



Presents

WE
MUST BE
NEIGHBORS

DIVERSITY - UNITY - COMMUNITY

The mission of One Planet United Organization is:

“To be a channel helping to create World peace, breaking down barriers that focus on differences, as well as promoting visionary ways to unite all people.”

“We Must Be Neighbors” is one of our visionary ways of fulfilling the mission of One Planet United which is ultimately to unite *all* people. We know that in typical neighborhoods across the country, many people often are in such a rush to come and go that they don’t take time to connect with the people that live all around them in their own neighborhood. “We Must Be Neighbors” offers ideas to bring people who live in the same neighborhoods closer together as well as projects that neighbors can join in on together that can impact their whole community. We believe that if we begin at the local community level with programs like “We Must Be Neighbors,” town by town and city by city will grow to where people can truly become closer as a human family, thus offering a greater chance for true peace in the world..

If you need further help in bringing “We Must Be Neighbors” to life in your community, you can call us at (954) 340-2115 or 1-866-340-2115 or email us at info@opunited.org. We’ll be here to help in any way we can.

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WE MUST BE NEIGHBORS

One Planet United sees the whole world as one neighborhood and one community. In local towns and cities across the globe, traditional neighborhoods begin and end on almost every corner. It is the very small piece of land that you share with fellow human beings that come and go every day just like you do. There can be a special feeling about the neighborhood you live in and just as easily, it can hold no meaning at all. Deep down in most people though there seems to be a sense of unity when you know someone is from the same geographical place you are. If you've ever been away on vacation and noticed someone that had a license plate on their car from your home state, wasn't your reaction one of excitement that you had just run into one of your "neighbors?"

Neighborhoods today have taken on quite a different look from years past. Back in earlier times, it was a common thing for many people to relax and have fellowship with their neighbors. Kids, parents and other neighbors would be out in the street, often playing a game of kickball, stickball or tag. There was one dynamic that was almost always present. People who lived in the same communities knew their neighbors a whole lot better than they do today. It seems that times have changed.

In a lot of neighborhoods today, it can often look something like this. You pull up in your car seeing a few neighbors as you approach your house. A casual friendly wave is exchanged sometimes accompanied by a smile. As you reach up for the remote control for your garage door opener, it is often timed so that you can drive under the door just at it reaches high enough to not hit the roof of the car. You get out and send the garage door on its way down and then enter your house. The next morning, it begins again in reverse. The friendly wave and smile is exchanged and a new day begins.

Another time that we often put forth the friendly wave and smile is when it is "garbage night." We happen to be taking the cans out around the same time as our neighbors a few doors away and we give them the friendly wave. Not until the next garbage night do we get to "connect" again. It's not this way in all neighborhoods but it is more common than years ago.

Is it really important that we get to know our neighbors? Don't we just want to be left alone after a hard day and not be bothered with any more interaction? It is true that many people today have such overloaded schedules that additional "neighbor time" might not fit in. Also, what if we know a thing or two about those who live around us and we would just prefer to keep to ourselves. That certainly is an alternative.

"We Must Be Neighbors" is designed to inspire people to take a different look at the neighborhood and community in which they live. By seeing your neighborhood community in a different light and implementing some of the suggested ideas, you can be bringing the principles of One Planet United to your neighbors which in turn can create a whole new environment.

What are some of the benefits of becoming closer to your neighbors? I'll list a few.

The possibility of making "real" friendships.

Not the kind that just discuss the latest sports teams, stock prices, or great sales at the mall. Friendships that can offer real help in times of need, an ear to listen, and a heart to care.

The possibility of meeting someone that:

- grew up in the same town
- went to the same High School or College
- was born in the same town or city

A neighbor can be there to:

Give you a ride, baby-sit, watch your pets, take in your mail, lend you a tool, keep an eye on your house when you are away and the list goes on.

