

# Tip Sheet

## ICE BREAKERS

**Getting to know your neighbors can have a powerful impact on your life. Research suggests that when neighbors interact, kids stay in school, crime declines and residents report improved health.**

**How do you begin? It may seem difficult to simply jump in and introduce yourself to strangers. Here are a few examples of ice breakers that have worked for others...**

- ◆ Move your after-dinner relaxation or week-end project out to the front porch so you have a better chance to meet your neighbors.
- ◆ Bring a neighbor's morning newspaper up to their door to introduce yourself.
- ◆ Notice and mention your neighbor's hobbies. Say something like, "How is the rollerblading going?"
- ◆ When you are planning a yard sale, let your neighbors know and invite them to submit a few items.
- ◆ Comment on a neighbor's garden or landscaping. Ask for tips.
- ◆ If you experience a break-in or have learned about a nearby robbery, give your neighbors a heads up.
- ◆ Shovel snow and do yard work at the same time as your neighbor.
- ◆ Take frequent walks on your block and take time to stop and chat.
- ◆ Make your first meeting with a neighbor a friendly one, rather than a complaint about a barking dog, overgrown yard or loud music.
- ◆ Ask to borrow an egg or tray of ice. Even if you don't need one, it will help you start talking.
- ◆ Invite everyone on your block over for dessert.
- ◆ Offer some useful advice about the recycling program, an upcoming block project or issue. Start with, "Did you know...?"
- ◆ If you share a tree or bush with a neighbor, suggest you trim it together.
- ◆ Acknowledge the awkwardness of the situation. "We've lived on the same block for five years, and I decided it was time to introduce myself..."
- ◆ Give a personal reminder to your neighbors who forget to move their cars on street sweeping day.
- ◆ Make a point to stop at the neighborhood lemonade stand to introduce yourself and have a refreshment.



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