



Drayton Valley's Block Party Resource Kit



What is a Block Party?

A block party is a large informal public celebration in which many members of a single neighbourhood congregate to socialize and have fun together. Block parties are not only a fun and easy way to get to know the people in your community, but they are also a great way to build and reinforce neighbourhood and community security.

Why have a block party?

- ★ It's fun! You don't need an excuse or reason to celebrate.
- ★ It provides an opportunity to get to know your neighbours, what they do, and where they live.
- ★ It's a building block to establishing trust and friendship among community members.
- ★ It brings a sense of belonging to all members of the community.
- ★ It increases safety/crime prevention in the community by helping children (and adults) distinguish between a neighbour and stranger.
- ★ It encourages neighbours to share in the responsibility of looking after the neighbourhood.
- ★ It provides an opportunity to meet some of the older neighbours and learn about your community's history.
- ★ It provides an opportunity for new residents to be welcomed into the community in a relaxed and informal setting.

Types of Block Parties

- ☆ Barbecues
 - ★ Organizers purchase all that is needed and neighbours collectively contribute the money.
 - ★ Everyone brings his or her own meat.
- ☆ Picnics - everyone brings their own meal.
- ☆ Pot luck - everyone brings one dish to share.
- ☆ Catered - everyone shares the cost and the food is purchased.

Don't restrict yourself to these types of block parties- when it comes to personalizing a block party for your community, the sky's the limit.



To find out how the Drayton Valley and District
Family and Community Support Services can help
make your Block Party a success call
780.514.2206.





Organizers' Time Line



2 Months Ahead

- ☆ Find a couple of neighbours to help you with organizing the event.
 - ☆ Create an Organizing Committee and make sure everyone is included in the decision making process.
 - ☆ If this is the first time your neighbourhood has had a block party, you may want to survey or send a flyer out to your neighbours. See *Flyers*
 - ☆ Enlist as many neighbours as you can to help out. Someone can type the flyer; someone else can collect them. You may want to ask some kids to drop the flyers in the mailboxes.
 - ☆ After the results are collected, invite everyone interested to a planning meeting (See **Planning Committee Meeting**).
- ☞ Date: _____
- ☞ Time: _____ (times between 10am and 9pm work well)
- ☞ Location: _____

1 Month Ahead

- ☆ Have a follow-up meeting to discuss what still needs to be done
- ☆ Send out invitations. Remember to be creative, perhaps attach blown up balloon to the invitation and tie the whole thing to your neighbour's doorknob - a whole street full of these is sure to get everyone's attention!



Party Day

- ☆ Set-up
 - ★ Designate areas for food, seating, music, activities, etc.
 - ★ Place garbage cans strategically
- ☆ Arrival
 - ★ Assign greeters to welcome and introduce people
 - ★ Sign-in sheet and nametags
- ☆ Party Schedule
 - ★ Post the day's events and the schedule
- ☆ Clean up
 - ★ Have everyone help clean up at the end or assign the job to a youth task force
 - ★ Take down street barriers
 - ★ Don't forget to ask everyone what they liked best and make a note of it for next year!



Remember that meetings and organizational activities should be fun; try to include as many community members as possible!

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING



Party Date and Time: _____

Rainout Alternatives: _____

Scope of Party (How much area will need to be blocked off?): _____

Location of Party: _____

Type or Theme of Party (BBQ, Potluck, Canada Day, etc.): _____

Budget (Cost of permits? Supplies?): _____

Tasks to delegate at the PLANNING MEETING:

Responsibility	Name	Phone Number and Address
Chair <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Send out invitations to everyone in the neighbourhood as well as anyone else who might be invited (Mayor, RCMP, firefighters, etc.). - Organize meetings as needed. - Acquire name tags. 		
Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Games/ Activities/ Icebreakers for all ages. - Prizes? Music? Contests? - Involve kids and teens in planning and supervising activities. 		
Food <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tables, BBQ's, coolers, etc. - Dishes and cutlery (should everyone bring their own, should plastic ones be supplied). 		
Clean-up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Garbage cans and bags. - Take down signs and pick up any garbage. 		



The more hands the better- try to schedule meetings for times that families, seniors, and students can attend.





Permits



- ☆ Talk to FCSS regarding what insurance is necessary for hosting a block party.
- ☆ Alcohol consumption is not permitted on city roads or public property.
- ☆ Loud music is prohibited.