The above observations are in general, good things that develop over time as you get to know your neighbors. What OP United is encouraging you to do is to become involved with your neighbors in a more meaningful and active way. It only takes one person to begin the process. Take a risk and see all the positive things that can come to life in your neighborhood.

IDEAS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITIES

ANNUAL BLOCK PARTY

Make up flyers (see sample wmbn #1) and distribute them to the houses that surround you. Pick a date approximately 1-2 months in advance. Try to get one or two other neighbors involved that will help you plan the event. You can make it a pot luck and have everyone bring a favorite dish or you can purchase all the food and charge a per person rate. Try to get a few people to set up their grills if you are to cook outdoors. One person will have to be the phone contact to keep track of R.S.V.P.'s as people call back in response to the flyer. Games can be planned for children.

You will most often find that those who attend are excited and suggest that the neighborhood should make it an annual event. This is a very simple way to meet the people who live around you and to begin uniting your neighborhood. Most people would embrace the idea of an annual block party, but don't want to initiate it. Once the first one has happened, it is guaranteed to grow each year.

"DINNERS of EIGHT"

Dinners of Eight is an event where small groups get together to share in a meal. Unlike a block party, this provides a more intimate setting so you can take time to get to know your neighbors. Here's how it works:

Pick 6-8 people that you would like to invite to your home. It's best if they are neighbors that you don't know too well because the main idea of a gathering such as this is to get to know people that are those you have not spent much time getting to know.

Make up a flyer (see sample wmbn #2) announcing “A Dinners of Eight” evening at your home. Provide your phone number for R.S.V.P’s to call back. The host provides the main course while the beverages, appetizers and dessert are brought by the invited guests. The host house will let each guest know what to bring.

You will be amazed at the fellowship and camaraderie that is created by a “Dinners of Eight” gathering. The hope for this idea to continue is that the people that came to your home for dinner will now reach out to 6 or 8 *different* people in your neighborhood and offer a “Dinners of Eight” in their home. As well, next time you can invite 6-8 different people to your home to host another one.

PROGRESSIVE DINNER:

A progressive dinner is a fun way to get to know a lot of your neighbors while at the same time, having an opportunity to have your main meal in a small group. This is how it works.

A committee of 3 or 4 people is needed to begin. Make up a flyer (see sample flyer wmbn #3) that invites your neighbors to participate in the 1st Annual (name) Neighborhood Progressive dinner.

All guests start out at one designated (appetizer) house and then break into small groups of 6 or 8 people and proceed to assigned houses in the neighborhood for the dinner portion of the evening. At a designated time later, everyone comes back together once again for coffee, dessert and fellowship at the designated (dessert) house.

A progressive dinner offers both the opportunity to gather as one big group as well as in a more intimate setting during the dinner portion of the evening. In a small group during dinner, you will have an opportunity to get to know your neighbors in whole new way. Many people who have enjoyed the experience of a progressive dinner say that it is often hard to move on to the dessert house because of the great fellowship that has been created in the small dinner group.

Note: When all guests arrive at the first (appetizer) house, give them a name tag. In the bottom left or right corner of the name tag in smaller letters, write in the host’s name of the (dinner) house they have been assigned to. As everyone is partaking in appetizers, it is fun to look at others name tags to see who else is assigned to the dinner house that you have been assigned to.

Cooking/Prep Committee:

Depending on the number of people who will attend, a main meal must be prepared ahead of time by a designated group of cooks. Make a fairly simple meal ie: stuffed shells, chicken parmesan etc. The meals are generally prepared the night before and delivered to the host houses the afternoon of the event.

Sample scenario:

24 people will be attending with 6 people designated at each house. You will need to prepare 4 salads, 4 rice/potato dishes and 4 entrees. Those who are not hosting at their home will bring appetizers/desserts.

