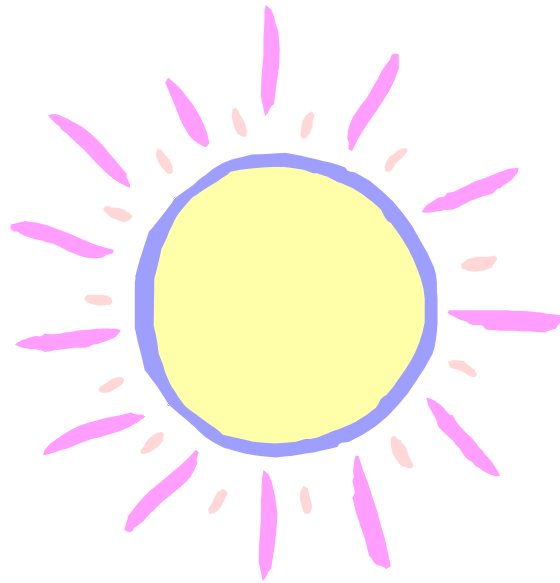


PICNIC IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



Information Package

Developed by:

Cypress Health Region (Health Promotion),

Family Advocacy Program (Regional Intersectoral Committee),

City of Swift Current (Parks & Recreation)



Neighbourhood

Picnics

Neighbourhood Picnics are ways for neighbourhoods to come together, get to know each other, and form relationships that:

- ❖ Promote a stronger sense of community
- ❖ Promote higher safety within the neighbourhoods
- ❖ Provide opportunities to meet face-to-face with city officials and service providers in order to better understand what resources are available, and how to address concerns, questions, or suggestions

These picnics can also be used as an organizing event for a neighbourhood block. These events further the sense of community as we provide a unified voice that can better address any concerns or suggestions with strength in numbers.

Your imagination is the limit when planning activities that will make your neighbourhood picnic memorable. You can keep it as simple or event-full as you want. Provide safe and fun activities appropriate for the age groups present. The following information will help you get started with planning your neighbourhood picnic.



~ Suggestions ~

How To Start Organizing

1. Start knocking on doors to find out if there is enough interest and, if so, which day would be the best for the most people.
2. Pick a date and time (mid-afternoon to evening often works best).
3. Pick a place for your gathering:
 - a. Your street (contact local town or city office for regulations on blocking off the area to traffic)
 - b. A neighbourhood park or green space etc.
 - c. Consider alternate plans in case of rain.
4. Go door to door.
 - a. Hand out an invitation (use the one included or create your own).
 - b. Ask people to fill out the Picnic details sheet (included) and let them know where to return it.
 - c. Recruit volunteers
5. Gather a few neighbours and divide up the tasks. Decide on a possible theme, activities etc. Decide what to do about food (snacks, BBQ, or potluck etc.).
6. Decide if this Picnic will be restricted to those on the street/block or will people be able to invite friends/relatives (if yes, how many).
Make this clear in your flyer/invitation.
7. Respect your neighbour's property and privacy. Do not block residents who do not wish to participate and be sure that emergency vehicles are able to enter the block party area at all times.



Consider This

- ❖ Promote a substance-free picnic to ensure the safety and enjoyment of all adults and children.
- ❖ In hot weather food spoils quickly so have coolers available.
- ❖ Keep safety in mind for all activities for example keeping BBQ's away from children's activities.
- ❖ Post signs the day before reminding everyone to remove cars and that the street will be closed.
- ❖ Nametags - they may seem silly, but it's a lot easier than trying to remember everyone's name or doing self-introductions. Kids will get to know their neighbours' names as well.
- ❖ Confirm arrangements for barricades, entertainment/games, food, refreshments, tents, tables, and any other equipment that will be rented or borrowed.
- ❖ Remember to keep the arrangements as simple as possible and the atmosphere relaxed and informal.
- ❖ Clean up when you're done! Have trashcans located in convenient locations to minimize clean up.



**ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE
SOME ADDITIONAL IDEAS TO
HELP YOU PLAN FOR SUCCESS**

Suggested Activities

You keep it as simple or as involved as you want. The main idea is to get to know your neighbourhood.

