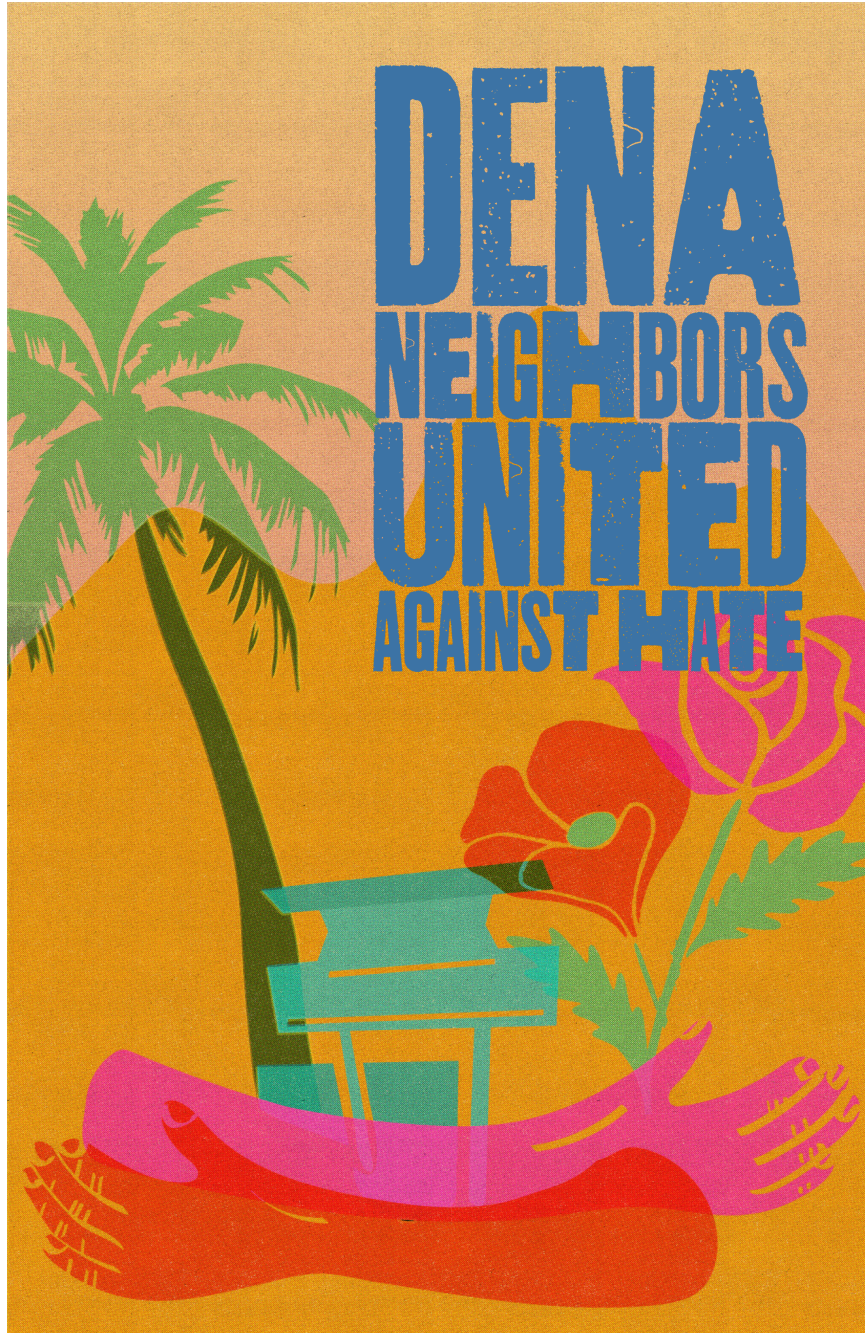


School Neighborfest Toolkit

A Dena Neighborfest Toolkit



Pair Neighborfest with an existing family night, pickup event, or parent group meeting so it's easy for busy families to join in.

