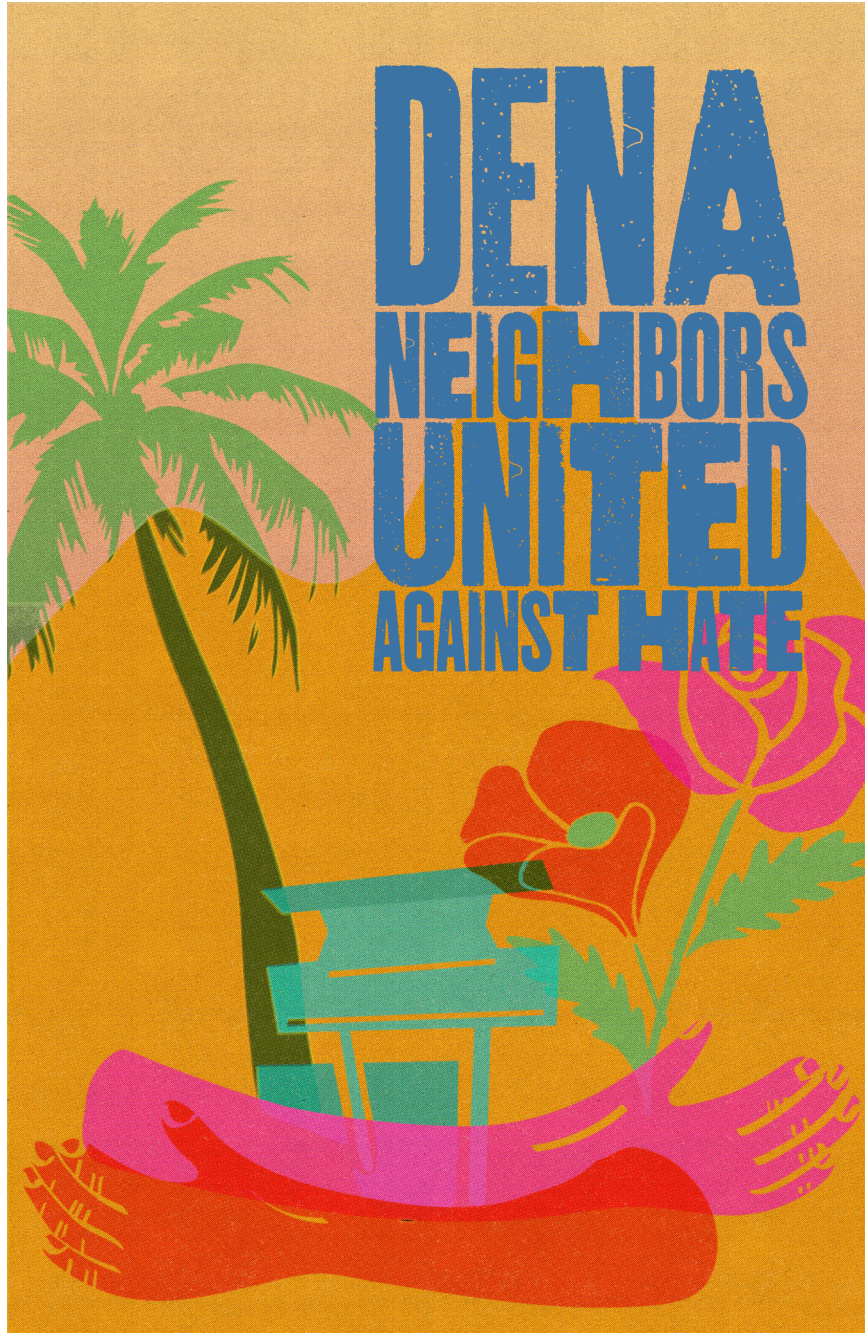


# Block Party Neighborfest Toolkit

*A Dena Neighborfest Toolkit*



Block parties bring neighbors together right on your block — folding tables, good food, and neighbors who've never officially met finally saying hello.