- ✓ BBQ
- ✓ Get older youth involved in planning and helping:
 - Kids (and kids-at-heart) Games (3-legged races, potato sack races, bobbing for apples, "fish" pond).
 - Bike decorating
 - Face painting
 - Kids mini-parade with decorated bikes, leashed pets, clowns and face painting, marching bands with kitchen utensil "instruments".
- ✓ Balloons
- ✓ Clown/s
- ✓ See "Games Ideas" section for more activities



WANT TO CLOSE YOUR STREET FOR A NEIGHBOURHOOD PICNIC?

Check with your town or city administrator for procedure

HINT: Here is what one city requires and what they can do to help you hold a successful picnic...

1. The group would have to provide the city with a letter requesting the temporary street closure with some background information such as:

- ✓ Location,
 - ✓ Purpose of the event,
 - ✓ Number of households involved,
 - ✓ Dates, Times, etc.
2. Some form of unblocked access to allow emergency vehicles into the area will be required
 3. The letter of request is evaluated and the necessary steps to proceed are put in place. The more notice they have the better...
 4. If it is a low traffic area, some barricades may be provided and the proper agencies are advised of the temporary street closure.
 5. If it is in an urban park, some picnic tables may be provided if requested.



You are Invited

To a Neighbourhood

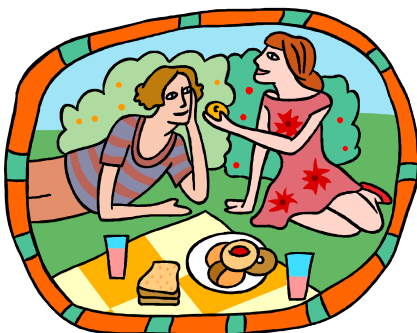
Picnic!

DATE: _____

TIME: _____

PLACE: _____

THEME/EVENT: _____



TO RSVP or help out, please phone:

at _____



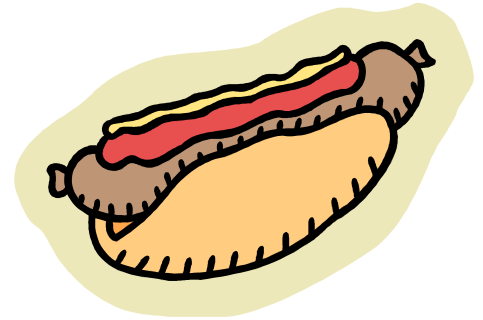
Picnic Details

We are glad you can join us for the Picnic

On _____ at _____
(date) (time)

We are asking each family to bring:

- ❖ Chairs to sit on
- ❖ Your own non-breakable plates, cups, and cutlery
- ❖ Food items:



- _____
- ❖ Beverage items: _____
- ❖ Other: _____



In addition, do you have the following that could be used?

Suggestions for activities you could organize?



Please return by: _____ (date) to:

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____



Games Ideas

ICE BREAKERS:

Character Description: When neighbours arrive, have them write down one or two adjectives that describe themselves. Put these adjectives, along with the person's name, on a stick-on-badge. Then allow your guests to find someone with similar or opposite adjectives. This will quickly allow your neighbourhood to meet and get to know one on a personal level. It will also allow them to quickly find who they have the most in common with.



I've Done Something You haven't Done: If your group is small and all seated in a group this works well. Once seated in a circle people introduce themselves and then state something they have done that they think no one else in the neighbourhood has done. If someone else has done that specific thing then that person must state another fact until he or she finds something that no one else has done.

Who Am I? When each person arrives the leader or host will tape the name of a famous person on the back of each participant (this could be anyone from Harry Potter to Elvis Presley). Each neighbour is not to see who is taped to his or her back. The task of the game is to find out who they are. While the party gets started guest will then wonder around introducing themselves and asking simple yes or no questions about who is taped to their back. If the member receives a 'yes' answer, they can continue to ask that individual questions until they receive a 'no' answer. When a participant figures out who they are, they then take off the tag and put it on the front of their shirts. At this point they also include their own name to the tag. That participant then goes around helping others to find out who they are. The exercise concludes when all members have discovered who they are. This game is good for getting members in the neighbourhood to mingle and introduce themselves.

Two Truths and a Lie: This game works best while doing introductions in a group. This is a great game for people who are getting to know one another. Once everyone is seated or gathered in a circle they then take turns saying their name as well as three things about themselves. Out of those three things, two are to be truths and one is to be a lie. The object is then for everyone to try and figure out which of the three is the lie. This is a fun way to learn simple but fun facts about your neighbours while getting to know their names.

