**Block Party – easy steps and door hanger template**

Building a foundation of strong neighborly relations is certainly worth the effort! Here’s a how-to guide:

1. **Reach out to your neighbors to get everyone on board.** This is easy if you already know your neighbors, but if you don’t know them yet, your first step might be to create a neighborhood or block directory. This can be as simple as dropping a sign-up sheet in everyone’s mailbox. If you decide to simply reach out by word-of-mouth, consider having a sign-up sheet at the block party to make future communications easier.
2. **Pick a date with everyone in mind.** Remember that a neighborhood block party is about encouraging interaction and a sense of community. This means that the most successful events are not necessarily perfectly planned and perhaps do not look Pinterest-worthy. But, the parties that build community by engaging neighbors, both during planning and on the actual day, are the most successful. For this reason, it’s important to pick a date that a majority can attend.
3. **Secure an event permit.** This is necessary if you will be holding the party in the street. Permits can be obtained on the St. Louis City website: stlouis-mo.gov.

1. **Remember the key ingredients for any successful party: food and drinks, music, and kids’ activities.**  A few questions to answer: Will this be a potluck picnic or can you have food donated by a local business? Should you designate a grilling area where everyone can have their meat grilled or should each family be responsible for their own? Is this BYOB or will you have a beer keg? Can someone provide the music with their own personal sound system or will you arrange for live music?   Finally, you need to determine if you will collect money for any of these shared costs.
2. **Don’t forget basic party supplies.** At minimum, you will need tables, chairs, plates, cups, utensils, and napkins. You might need a tent, ice, a grill or two. Ask families to sign up to bring supplies.
3. **Share the planning assignments.** Once you determine what you will you need to assign responsibility.  It’s important for all the neighbors to feel ownership of the event and sharing the planning tasks is one way to do that. This is how you not only ensure attendance this year, but also that the party will continue to live on year after year.
4. **Send out an invitation with party details.** Create a flyer or use the attached door hanger template. In addition to the time and date, be sure to include what neighbors should expect: Should they bring food to share? Are you asking everyone to contribute to costs? Be sure to include these details in your invitation.
5. **Set the scene before everyone arrives.** Block off the street, set up tables and chairs, and designate a food area, preferably out of the sun.
6. **Don’t forget the clean-up.** Remember this party is all about celebrating your neighborhood, so don’t forget to leave your street better than you found it. This is also the perfect chance to plant the seeds in the minds of the little ones in attendance that it’s important to care for and take ownership of our neighborhood.