Cost:

The committee will figure out all costs and divide by the number of people that will be attending. Collect money at the door of the (appetizer) house when giving out name tags. Cost is normally between \$5.00 and \$8.00 per person.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROJECTS:

Many churches as well as businesses and companies often gather as groups to take on outreach projects in their community. They take on projects such as feeding the homeless at a shelter or building houses for Habitat for Humanity. There are many organizations that need volunteer support. A great way to also accomplish the same results is to take on a project together with your neighbors. All it takes is one or two people from a neighborhood community to put the project into motion. Decide on an organization or charity that seems like it would have universal appeal. Next make up a flyer (see sample flyer wmbn #4) and distribute them to your neighbors. Some of your neighbors might already be involved in helping the less fortunate in your community, but many are not. People often times have a strong desire to reach out and help others but don't know where to start. Working in unity with people from your own neighborhood will create a very close bond, thus making your own neighborhood a tighter community.

Listed below are a few examples of organizations or charities that are always in need of community support.

- Habitat for Humanity
- Community Shelters for the Homeless
- ASPCA
- Salvation Army
- American Red Cross
- Community Nursing Homes
- Animal Shelters

Also, you can refer to our program/template “Don't Just Sit There; Volunteer” for more ideas and information.

NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH OUTREACH:

If you go into any neighborhood today, you can quite often find a gathering of kids doing what most teenagers do best. That is, “just hangin out.” They usually hang out in the same place, either in front of someone's house or at the closest park. Of course it is quite natural to want to be with your peers and feel accepted as part of the group.

Being a part of a NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH OUTREACH group offers the same experience for all teens but just enhances the experience. While they still get to bond with their peer group, they can also be reaching out to help others in need through this outreach project. Here's how it works:

Often, but not always, a parent or an adult will have to plant the seed by approaching the group and asking for a few minutes to talk with them. If they are receptive, the adult can ask them if as a group they would be willing to help out an organization or people in need. The adult will have had the opportunity beforehand to research a charity or organization that would be a good fit for the kids. As well, one of the kid's might come up with their own idea of an organization or charity that they are familiar with. It could be collectively going to a neighborhood nursing home to read to the elderly residents or just to offer fellowship and conversation. As well, it could be a clothing or food drive where the kids make up flyers (see sample flyer wmbn #5) on their own to distribute door to door in their neighborhood.

The main idea is that these groups of neighborhood kids will still be able to hang out with their friends, but instead of just hanging out on the street, they will have the opportunity to help out in the community, all the while sharing the experience with their closest friends. Once young people get involved with helping those who are less fortunate, it often will turn into something they will be eager to continue on their own now, as well as in the future.

Outreach ideas for youths:

- Clothing/Food drives
- Visiting with the elderly at community nursing homes
- Helping out an elderly or ill neighbor with household chores
- "Adopt a House" clean up
- Neighborhood Car Wash with proceeds going to a local charity

CONCLUSION:

One scenario that often brings people from the same neighborhoods together is when there is a threat of an oncoming hurricane or after a heavy snowstorm. Neighbors often come out of their homes and a mysterious bond is formed based on the feeling that "we're all in this together" and we've got to be there to help each other. We normally offer our help in securing hurricane shutters or in lending a hand and a shovel in helping with snow removal. OP United is encouraging all people to bring this particular sense of unity to your neighborhood each and every day and not wait for a potentially dangerous "act of God" to bring you together.

We encourage you to share your stories with us as to how "We Must Be Neighbors" was brought to life in your neighborhood. Also, please share with us any ideas that you have come up with that we could possibly add to this program. Email us at: inspiration@opunited.org

NOTE:

One Planet United Programs/Templates are continually being updated. Please visit our website often for most recent updates.

SEE SAMPLE TEMPLATES FOR FLYERS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Annual Block Party – wmbn#1

Dinners of 8 – wmbn #2

Progressive Dinner – wmbn #3

Community Outreach Project – wmbn #4

Neighborhood Outreach Project – wmbn#5

(sample flyer – wmbn #1)
Annual Block Party

You Are Invited
To the

FIRST ANNUAL (Community Name) BLOCK PARTY

Come join us as we “hit the streets” and get to know our neighbors.