🎨 Tips and Ideas 🎨

- ☆ To avoid any red tape, it is a lot easier to host a party in your yard or driveway.
- ☆ Decide early and make it clear in your flyer if this will be a block party restricted to those on the street/block or whether people can invite friends/relatives (if yes how many).
- ☆ Have neighbours pull together 3 or 4 BBQ's so that everyone can eat at the same time. Remember to reserve one BBQ for vegetarians, vegans, kosher meats, and other types of diet restrictions.
- ☆ Block parties can also be held in some of the public parks around town - call the Town Office and talk to the Bylaw Officer regarding permits.
- ☆ Activity Ideas:

Neighbourhood History

- Research the history of your neighbourhood through the Library or the Town of Drayton Valley
- Identify special people that lived in your area such as a politician, artist, eccentric, hero, etc
- Have neighbours guess the neighbourhood history by playing charades (who, what, where and when questions)

Cultural Connections

- Have everyone bring their favorite family dish
- Teach everyone how to say 3 things in another language
- Use a world map to indicate where everyone originally came from
- Record the story of how everyone came to live in the neighbourhood and what they like best about the neighbourhood; give a copy to the city archives and the Mayor

Neighbourhood Action

- Discuss what issues or concerns neighbours may have and establish teams to explore how to resolve them. (Note: keep this part of the party to a set time; remember a block party should be fun!)
- Have a clean up time, build a bench, plant a garden, paint street numbers etc. as part of the block party activities- this is a good way to start a block party tradition in your neighbourhood.

Kids Games

- Side walk chalk, obstacle course, face painting, balloons, skipping ropes, road hockey, etc.

Neighbourhood bingo

- Collect neighbours' signatures in this fun icebreaker game.

Speaks a second language	Born in the 1930's	Has freckles	Traveled outside of Canada in 2004	Likes to exercise
Wearing sandals	Has a great smile	Likes to play golf	Plays a musical instrument	Planted a garden
Wears glasses	Did not see 3 rd "Lord of the Rings" movie	Has brown eyes	Wearing Jeans	Wearing black socks
Plays soccer	Has a sister	Born in another country	Is a football fan	Born in another province

Live Music

- Find out who plays musical instruments, if there is a local musician in your midst, or an inspiring group of kids that play together as a band in your neighbourhood. Set up a stage outside with a microphone and speakers and let the music begin!

Talent Contest

- Host a "neighbourhood talent contest" and you are sure to learn all kinds of interesting things about your neighbours. Design some fun categories that people of all ages can compete in and this event will practically run itself.

Face Painting

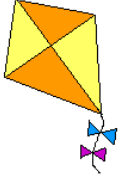

- Put up some flyers in the local high schools- many students are looking for weekend work and volunteer hours.

Other

- Contests of any kind can be exciting and allow people to showoff their skills and hobbies. Why not try a baking contest, craft exhibit, scrapbooking display, karaoke contest, or joke contest with a laugh-o-meter.
- Have some kids sell lemonade and rice crispy squares, then put the money towards charity, neighbourhood projects, or the block party fund for next year!

🎈 Flyers 🎈

Here is an idea of what should be included in a survey or flyer that will be distributed about 2 months ahead of the block party...

	<p style="text-align: center;">123 Street is Having a Block Party!</p> <p>A few neighbours have been talking and we thought it would be fun to get together and have a "meet-on-street event". It could be an opportunity to meet each other and to have some fun! To get this event underway, we would like to know what you think!</p>	
<p>Are you interested in participating in a neighbourhood party? Yes ____ No ____</p>		
<p>If yes, what is the best time of day and the best date?</p>		
<p>Indicate your choice</p>		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Saturday, July 29, 2014 from 11am - 7pm</p>		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Saturday, August 30, 2014 from 11am - 7pm</p>		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Sunday, August 13, 2014 from 11am - 7pm</p>		
<p>Which of the following suggestions would suit your family the best?</p>		
<p>A. Each family brings their own hamburger, buns and refreshments, plus a dessert or a salad to share.</p>		
<p>B. The hamburgers & buns are supplied and everyone contributes money to pay for them.</p>		
<p>C. Each family brings their own refreshments plus an appetizer, salad or dessert to share.</p>		
<p>D. Each family brings their own picnic meal and a dessert to share.</p>		
<p>E. Everyone brings one dish to share (casserole, salad, or dessert - to be assigned) and their own refreshments.</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">1st Choice ____ 2nd Choice ____</p>		
<p>If you have other ideas please jot them down!</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		
<p>If you would like to help organize, let us know. Yes ____ No ____</p>		
<p>Please return this questionnaire by July 5th 2006 to Sally Jones at 321-123rd Street</p>		
<p>We will send out a second notice to let everyone know the outcome of the survey. Please remember to give us your name and address so we can contact you directly.</p>		
<p>Name: _____ Address: _____</p>		
<p>Phone: _____</p>		
<p>Thanks Neighbour!</p>		

Make sure you explain what a Block Party is, encourage attendance, share some of the benefits, get opinions on how to handle the food, and find out which dates will work best.