



## 51 WAYS TO INCREASE 'SOCIAL CAPITAL' IN YOUR COMMUNITY

### 41 steps for individuals who want to improve their social capital

- Organize a social gathering to welcome a new neighbor
- Register to vote — and vote every time
- Support your local merchants
- Start a community garden
- Help fix someone's flat tire
- Join the local Elks, Kiwanis, or Knights of Columbus
- Sing in a choir
- Attend Memorial Day parades and 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks
- Form a tool lending library with neighbors and share ladders, snow blowers, etc.
- Eat breakfast at a local gathering spot on Saturdays (and mingle!)
- Join the volunteer fire department
- Stand at a major intersection holding a sign for your favorite candidate
- Persuade a local restaurant to have a designated "meet people" table
- Say "thanks" to public servants – police, firefighters, town clerks, teachers
- Plant tree seedlings along your street with neighbors and rotate care for them
- Talk with those you see every day on your commuter train
- Carpool to the station with them
- Enroll in a class and get to know your classmates
- Say hello to strangers
- Log off and go to the park
- Say hello when you spot an acquaintance in a store
- Exercise together or take walks with friends or family
- Collect oral histories from older town residents
- Join a book club.
- Tell friends and family what social capital is and why it matters!
- Read the local news faithfully
- Fix it even if you didn't break it
- Pick it up even if you didn't drop it
- Attend a public meeting
- Hire young people for odd jobs
- Sit on your stoop and greet passers-by
- Be nice when you're behind the wheel
- Join or start a mall-walking group and have coffee together afterwards
- Become a story-reader or baby rocker at a childcare center or neighborhood pre-school
- Open the door for someone who has his or her hands full
- Offer to watch your neighbor's home or apartment while they are away
- See if your neighbor needs anything when you run to the store
- Join groups (e.g., arts, sports, religion) likely to lead to making new friends that bridge across race/ethnicity, social class or other social cleavages
- Walk your dog in a different neighborhood or park
- Tutor someone
- Read bulletin boards and try something new

## **10 things your organization or business can do**

- Encourage groups to hold meetings at your site
- Invite local government officials to speak at your workplace
- Give employees time (e.g., 3 days per year) to work on civic projects
- Offer a group of your employees to clean up a local park or cemetery
- Start a lunch gathering or a discussion group with co-workers
- Go with colleagues to a ball game (and root, root, root for the home team!)
- Help scrape an icy windshield, or jump-start a co-worker's car
- Organize a fitness/health group with your colleagues
- Create a team to help with a home building or renovation project
- Mentor a young co-worker