When: (date)

Where: (address of house or houses that cookout will be out in front of.)

What to bring: Hamburgers & Hot Dogs will be provided as will all of the fixins that go with them. You are asked to bring a dessert or an appetizer of your choice as well as your desired beverage. (A ??? donation per person will be appreciated to cover the cost of hamburgers, hot dogs, condiments, paper goods etc.) Also, please bring your own folding chairs.

Games and activities: (list games and activities planned for children and adults)

RSVP: We would appreciate your RSVP so we will know how much food to buy. Please call (name) and designate how many will be coming and whether you will bring an appetizer or dessert.

(sample flyer – wmbn #2)
Dinners of Eight

You Are Invited
To:

A
“DINNERS of EIGHT”
Neighborhood Gathering

Come join us in a fun and intimate evening setting designed to help you get to know your neighbors better. We will enjoy a home cooked meal as well as fellowship and conversation with each other in an effort to create stronger bonds with our neighbors.

When: (date and time)

Where: (address of host)

What to Bring: Appetizer or Dessert. Your host will let you know when you RSVP.

RSVP: (Host name and number)

(sample flyer - wmbn #3)
Progressive Dinner

You are invited to the
1st ANNUAL (name) NEIGHBORHOOD
“PROGRESSIVE DINNER”
ON: (DATE)

Come experience a night of fellowship, fun and an opportunity to get to know your neighbors better. Announcing the first annual progressive dinner to be held in our neighborhood. Come and enjoy a truly exceptional meal prepared by (community name) talented chefs. You may finally get to talk to someone you have just waved to when passing by or you could make a friendship that could last a lifetime. Come with a spouse, a friend or by yourself, but come and experience a unique and fun way to be in fellowship with your neighbors. We will begin with appetizers at the home of (name) (address) at 6:00 p.m. You will then be assigned to a neighbor's home for the main course of the evening. We will then meet back at the home of (name) (address) to share dessert and coffee together.

We will need approximately (number) host houses that can open their homes for about 6-8 people for the dinner part of the evening. (The entire meal is prepared for you and delivered to your home so you have no cooking to do. You only need to turn on your oven.) To help volunteer with shopping, cooking and delivery of food, call (name) (number)

Please RSVP by calling (name) (number). We will be asking all people other than those who will be hosting in their home to please bring an appetizer or a dessert. (Host homes provides beverages)

Babysitting will be provided for children 2 years old and up for a minimal fee at the home of (Name) (Address).

(sample flyer - wmbn #4)

Community Outreach Project

COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROJECT

You are invited to come and join your neighbors as we reach out together in the community to help those less fortunate. We will gather as neighbors to lend a hand together.

What: (organization or project that will be taken on as well as a description of the organization and what its core mission is.)

When: (date and time)

Special Notes: (fill in details of things such as the possibility of age requirements, whether to bring lunch, mode of transportation etc.)

Contact: (name)

(sample flyer - wmbn #5)
Neighborhood Youth Outreach

NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH OUTREACH

Reaching out to help (project name)

The youth of (neighborhood name) have taken on an outreach project and we are asking for your help. We have decided to initiate a food drive for the victims of (project name) and we are asking that all of our neighbors help out and pitch in. This coming Saturday (date) we will be coming by each house in our neighborhood and collecting food which will be shipped to (name.) We would appreciate your support in making a donation to our project. Canned goods, non perishables and toiletries of all kinds are in the shortest supply. Thank you from the youth of (neighborhood name)

“WE NEED YOUR HELP”

For more information, please call (contact name) at (number)

Note: This sample is for a food drive but can be altered for any youth neighborhood project whether it is a collection of goods, a fundraiser for charity or any other project that is designed to help those in need.