Best for family nights, 30–200+ students & families

What is Neighborfest?

Neighborfest is a simple, low-lift way to bring people together during United Against Hate Week. There's no script to follow and no expertise required — just a handful of easy activities that help neighbors learn each other's names, swap a few stories, and remember that the people nearby are worth knowing. It works anywhere people already gather: a street, a yard, a classroom, a sanctuary, or a community hall.

Pick and choose activities, adjust timing to fit your group, and don't worry about doing every single thing — even one or two activities make for a great Neighborfest.

Why host here?

Pair Neighborfest with an existing family night, pickup event, or parent group meeting so it's easy for busy families to join in.

Planning Checklist

- Loop in your principal, parent group, or family engagement coordinator early — many schools require sign-off for events.
- Attach Neighborfest to something already on the calendar (movie night, open house, potluck) to boost turnout.
- Send flyers home in backpacks and post in the school's newsletter or app.
- Set up activity stations in a cafeteria, gym, or courtyard.
- Recruit a few staff members or parent volunteers to run stations.
- Keep activities short and rotating so families with young kids can drop in and out.

Suggested Timing

45–60 minutes, right before/after school or during an evening event.

Activities

The same activity can flex to fit a big block party or a small backyard gathering. Use what fits your space and group size.

Neighbor Name Game

10–15 minutes

Break the ice and start putting names to faces.

MATERIALS

- Name tags or index cards
- Markers
- Optional: a ball or bean bag to toss

HOW IT WORKS

1. Have everyone write their first name and street (or a fun fact) on a name tag.
2. Stand or sit in a circle. Go around and have each person say their name plus one thing they love about the neighborhood.
3. Optional: toss a ball — whoever catches it introduces themselves next.
4. Wrap up by asking how many new names people just learned.

Draw What You Love About Your School Community

15–20 minutes, ongoing

A simple art station for students and families of all ages.

MATERIALS

- Paper
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- A table or blanket to work on

HOW IT WORKS

1. Set out paper and art supplies on a low table or blanket.
 2. Ask students (and grown-ups!) to draw their favorite spot, teacher, friend, or memory from school.
 3. Hang finished drawings on a wall, fence, or string for everyone to admire.
 4. Consider taking photos to share with families afterward.
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Talents & Treasures Board

15 minutes, ongoing

Find out what your neighbors can teach — and what they want to learn.

MATERIALS

- A poster board or butcher paper
- Sticky notes (two colors if possible)
- Markers or pens

HOW IT WORKS

1. Label one side of the board “I can teach...” and the other “I want to learn...”
2. Hand out sticky notes and ask neighbors to write one skill, hobby, or bit of know-how on each side.
3. Stick them up and let people browse — you never know who lives two doors down.
4. Encourage matches to exchange contact info on the spot.

Good Neighbor Shoutouts

5 minutes to fill out, ongoing

A little recognition goes a long way.

MATERIALS

- Shoutout cards (included)
- Pens
- A box, board, or clothesline to display them

HOW IT WORKS

1. Set out shoutout cards and pens near the entrance or food table.
2. Invite neighbors to nominate someone who's been a great neighbor and say why.
3. Clip or pin finished cards somewhere everyone can read them.
4. Read a few out loud if you get a moment to gather the group.

Take It Home Pledge

5 minutes

One small, doable commitment to carry the day forward.

MATERIALS

- Pledge cards (included)
- Pens

HOW IT WORKS

1. Hand out pledge cards near the end of the gathering.
2. Ask each person to write one small thing they'll do to be a better neighbor in the next month.
3. Have people keep their card somewhere they'll see it — a fridge, mirror, or car visor.
4. Optional: revisit the pledges at your next gathering.

Printable: Good Neighbor Shoutout Cards

Cut apart and set out with pens for the Good Neighbor Shoutouts activity.

