



**The Good Neighbor Toolkit is a step-by-step guide to forming meaningful connections, building strong starts for families, and promoting health community-wide**



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# Why is the Good Neighbor Toolkit Important?

You may be wondering, why should I connect with my neighboring community? You may already know some of your neighbors or feel like you have a strong community outside of your neighborhood. Why is the Good Neighbor Toolkit important?

**Short Answer:**  
**Promoting connection in your neighborhood helps everyone!**



## Social Drivers of Health

Social drivers of health are the conditions in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, pray, and age that affect a wide range of health and quality of life outcomes and risks.

Examples:

Safe housing, transportation, or neighborhoods, access to nutritious foods, and access to physical activity opportunities.

## Adverse Childhood Experiences

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic events or aspects of a child's environment that can undermine their sense of safety, stability, and bonding.

Children that experience ACEs have an increased risk of injury, chronic health complications, and toxic stress. Toxic stress as a child can lead to difficulty forming stable relationships, struggles with finances, or holding a stable career in adulthood.

## Promoting Positive Childhood Experiences and the Good Neighbor Toolkit

The Good Neighbor Toolkit aims to both improve social drivers of health and decrease the likelihood of ACEs in Yellowstone County. Having access to safe neighborhoods, opportunities for social connection and emotional growth, and a network of adult mentors outside the immediate family is shown to promote Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs).

Neighborhood block parties can promote safe neighborhoods, healthy eating, and physical activity. They can also connect children with caring adults, outside of their immediate family, who can serve as role models or mentors. PCEs are shown to help mitigate the negative effects of ACEs on long-term health.



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Hosting a block party that is healthy  
by design can be done in 9 simple  
steps:

## Step 1

### Make the decision

Oftentimes, making the initial choice to host a block party is the hardest part. The Good Neighbor Toolkit aims to take the fear out of hosting.

## Step 2

### Gather block party resources

This toolkit will guide you step-by-step on your block party journey.

## Step 3

### Select a date, time, and location

Consider the size of your neighborhood, and the type of event you want to host. See pages 4 and 7 for help with this step.

## Step 4

### Make necessary reservations

If you wish to close your street, see page 8. Determine types of food to be served. Consult page 5 for healthy tips.

## Step 5

### Send out invitations

Once you have a location, date and time, invite your neighbors. See pages 4 and 5 for invitation help and consult page 10 for tips and tricks.

## Step 6

### Set up for your event

Utilize toolkit resources to help set up (cooler, road signs, name tags, icebreaker game) and consider recruiting neighbors for set-up.

## Step 7

### Bring in the people

Host your event knowing that you are helping to promote health in Yellowstone County, using a party plan that's healthy by design.

## Step 8

### Take down the event

Once the event is over, place all Good Neighbor Toolkit items back in the cooler. Please make sure the cooler is emptied and dry.

## Step 9

### That's it

If you reserved the party kit from the library, return all Good Neighbor Toolkit items to the Billings Public Library, and you're done!

# Block Party Invitation Tips and Template

An invitation is a great way to get the word out about your neighborhood gathering or block party. Consider using the template on the following page to make invitations for your event.

**Title:** You're Invited! Join us for a neighborhood block party!

**When:** Include the date and time for the get together.  
Pro tip: Include the day of the week to help neighbors remember (example: Monday, July 16<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.)

**Where:** Include the location of the get together.  
Pro tip: If you live in a larger neighborhood, off of a major road, consider filling out the form on page 8 to close a street in your neighborhood (it is free!). If you are wanting to throw a smaller event, a resource detailing Billings area park resources can be found on page 7.

**What to Bring:** Include whether or not guests should bring food/drinks, lawn chairs, or other supplies. If food is being supplied, consider listing what food is being provided (allergy awareness, dietary restrictions, etc.)  
Pro tip: Additional healthy event planning resources can be found on the Healthy By Design Website: [www.hbdyc.org](http://www.hbdyc.org) → [Community Resources](#)

Pass out invitations to neighbors by hand or use a digital invitation if your neighborhood has a way to connect online! Use the templates on the next page for in-person invites and check out more tips on page 10!



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# You're Invited! Join us for a neighborhood block party!



When: \_\_\_\_\_

Where: \_\_\_\_\_

What to Bring: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# You're Invited! Join us for a neighborhood block party!



When: \_\_\_\_\_

Where: \_\_\_\_\_

What to Bring: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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# How to Reserve a Block Party Space

Block parties can be affordable and easy to plan. Consider filling out the attached block party form to close a residential block for your event - free of charge!