*Best for 20–100+ neighbors, one or more blocks*

## What is Neighborfest?

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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?

Block parties bring neighbors together right on your block — folding tables, good food, and neighbors who've never officially met finally saying hello.

#### PERMITS, SIMPLIFIED

Pasadena only requires paperwork if you close a public street. Keep your gathering on private property (a driveway, front yard, or parking area), or keep it small and neighbor-to-neighbor rather than publicly advertised, and you can skip city permits entirely. Source: City of Pasadena Special Events FAQ, [cityofpasadena.net](http://cityofpasadena.net).

## Planning Checklist

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- Easiest option: host on private property (driveway, front yard, parking area) — no city permit required at all.
- If you'd like to close the street to traffic, Pasadena requires a Public Right-of-Way Permit from Public Works, (626) 744-4195 — simpler than a full Special Events Permit.
- Keep it neighbor-to-neighbor rather than publicly advertised. A gathering that's open to the general public triggers Pasadena's full Special Events Permit, which needs 6–9 months lead time.
- Recruit 2–3 co-hosts to share setup, activities, and cleanup.
- Let neighbors know a couple weeks out with flyers, door hangers, or a group text/app (Nextdoor, WhatsApp).
- Set up canopy or shade, folding tables and chairs, and a trash/recycling station.
- Have a rain or extreme-heat backup plan, like a nearby garage or covered space.
- Assign someone to greet arrivals and point them to activities.

### Suggested Timing

2–3 hours, afternoon or early evening works well.

*Tip: swap the paper drawing station for sidewalk chalk if you've got some space to spare.*

## Activities

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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.

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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.
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## Neighborhood Dreams Wall

10 minutes, ongoing

*A quick, hopeful look at what your block could become.*

### MATERIALS

- Poster board or wall space
- Markers
- Tape

### HOW IT WORKS

1. Write one big question at the top: “What do we want our neighborhood to be known for?”
2. Let neighbors add a word, sentence, or drawing anytime during the event.
3. Read a few highlights aloud near the end, if there's a natural moment.
4. Snap a photo of the finished wall to share on your block's group chat.

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## 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.

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## Shared Table Sign-Up

Set up in advance

*Food brings people together — literally.*

### MATERIALS

- Sign-up sheet (included)
- Tape or a clipboard

### HOW IT WORKS

1. Share the sign-up sheet ahead of time — a porch posting, group text, or shared doc all work.
2. Ask people to bring a dish, drinks, plates, or ice, spread out so no one's overloaded.
3. Post the sheet at the event so latecomers can see what's already covered.
4. Optional: collect a favorite recipe from each dish for a mini neighborhood cookbook.

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## Draw What You Love About Your Neighborhood

15–20 minutes, ongoing

*A simple art station for neighbors 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 kids (and adults!) to draw their favorite spot, person, or memory from the neighborhood.
3. Hang finished drawings on a wall, fence, or string for everyone to admire.
4. Consider taking photos to share with the group afterward.

## Printable: Shared Table Sign-Up Sheet

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Post this where neighbors can add their name so food (and helping hands) get spread around evenly.

| Name | Bringing | Notes (allergies, serves-how-many, etc.) |
|------|----------|------------------------------------------|
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## Printable: Good Neighbor Shoutout Cards

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

|                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Good Neighbor Shoutout</b></p> <p>I want to recognize _____ for being a great neighbor because:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> | <p><b>Good Neighbor Shoutout</b></p> <p>I want to recognize _____ for being a great neighbor because:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> |
| <p><b>Good Neighbor Shoutout</b></p> <p>I want to recognize _____ for being a great neighbor because:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> | <p><b>Good Neighbor Shoutout</b></p> <p>I want to recognize _____ for being a great neighbor because:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> |
| <p><b>Good Neighbor Shoutout</b></p> <p>I want to recognize _____ for being a great neighbor because:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> | <p><b>Good Neighbor Shoutout</b></p> <p>I want to recognize _____ for being a great neighbor because:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> |

## Next Steps

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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

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### 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

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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*

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#### 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