



National Night Out

Tuesday, August 2, 2016



HELPFUL TIPS & IDEAS

Whether this is your first time planning an event or you're just looking to do something different, here is a list of ideas and tips that can help you have a more organized and successful National Night Out event:

Organizational

- Ensure applicable permits and applications are completed, and turned in on time
- Create a list of things you need, and a list of volunteers/responsibilities – make a checklist
- Draft a donation request letter for businesses, including specific items needed, and provide copies to volunteers

Promotion

- Identify the ways to encourage neighbors to attend
- Create, post, and deliver fliers throughout neighborhood
- Make signs to put on the main streets
- Have a vinyl banner made with your group name (and logo if applicable)
- Send email invitations and post in the events section of Nextdoor.com
- Invite local businesses to participate; ask them to provide giveaways

Budget

- Borrow and repurpose items whenever possible – be resourceful!
- Ask for a small monetary contribution from neighbors and/or to help cover costs
- Solicit donations from local businesses and restaurants
- Request assistance from your local council office
- If budget allows:
 - Develop a special logo – use it for flyers, t-shirts, signs/banners, etc. to help unify your group
 - Items for kids (stickers, backpacks/school supplies, balloons)
 - Door prizes or free giveaways

Master of Ceremonies (MC)

- Select a volunteer to be the MC and speak during the event
 - It helps if the MC can recognize the people/groups to name, otherwise ensure someone is available to assist them
- Draft a sample script: welcoming remarks, safety reminders, thank sponsors and donors, introduce VIPs/guests/vendors/etc., closing remarks

Food

- Neighbors bring their own main dish with potluck sides and desserts to share
- Water, and plenty of it – it's August and it will be hot, make sure your volunteers stay hydrated!
- Main/Sides: hot dogs/hamburgers, pizza, pasta, chips, pasta/potato salad
 - Keep refrigerated items on ice or in coolers
- Desserts/Snacks: brownies, cookies, cupcakes, watermelon, popcorn, cotton candy, root beer floats
- Don't forget to offer food to the officers and VIPs that visit



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Entertainment/Activities

- Music
- Vendor tables with informational items and/or giveaways
- Request visits from police, fire, councilmembers, elected officials if desired
- Neighborhood march – have kids make signs and walk as a group to take back our streets!
- Use local talent: singers, face painters, balloon artist, bands, dance groups (Aztec, Folkloric, cultural, hip hop), clown, magician, high school teams/clubs
- Bounce house, slip-n-slide, jump rope, hopscotch, finger painting, cowboy roping, dunk tank, piñata, bean bag toss, musical chairs
- Contests: pie eating, tug-o-war, three-legged race, balloon/egg toss, limbo – small prizes for winners?
- Games: suspect identification, National Night Out quiz, ice breakers
- Work with local home improvement stores to provide a fun building project for kids
- How to:
 - Make your own bubbles: 2c Dawn dish soap, 4oz glycerin, water – pour soap and glycerin into 1gal container, fill with water, let sit overnight. (Wands can be purchased at the Dollar Store)
 - Water balloons: fill balloons the night before and store in a tub of water so they don't dry out

Supplies

- Trash and recycle cans – don't forget bags!
- Paper products and disposable utensils
- Folding tables and chairs – tablecloths
- Microphone with speakers or megaphone for announcements

Post Event

- Group debrief about what worked and what can be improved
- Finalize budget
- Inventory and store leftover items: paper products, activity/game supplies, etc.
- Keep detailed notes for the following year