NOTE: For the petition section of the block party application, neighbors who live along the road closure are the only individuals who must sign the petition.

Interested in a small park get-together?

Smaller scale events can be held without the completion of a Block Party Application.

Billings area parks that have helpful amenities like a barbecue grill can be found here:

[List of Billings Parks and Outdoor Space Amenities](#)





## City of Billings BLOCK PARTY APPLICATION

### For Block Parties, the following items are needed:

- ◆ A map showing the exact street(s) being closed and the location of any/all barricades.
- ◆ A completed Block Party application.
- ◆ Block Party Petition signed by residents within the block party location.
- ◆ There is no fee for a block party application.

Submit this application with attachments to the: Public Works office, 316 N. 26th 5th Floor, Billings, MT 59101 or email to: [wellbrooks@billingsmt.gov](mailto:wellbrooks@billingsmt.gov)

PERSON MAKING APPLICATION \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

### APPROXIMATE TIME EVENT WILL:

Assemble \_\_\_\_\_ Start \_\_\_\_\_ Disband \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF EVENT \_\_\_\_\_

BLOCK PARTY STREET LOCATION: (Description and detail of the event.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

ATTACH MAP OF BLOCK PARTY CLOSURE INCLUDING BARRICADE LOCATIONS AND RESIDENT PETITION SIGN OFF SHEET

APPLICANT SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF RESIDENTS WITHIN BLOCK LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_  
 NUMBER OF APPROVALS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 NUMBER OF DISAPPROVALS: \_\_\_\_\_

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>APPROVE</u>	<u>DISAPPROVE</u>
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This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



# Tips for Planning a Block Party That is Healthy By Design

Choosing healthier food and drink options for your gathering is an easy way to help make the healthy choice the easy choice here in Yellowstone County. Here are a few tips on how to do it:



Avoid putting out unhealthy snacks like candy bowls



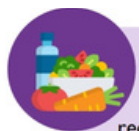
Consider providing easily distributed fresh fruit like bananas or oranges



Avoid unhealthy drinks like sodas



Provide water to guests in the cooler, or encourage neighbors to bring a reusable water bottle



## WE NEED TO EAT **HEALTHY FOODS MORE OFTEN**

About **75% of us** are not eating enough fruits and vegetables each day, the recommended daily serving is **5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day**.

### Play some music!



Do you play an instrument? Bring it with you! Make movement, and your event, feel like a party



### Use your resources!

Encourage neighbors to bring lawn games like cornhole or spikeball



### Involve the kids!

Encourage neighbors with children to bring their whole family. Engaging in play promotes activity for everyone

Promoting physical activity and movement at your event is another great way to make the healthy choice, the easy choice. Here are some ways to bring movement to your event:

## WE NEED **MORE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

Almost **3 out of 4 adults** are overweight and **1 in 3 of us** are not active enough



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# Tips For a Successful Event

## Make your neighborhood a work of art!

Use sidewalk chalk as a fun activity or a competition between neighbors. Consider themes like “Favorite activity” or “My friends and me”.

## Utilize name tags!

Use name tags to promote connections and developing relationships with neighbors.

## Accept help!

Don't be afraid to invite help from neighbors and community members, especially for things like set up and take down. Make the process easy!

## Check out more family friendly activities!

Learn about additional free or low-cost family friendly STEM Kit activities for your block party from Billings Parks and Recreation:



## Play an icebreaker game!

Play the icebreaker Jenga game that is included in the Good Neighbor Block Party Kit (reserve at the Billings Public Library) and consider taking a look at more free and downloadable activities at hbdyc.org or scanning the QR code below:



## Does your neighborhood have a Facebook page or use a similar platform?

Consider posting about the event to spread the word and get an approximate count of attendees.

Sample social media posts can be found at hbdyc.org or by scanning the QR code below:



# It is as Simple as That!

We hope that this Good Neighbor Toolkit makes it easier for you and your neighbors to gather, make meaningful connections, and promote health in our community.



## Interested in more free community resources like the Good Neighbor Toolkit?

In addition to the Good Neighbor Block Party Kit that you can check out at the library for free, the Billings Public Library has additional free resources and kits for the whole family! These include a family movie night kit, karaoke party kit, and more!

Learn more here:

<https://billingslibrary.org>



- <https://www.cdc.gov/aces/about/index.html>. July 16, 2025
- <https://www.cdc.gov/aces/prevention/index.html>. July 16, 2025
- <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2836904>. July 30, 2025