GAMES FOR CHILDREN:



Refrigerator Tag: This is a game that should be played outside or in an open area. To play, pick four objects to be bases and give each base a name: "don't like it," "love it," "it's ok," and "never tried it." To help the game along, signs can be made for each base so that the children will know what each one means. To begin the game, pick someone to be it. That person then stands in the middle and the players scattered to whichever base they desire. The person who is it, calls out the name of a food; players then have to run to the base that describes how they feel about that food. The person who is "it" must try to tag the players before they reach a base. The player who is tagged becomes it.

Hen and Chicks: At each end of the playing field or area assign a safe point that can be easily distinguished (such as a space between two trees or houses). One child is chosen to be hen and another is chosen the fox. The fox (who is it) stands in the middle of the playing field, while the mother hen stands at one of the ends of the field. The rest of the children (who are the chicks) stand at the opposite end of the field. Mother hen then calls, "Baby chicks, baby chicks, please come home!" The little chicks then reply, "We can't the foxes are out." The mother hen then states, "well come anyways." At this point the children all run towards their mother hen while the fox tries to catch the baby chicks. Any children that are caught then become wolves until all the children are caught. Mother hen always remains at the opposite side of the playing field.

This game can be simplified by replacing the fox with the mother hen who then tries to catch the chicks as they run by.

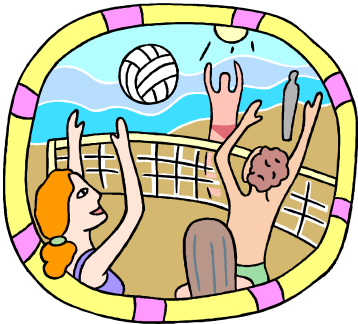
Wet Ground: This game is much like musical chairs with a twist. Instead of using chairs this game calls for newspaper; which are randomly spread on the ground. The idea behind this game is that the children are the campers and the newspaper represents dry ground. Other children are bears and the newspapers are the icebergs. As the music plays, the campers move around the newspaper but do not step on them. When the music stops, they rush to dry ground to keep their feet dry. After each round a sheet of newspaper is removed until only one sheet is left. The fun part is trying to see how many children can fit onto one sheet.

This game can also be played as a game of tag in which the children are safe on the icebergs (sheets of newspaper) but those in the water (running on the grass) and be caught. Once a child is caught they begin to chase the other children as well.

Thanksgiving Game: This game can be used with chairs like musical chairs or it can simply be played with all the children standing in a circle much like duck, duck, goose (this works better when there are lots of children). The child without a chair is the person who is it. That child calls out "I'm thankful for...." (For example, "I am thankful for people with white t-shirts"). At this point everyone with white t-shirts (or whatever the speaker is thankful for) stands up and changes places. The person left standing is then the next one to say what they are "thankful for".

OTHER IDEAS:

Other activities that you can do would be things such as obstacle courses, scavenger hunts, bubbles, crafts, face painting, water games and story times for the younger children.

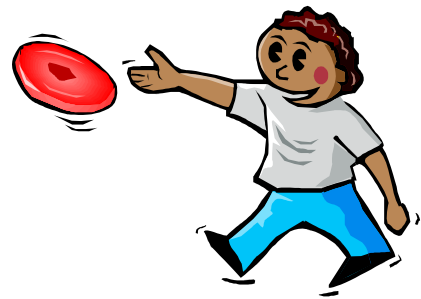


YOUTH:

Older children will want to be a little bit more active and a lot more competitive. Try traditional games such as dodge ball, baseball, touch football, kick the can, capture the flag and soccer.

Or try some newer games such as:

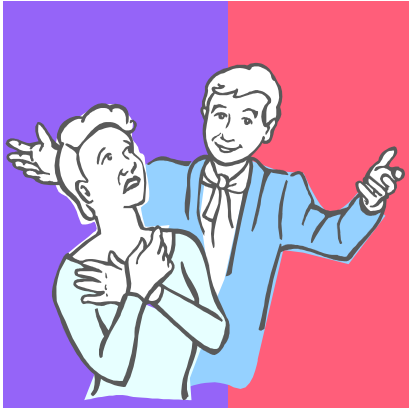
Ultimate Frisbee: This game takes a large playing field or open area and should be played in either a gym or outdoors. Youth are split up into two teams who each take one end of the field. A single disk or Frisbee is used in this game. Each point begins with both teams lining up on the front of their respective end zone line. The defence throws ("pulls") the disc to the offence. Each time the offence completes a pass in the defence's end zone, the offence scores a point. Play is initiated after each score. The disc may be advanced in any direction by completing a pass to a teammate. Players may not run with the disc. The person with the disc ("thrower") has ten seconds to throw the disc. The defender guarding the thrower ("marker") counts out the stall count. This is a non contact sport.



