



Anoka County Sheriff's Office Tuesday, August 6, 2019

How would you like to improve the safety of your neighborhood, have a fun time with your neighbors, build community and take part in a huge, nationwide program?

You can do it all at this year's Night to Unite (NTU) celebration on August 6th! This is the night to get together with your neighbors. Choose to keep your neighborhood safe by watching out for each other and reporting crime and suspicious behavior.

What is *building community*?

This is a simple but powerful method for people to improve their own and others' living conditions. At its most basic, this is neighbors working together to create positive changes in an area – whether they're trying to reduce crime, looking out for each other's property or getting involved.

Seven steps make planning a Night to Unite celebration easy.

Step 1: Decide to get involved!

Already involved in a crime watch group? NTU will help keep your group active. This is important: neighbors who know each other and agree to watch out for suspicious behavior are a great defense against crime.

- If you do not have a crime watch group, NTU is a good reason to get people together for the first time and start building relationships.

- You can make your NTU event as simple or as elaborate as you like – anything from light refreshments on a neighbor's lawn to a street party with food, music, games and prizes. You can take part in this nationwide event in your own way.
- You'll be part of the biggest crime prevention event in Minnesota.

Step 2: Register your event

It is easy! Log on to: www.anokacounty.us/crimewatch and complete the application.

Step 3: Plan your event

Design an event that fits your block. Your block is unique and your event can reflect that. Participate with any kind of event that suits you and your neighbors.

Have a planning meeting. Even the simplest event requires some planning. Plus, if you don't want to do all the work yourself - get some volunteers at the planning meeting.

How will you involve children? Kids bring great energy and enthusiasm to NTU events. Get all ages busy with your NTU planning this year. Involving children and teens can also have a great long-term benefit for your block. Recent research shows that crime rates are lowest where young people and adults share a close bond.

Where will you hold your event?

- Lawn or park
- Vacant lot
- Parking lot
- Street

Decide the details:

- Do you want to have refreshments?
- Do you want to have entertainment? What kind and who will provide it?
- Do you want to feature any special group activities?

Will you ask nearby businesses for donations? If so, check out the Donation Tips provided online.

Divide up responsibilities among neighbors. NTU usually works best when many people share the work!

Step 4: Make sure you have the materials

All our materials are on our website at www.anokacounty.us/crimewatch

- Tips for asking for NTU donations
- Planning ideas
- Invitation to your event

Step 5: Invite your neighbors

- Make a NTU sign and put it in your yard.
- Fill out the NTU invitation flyer with the specifics about your party and make copies.
- One week before NTU, hand out the flyers to all of your neighbors. Tell everyone you see about the upcoming event.

Step 6: Have fun at National Night Out!

- Make sure to have Name Tags!
- Consider taking some pictures and starting a NTU photo book for the block.
- Gather email addresses of neighbors if you are an organized NCW group; if not, discuss starting a group.
- Enjoy the event.

Step 7: Document your event

After registering for NTU, you will receive a EVENT SURVEY EMAIL. Please fill it out and reply by August 16th to be entered in a drawing for a \$25 Target Gift Certificate.

Giving Back to the Community

The Anoka County Sheriff's Office believes in giving back to the communities we serve. Throughout the year, we offer our employees the opportunity to support the fine organizations that help people in our communities such as the ACBC Food Shelf, Toys for Joy and the Salvation Army and Youth First.

The following is a list of organizations and what they collect. If you group is inclined, you may want to collect supplies at your NTU Party.

ACBC Food Shelf

2615 9th Ave N in Anoka

Donations accepted Monday and Wednesdays from 9 am to 11 am.

- Non perishable food items

www.acbcfoodshelf.com

Alexandra House Inc.

Blaine, MN 55449

Donations accepted by appointment; call 763.795.5473.

- Personal hygiene items
- Diapers

www.alexandrahouse.org/contribute-goods/

Youth First Community of Promise

Andover, MN 55304

Donations accepted by appointment; call 763.421.8530

- Backpacks
- School Supplies
- Healthy Snacks

www.youthfirst.net

It is your group's responsibility to get all your donated items to the charity of your choice.

