

What to do: 100 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO BUILD SOCIAL CAPITAL

Social capital is built through hundreds of little and big actions we take every day. We've gotten you started with a list of 100 ideas, drawn from suggestions made by many people and groups. Try some of these or try your own. We need to grow this list. If you have other ideas, post them at: <http://www.bettertogether.org>

You know what to do. Build connections to people. Build trust with others. Get involved.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1. Organize a social gathering to welcome a new neighbor | 20. Join the local Elks, Kiwanis, or Knights of Columbus | 35. Attend school plays |
| 2. Attend town meetings | 21. Get involved with Brownies or Cub/Boy/Girl Scouts | 36. Answer surveys when asked |
| 3. Register to vote and vote | 22. Start a monthly tea group | 37. <i>Businesses</i> : invite local government officials to speak at your workplace |
| 4. Support local merchants | 23. Speak at or host a monthly brown bag lunch series at your local library | 38. Attend Memorial Day parades and express appreciation for others |
| 5. Volunteer your special skills to an organization | 24. Sing in a choir | 39. Form a local outdoor activity group |
| 6. Donate blood | 25. Get to know the clerks and salespeople at your local stores | 40. Participate in political campaigns |
| 7. Start a community garden | 26. Attend PTA meetings | 41. Attend a local budget committee meeting |
| 8. Mentor someone of a different ethnic or religious group | 27. Audition for community theater or volunteer to usher | 42. Form a computer group for local senior citizens |
| 9. Surprise a new neighbor by making a favorite dinner—and include the recipe | 28. Give your park a weatherproof chess/checkers board | 43. Help coach Little League or other youth sports – even if you don't have a kid playing |
| 10. Tape record your parents' earliest recollections and share them with your children | 29. Play cards with friends or neighbors | 44. Help run the snack bar at the Little League field |
| 11. Plan a vacation with friends or family | 30. Give to your local food bank | 45. Form a "tools cooperative" with neighbors and share ladders, snow blowers, etc. |
| 12. Don't gossip | 31. Participate in walk-a-thons | 46. Start a lunch gathering or a discussion group with co-workers |
| 13. Help fix someone's flat tire | 32. <i>Employers</i> : encourage volunteer/community groups to hold meetings on your site | 47. Offer to rake a neighbor's yard or shovel his/her walk |
| 14. Organize or participate in a sports league | 33. Volunteer in your child's classroom or chaperone a field trip | 48. Join a carpool |
| 15. Join a gardening club | 34. Join or start a babysitting cooperative | 49. <i>Employers</i> : give employees time (e.g., 3 days per year to work on civic projects) |
| 16. Attend home parties when invited | | 50. Plan a "Walking Tour" of a local historic area |
| 17. Become an organ donor | | 51. Eat breakfast at a local gathering spot on Saturdays |
| 18. Attend your children's athletic contests, plays and recitals | | |
| 19. Get to know your children's teachers | | |

52. Have family dinners and read to your children
53. Run for public office
54. Stop and make sure the person on the side of the highway is OK
55. Host a block party or a holiday open house
56. Start a fix-it group—friends willing to help each other clean, paint, garden, etc.
57. Offer to serve on a town committee
58. Join the volunteer fire department
59. Go to church...or temple...or go outside with your children—talk to them about spirituality
60. If you grow tomatoes, plant extra for an lonely elder who lives nearby – better yet, ask him/her to teach you and others how to can the extras
61. Ask a single diner to share your table for lunch
62. Stand at a major intersection holding a sign for your favorite candidate
63. Persuade a local restaurant to have a designated “meet people” table
64. Host a potluck supper before your Town Meeting
65. Take dance lessons with a friend
66. Say "thanks" to public servants – police, firefighters, town clerk...
67. Fight to keep essential local services in the downtown area—your post office, police station, school, etc.
68. Join a nonprofit board of directors
69. Gather a group to clean up a local park or cemetery
70. When somebody says "government stinks," suggest they help fix it
71. Turn off the TV and talk with friends or family
72. Hold a neighborhood barbecue
73. Bake cookies for new neighbors or work colleagues
74. Plant tree seedlings along your street with neighbors and rotate care for them
75. Volunteer at the library
76. Form or join a bowling team
77. Return a lost wallet or appointment book
78. Use public transportation and start talking with those you regularly see
79. Ask neighbors for help and reciprocate
80. Go to a local folk or crafts festival
81. Call an old friend
82. Register for a class – then go
83. Accept or extend an invitation
84. Talk to your kids or parents about their day
85. Say hello to strangers
86. Log off and go to the park
87. Ask a new person to join a group for a dinner or an evening
88. Participate in pot luck meals
89. Volunteer to drive someone
90. Say hello when you spot an acquaintance in a store
91. Host a movie night
92. Exercise together or take walks with friends or family
93. Assist with or create your town or neighborhood's newsletter
94. Organize a neighborhood litter pick-up – with lawn games afterwards
95. Collect oral histories from older town residents
96. Join a book club discussion or get the group to discuss local issues
97. Volunteer to deliver Meals-on-Wheels in your neighborhood
98. Start a children’s story hour at your local library
99. Be real. Be humble. Acknowledge others' self-worth
100. Tell friends and family about social capital and why it matters