Prisoner's base: This game also takes a larger playing field or a gym. The playing field is divided into half (this means there must be a clear centre line). The youth are divided into two teams and each is given a hula-hoop and some beanbags. Each team takes their hoop and beanbags to their end. The beanbags are then placed near the end of the playing field inside of the hoop. Inside this hoop is then a safe area to the opposing team. The goal in the game is to collect all of the opposing team's beanbags and bring them back to your own hula-hoop. Whenever a player crosses the centre line they then cross into the opposition's territory and can therefore be caught and captured. Once a player is captured they are taken to the opposing team's prison. The only way a player can escape from prison is to get tagged by a free player of their team. Once a player has freed a teammate they and the prisoner get a free walk back to their safe side. A player can only rescue one player at a time and cannot rescue a prisoner and steal a beanbag at the same time. Each player must return to their side after completing one of these tasks. When one steals a beanbag they do not get a free walk back. If they are caught before they reach their safe side of the field, they must then return the beanbag to its original hula-hoop. The team to collect all the beanbags wins. Once again this is a non contact sport.

THEATRE GAMES

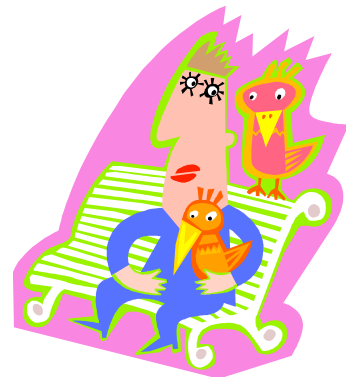
If the block party is small or in a quiet area, you might consider doing quieter games such as theatre games. These games are fun for the youth as well as adults; not to mention they are entertaining for those not involved as well. Here are some ideas for theatre games...



Charades: This is a word guessing game. It can be a simple group activity or a competitive game between two teams. This game would involve everyone present. If the game is competitive then the group would be divided into half. Each team would have a turn to pick one person to go up front and mime a word, action, person, movie, phrase, part of the community etc. The team then has 30 seconds to guess what that person is trying to act out. If the team does not succeed then the other team gets the chance to guess at the action. The team to guess right gets a point. Keep track of the points.

Party quirks: This game involves between 4 and 8 players. One person is chosen to host the imaginary party. Before the game begins the audience should write down suggestions for quirky character traits and put them in a hat or canister. For example, a person going through all the stages of life, a teenage beauty queen, or someone who is afraid of the colour blue. The players then pick one of these traits but do not share the trait with the audience or the host. Once by one the players then enter the party acting in the way their slip of paper they picked suggested. The object is for the host to guess the traits of the players. Once the player's trait has been guessed they may exit the stage. This game is fun for those playing and very entertaining for everyone not involved.

Park bench: Game needs a bench or a couple of chairs. This can involve as many or as few people as is desired. The game begins when one person enters the scene as a certain character. Another person then chooses a character and enters the scene with that person. They both must stay in character. After a few minutes or when the scene begins to falter, another person or character enters the scene. At this point the first character on stage finds a way to exit without ruining the scene. A new scene will then begin and end in the same way.



GAMES FOR ADULTS:

Wink Murder: One of the players is chosen to be a detective and is then asked to leave the room (or play area) while the others choose the murder. Those who are left are then the victims. The detective is called back and everyone begins to wander around until the murder winks at his victim and they dramatically pretend to die. The detective must then try to decide who the murder is. He can only make one guess. If he is wrong then the game continues on until the detective is ready to make another guess. The victims who have died remain dead until a new game begins. This game can also be played with handshakes instead of winks. All players walk around shaking hands pretending to meet and talk. The murder would have a special handshake and once a victim receives this handshake they then take a few steps away and pretend to die. The rest of the game is the same.

Pass the Orange: Arrange teams into two or three rows standing one behind the other (usually boy, girl, boy, girl). Each team is given an orange or ball of some sort. The first person then tucks the orange under their chin. The object is to pass the orange down the line from person to person without using hands and without dropping. The first team to pass the orange down the line and bring it back to the first person wins.

