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The impersonal hand of government can never replace the helping hand of a neighbor. --Hubert H. Humphrey

Meet the Neighbors

In an age of discount air travel, cheap long distance, and the internet, when we can create community anywhere, why is it that we often don't know the people who live next door? From porch parties in Columbus, Ohio, to community gardening projects in Albany, NY, people across the U.S. are finding creative ways to break down our physical and mental barriers of isolation. Dennis Maxwell of Oregon gives each new neighbor a homemade neighborhood map, complete with family names, children, pets, and telephone numbers. "Now we exchange child care, take care of mail and newspapers, and water plants during vacations," Maxwell says. In the U.S. today, more than 30 million people live alone. By not knowing our neighbors, we lose a crucial safety net for our material and psychological well-being. As a woman from Jackson, Mississippi wrote: "If we all cared about our neighbors, we could change the world one street at a time."

Be The Change:

Take a walk around your block and introduce yourself to a neighbor.