



Festival of Neighbourhoods
Kitchener

thE-neighbour

March, 2014

phone (519) 579 3800 - fax (519) 578 9185

entries@festivalofneighbourhoods.ca

www.kitchener.ca/fon



Reach Out... Connect... Belong!

2014 Festival theme unveiled.

This year's theme casts a light on the desire for many in our community to belong, and yet it can be hard to reach out and connect with neighbours. Still, it is well worth the effort to break the ice so you and your neighbours can grow a strong sense of belonging. It makes for more cohesive and resilient neighbourhoods, and people's sense of wellbeing increases.

Reach Out... Start by going for a walk near your house, and simply saying "Hi" or say "Thank you" when neighbours clear the sidewalk of snow, or let them know if you admire something in their front yard when they are tending to it. You can build a snowman or place seasonal decorations in your own front yard. Likely, there will be neighbours who will thank you for making the street more cheerful. You never know what might grow out of these chance encounters.

Connect... Create an opportunity for neighbours to come together and to know one another. Some simple activities might be a book swap, a plant exchange or a garbage clean up in the local park. Invite every household in your neighbourhood by putting up signs, placing invitations in mailboxes, and talking to neighbours. Enlist the help of neighbours, not just to lighten your load, but also to include your neighbours in all the fun. They too want to belong!

Belong! Enjoy the benefits of your efforts to know your neighbours and care for your neighbourhood. When we connect with each other, the sense of community ownership spreads, improving our sense of well being as we make positive change.

Festival of Neighbourhoods encourages people to come together with their neighbours. You might feel your neighbourhood is just your street, or several surrounding streets, or even the apartment building where you live. Just be sure to include everyone. If you have any questions, contact us. Take the time to browse at our [Neighbourhood Activity Trunk](#) which has great selection of toys and games suitable for larger groups.

Remember to [register](#) your neighbourhood gathering, and participate in the April Early Bird Draw. Registering is a required step to participate in the random draw at the October Festival Finale for a \$10,000 capital improvement grant for your neighbourhood.

FoN BILLBOARD

Win a prize for your next neighbourhood get-together - The April Early Bird Draw is open to any registrations of neighbourhood activities held after October 31, 2013, received between January 14 to March 31.

Congratulations to Victoria Park Neighbourhood Association for the Annual Holiday Potluck & General Meeting! - Winners of the January Early Bird Draw. The prize: A \$50 gift card for their next neighbourhood activity. Sponsored by Alejandra & Vladimir Ivic of Remax - Twin City Realty.



QUICK LINKS to FoN Resources

- [Registration Form for mail or fax](#)
- [Full Online Registration](#)
- [Short Online Registration, to be completed by phone](#)
- [Online Booking Neighbourhood Activity Trunk](#)
- [Earth Day Resources](#)
- [2014 Festival Map](#)

*Neighbours of Topper Woods got together on a sunny [Earth Day](#) last year for a community clean-up. Many helpers showed up with garden gloves and garbage bags for a day of hard work and great fun.
Well done!*

Neighbour to Neighbour

People share thoughts that reflect the value of gathering with their neighbours

"Every day, you will find parents or caregivers walk children through the garden and teach them about vegetables. Other times, it becomes a hangout for families to eat their lunch and friends to chat about their day. Increasingly though, it fosters new relationships as people walk by and comment on what they see. All of the feedback has been extremely positive, and with this being only our first year, we see so much potential for community building in the near and distant future."