Belt Race Game: The groups should be split into partners. Each has a very large belt (it can be made out of two belts tied together). The couples should have their backs to each other and the belt should be placed at their feet. When the host says the word "go", the couples must then try to get the belt up over their heads without using hands.

What if: Everyone sits in a circle and each person has a piece of notepaper and a pencil or pen. Each person writes down a *what-if* question (for example, "what if John had a wig?"). They then pass their sheet of paper to the right and that person answers their question, "I would use it as a Frisbee". Once everyone is finished answering their question, start with one person in the circle reading their question and their neighbours answer and then go around the circle.



GAMES FOR SENIORS:

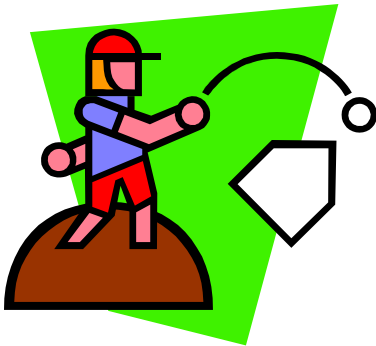
Games for seniors should be a little bit more leisurely; however, they should still be fun and entertaining.

Some good ideas are simple things such as horseshoes, card games or tournaments, bingo (always a favourite with all ages) and a game that resembles Trivial Pursuit. This game could be made to be about the community or the members of the community instead.

For example cards could be easily made from coloured index cards and research could be done to get questions about the history of the community or to get questions about the people in the community. This would help to create a sense of community and familiarity. Simple games like Pictionary or charades are also good for involving both seniors and children.

GAMES FOR EVERYONE:

Since the idea behind the block parties is to get everyone in the community involved, it is a good idea to plan games that involve all ages that are both fun and entertaining. Here are some ideas:



The Human Knot: If there are a lot of people then the group can be divided up into two separate groups who can then compete to see who will get done first. Once the groups are made then everyone puts both arms into the centre of the circle and grasp someone else's hands. This will create a human knot. The object is then to try and get out of the knot with out dropping hands. This takes time and patience but more importantly it takes teamwork and creates a relationship with everyone in the group. Once again a sense of community will be created.

Bubble Gum Game: This game is messy but a lot of fun (especially for those watching). Each participant is given a dish full of whip cream with a piece of bubble gum buried in the middle of it. The object of the game is to find the piece of bubble gum and blow a bubble with it. The problem is that you cannot use your hands! You might want to provide a garbage bag for this one!

Don't Say that Word! Each person is given a stick to wear on their collar when they arrive. They will also be told that they cannot say a certain word. For example maybe the word is neighbourhood. Through out the night the goal is to never say this word. If you do say the word and someone catches you they can then steal your stick. At the end of the night the person with the most sticks wins!

Human Taco: Each guest will be given a card with a taco ingredient. This is to be put on the back of their shirt; however, they cannot look at it. Each player must then mingle around asking yes or no questions to find out which taco ingredient is on their back. Before beginning the game it is important to give a correct list of taco ingredients to the guest. For example, shell, meat, cheese, lettuce, tomato, salsa. Once everyone has been given a card and a list then announce "I am hungry! Lets eat!" and the game will begin. At this point each person must discover their ingredient and then find enough to form a complete human taco.

Fashion Madness: First, get a bag full of different funny cloths. For example: old hats, shirts, swimsuits, dresses, etc. Then put that bag in the middle of a circle formed by all the participants. This game works like hot potato. The bag will get passed around until the music stops. When it stops then the person holding the bag must dig into it and pull something out. Whatever piece of clothing they pull out they must then put on. When the bag is empty, vote on who has the silliest outfit on. That person wins.



You're invited
to a
NEIGHBOURHOOD
PICNIC

Neighbourhood Bragging Rights

What did you do?

Where was it held?

Were the children & Youth involved? How?

How many people came?

Would you do it again? Why/Why not?

What worked?

What didn't work?

Any Suggestions for others?

Contact name/ address/ phone number?

Art Work:

Have your children draw a picture of:

- ✓ The things they did
- ✓ The fun they had
- ✓ The food they ate
- ✓ The games they played
- ✓ The people they met
- ✓ How they helped

Send their art! We'll arrange to have it displayed! Send your photos!



Tell us about your Picnic!



**** Fill out this sheet & enter to win a prize (TBA)! ****

Send to: Health Promotion Coordinator, 350 Cheadle St.W. Swift Current, Sk S9H 4G3