Good Neighbor Shoutout I want to recognize _____ for being a great neighbor because: _____ _____ _____ _____	Good Neighbor Shoutout I want to recognize _____ for being a great neighbor because: _____ _____ _____ _____
Good Neighbor Shoutout I want to recognize _____ for being a great neighbor because: _____ _____ _____ _____	Good Neighbor Shoutout I want to recognize _____ for being a great neighbor because: _____ _____ _____ _____
Good Neighbor Shoutout I want to recognize _____ for being a great neighbor because: _____ _____ _____ _____	Good Neighbor Shoutout I want to recognize _____ for being a great neighbor because: _____ _____ _____ _____

Printable: Take It Home Pledge Cards

Cut apart and hand out near the end of your gathering.

Take It Home Pledge

One small thing I'll do to be a better neighbor this month:

Take It Home Pledge

One small thing I'll do to be a better neighbor this month:

Take It Home Pledge

One small thing I'll do to be a better neighbor this month:

Take It Home Pledge

One small thing I'll do to be a better neighbor this month:

Take It Home Pledge

One small thing I'll do to be a better neighbor this month:

Take It Home Pledge

One small thing I'll do to be a better neighbor this month:

Next Steps

Neighborfest doesn't have to end when the day does. Here are two easy ways to keep the connection going.

Neighbor Postcard Swap

10 minutes at the event, surprise arrives later

A secret-pen-pal twist on a postcard exchange; everyone writes a note during Neighborfest, and a random neighbor gets a surprise in the mail a few weeks later.

MATERIALS

- Pre-made postcards (printable included) and pens
- Small address labels or stickers
- Two boxes or baskets: one for postcards, one for address labels
- Stamps (organizer or event budget covers postage)

HOW IT WORKS

1. Set out the postcards and pens on a table. Ask each guest to write a short note—a hello, something they enjoyed about the day, or a neighborhood shoutout—and drop it in the postcard box.
2. Separately, have each guest write their name and address on a label and drop it in the address box.
3. After the event, the organizer draws one postcard and one address label at a time, sticks the label on the card (skipping any accidental self-matches), and sets it aside to mail.
4. Mail the postcards out over the following weeks—each neighbor gets a surprise note from someone nearby

Save the Next Date

2 minutes, no materials

Before people head out, put up a simple poster or sign-up sheet asking "When should we do this again?" Let neighbors jot a date, season, or just a thumbs-up. It costs nothing and turns a one-time event into an expected tradition.

Mutual Aid: Making It Last

Neighborfest is a great first step, and it can also be the start of something longer-lasting. Many mutual aid networks begin exactly this way: a group of neighbors who met once, exchanged contact info, and decided to keep looking out for each other.

If your Neighborfest sparks interest, a few low-lift ways to keep it going:

- Start a shared contact list or group text so neighbors can ask for and offer help: a ride, tools, a spare key, a hand carrying groceries.
- Keep the Talents & Treasures board (or a photo of it) as an ongoing resource, not just a one-day activity.
- Check in seasonally: a heat wave, a holiday, or an emergency is a natural reason to reconnect.

A FEW RESOURCES (if you want to go further)

- [Mutual Aid 101](#) — toolkit to help start a neighborhood mutual aid network
- [How to Create a Mutual Aid Network](#) — from the American Friends Service Committee.

You don't need a formal organization to start, just a way for neighbors to reach each other when it matters.

Participating Organizations

DENA Neighbors United Against Hate 2026

Community-Based Organizations

- Boys & Girls Club of Pasadena
- The Center for Restorative Justice
- Clergy Community Coalition
- Collaborate PASadena
- Day One
- Harambee Ministries
- Jewish Federation of San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys
- Mobility Dogs
- Muslim Public Affairs Council
- NAACP of Pasadena
- Stars
- Western Justice Center
- Young & Healthy

Government Partners

- California Civil Rights Department
- Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations
- Pasadena Human Relations Commission

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With Gratitude

Thank you to the City of Riverside's Our Riverside, Our Neighborhood initiative for inspiration from their Neighborfest Toolkit