



Neighbors Creating Connections: Meeting Your Neighbors

The first time you introduce yourself as a neighborhood block leader, here is a list of things you can begin with:

- Your name
- How long you've lived in the neighborhood
- How long you've been a Block Leader
- Reasons why you've decided to be a Block Leader
- Activities your neighborhood has been involved in
- Your hopes for the neighborhood and how participation matters

After you've introduced yourself, your neighbors are likely to respond differently. Here are some possible ways your neighbors may respond and some things that you might want to do.

Scenario #1: If the person is enthusiastic and interested in what you have to say.

Of course, this is the best possible scenario. If your neighbor's response to the Program is enthusiastic, you may want to ask him or her to get involved in ways that go beyond attending a meeting. For example, perhaps s/he could help you plan or host an event, meet other neighbors, or work with you on a neighborhood roster. Ask for his or her interest and skills/abilities to gain involvement and share responsibilities among neighbors.

Scenario #2: If the person is open but hesitant.

This may mean that the person may not know much about what your role is as a neighborhood leader and what you might be expecting of him or her. If you have your Block Leader ID card, it would be good to show it to help establish your credibility. After explaining your role as the neighborhood leader and the things you are planning for the neighborhood, it's important to let your neighbor know that he or she does not need to commit to anything s/he doesn't want to. You might end your conversation by asking the person if there's anything s/he would like to see happen in the neighborhood, or if s/he has any questions or concerns about this program that you can address. You may want to leave a flyer, or letter that reinforces the information you've discussed, and your contact information.

Scenario #3: The person is clearly not interested.

If you have a neighbor who clearly wants to be left alone, it's important to respect his/her right to privacy. Before ending the conversation, however, you might ask if there are any future programs s/he would want more information about or conditions, or emergencies, (for example, an earthquake) in which connection to the neighborhood would be useful. If

s/he says yes, you have an opening for future involvement and you and your neighbor can decide together how best to proceed. If s/he says no, respect your neighbor's wishes knowing that s/he may change his mind in the future.

Scenario #4: The person doesn't speak English well.

Once you realize the person does not speak English well and you find out what his or her native language is, you can ask another neighbor who speaks the same language to help translate. If none of your neighbors speak the language, contact [Laura Lee](#) who can ask for assistance from peers.

Scenario #5: If the person doubts your credibility.

This is where having your city ID will come in handy. Once neighbors see your Block Leader ID they usually will take your role seriously. If your neighbor is still skeptical, you can ask him or her if s/he would feel more comfortable contacting the City to acknowledge your role as a Block Leader.