helping with set-up and clean-up.



Ask your neighbours to help by...



Pop-Up Popsicle Stand



Bring your neighbours together to share delicious homemade soups on a cool fall evening. Invite each neighbour to prepare their favourite soup recipe to share with one another. Close off a neighbourhood street or choose a local park and set up a long table to place crock-pots and thermoses. Neighbours can bring along their own bowls and spoons and serve themselves, sampling a variety of tasty soups!



A fall evening, on a closed road or neighbourhood park. When & Where

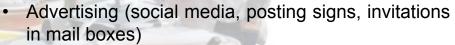


Set a rain date for Soupstock.

Bring warm clothing, chairs, and blankets, this is an Heads up! outdoor event!



Have an ingredient list available for your soup in case of allergies or dietary restrictions.





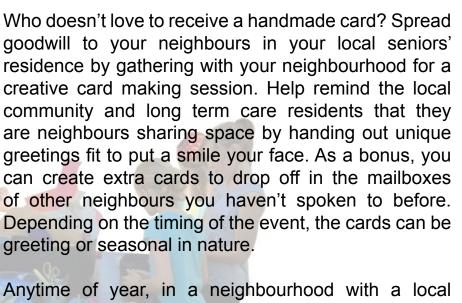
Ask your neighbours to help by...

- Preparing and bringing their favourite soup recipe
- Bringing along their own bowls, mugs, and spoons for their families
- Helping with set-up and clean-up.



Soupstock







long term care facility. Pick a space to gather that is condusive to making crafts.



Make sure to remind everybody to keep the content of the cards inclusive to all, especially if made during the holiday season.



Making the neccessary contact to partner with the local long term care facility for the event



Ask your neighbours to help by ...

- Donating card making supplies (construction paper, scissors, markers, crayons, glue, decorations)
- Using their creativity to make fantastic cards!



Card for Seniors





Bring your neighbours together by hosting neighbourhood toy drive! Invite each neighbour to donate a brand new toy for a child to enjoy. Provide snacks and the opportunity for neighbours to celebrate and socialize at the donation drop off location. Donate the toys to a local shelter where they can be appreciated during the holiday season, as well as year round for children's birthdays.



Pick a date in advance of the holiday season and choose an indoor location for neighbours to drop off donations and share snacks.



Make sure that all donations are brand new, not used. Consider having the participating neighbours sign a banner that can be delivered to the shelter along with your donations.



 Advertising (social media, posting signs, invitations) in mail boxes)



- Donating "thank you" treats! (Candy canes, cookies, hot chocolate)
- Collecting toys
- Delivering donations to shelter

Ask your neighbours to help by...



Toy Drive



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Section 3

Templates, Resources & Forms



Our Neighbourhood Is Celebrating!

We are getting together to get know each other and to strengthen the community bonds in our neighbourhood.

We could win a \$20,000 grant from the City of Kitchener to improve our neighbourhood!



Festival of Neighbourhoods **Ritchener***

For Further Info Contact

Our Neighbourhood Is Celebrating!

We are getting together to get know each other and to strengthen the community bonds in our neighbourhood.

What's Happening		
Where		
Date & Time		
Rain Date		
Please Bring		
For Further Info Contact		

Our Neighbourhood Is Celebrating and Everyone in your Household is Invited!

We are getting together to get know each other and to strengthen the community bonds in our neighbourhood.

What's Happening
Where
Date & Time
Rain Date
Please Bring
For Further Info Contact
Contact us if you require accommodation to take part in this gathering

Our Neighbourhood Is Celebrating and Everyone in your Household is Invited!

We are getting together to get know each other and to strengthen the community bonds in our neighbourhood.

What's Happening
Where
Date & Time
Rain Date
Please Bring
For Further Info Contact
Contact us if you require accommodation to take part in this gatherin

Our Neighbourhood Is Celebrating and Everyone in your Household is Invited!

We are getting together to get know each other and to strengthen the community bonds in our neighbourhood.

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What's Happening

Where

Date & Time

Rain Date

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Would you like to join me to plan a neighbourhood celebration?

Hello, My name is
and I live in your neighbourhood! Let's bring all of our neighbours
together and strengthen the community bonds in our neighbourhood.
We can plan an activity, a date, figure out what needs doing and who can do it!
Please, contact me before – How to contact me –
Yes, I would like to help!
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Festival of Neighbourhoods

* Kitchener *



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Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

Some Important Days to Mark on the Calendar

Find at least one person to help

Set Date, Location & Activity

Contact Resources and Authorities

Make Posters & Invitations

Deliver Invitations

Find more Helpers

Hang Posters

Gather Supplies

Purchase Food

Neighbourhood Gathering

Return Borrowed Items

Remove Posted Signs

Set Date, Location & Activity Determine How Many Helpers we Need Contact Resources and Authorities Make Posters & Invitations **Deliver Invitations** Find more Helpers Hang Posters Gather Supplies Purchase Food Set Up Neighbourhood Gathering Clean Up Return Borrowed Items Remove Posted Signs





Things to Do Checklist

Find at Least One Person to Help

Register your inclusive neighbourhood gathering in Kitchener with the Festival of Neighbourhoods. Join us at the Festival Finale at Kitchener City Hall on the third Sunday of October, when the draw for the \$21,000 neighbourhood improvement grant will be held and the winner announced. The registration forms are updated yearly. There are several ways to register. Contact us if you have any questions.



Registering your Activity with Festival of Neighbourhoods Kitchener

- Registration Form for mail or fax
- Full Online Registration
- Short Online Registration finalized by phone

The Neighbourhood Activities Trunk is the Festival of Neighbourhood's assortment of games, toys and supplies available on loan for those organizing neighbourhood gettogethers.



Booking the Neighbourhood Activities Trunk

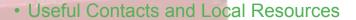
The Booking Form is updated regularly as we are continually rejuvenating the trunk supplies. Contact us if you have any questions.

Online Booking Form & Catalogue

Festival Kitchener residents, the access Neighbourhoods



Contacts and Resources in Kitchener





Festival of Neighbourhoods Forms

