



Strategies for a Successful Event:

Not sure how to celebrate families in your community? Start small. Sign on to already existing events. Work with local partners. Meet the needs of men and women in your community. And, when you are ready, start making it bigger.

Start Small.

- Host a “Donuts with Dad” or a “Pancakes with Mom” on a weekend morning
- Provide construction paper and markers for making Father’s Day, Mother’s Day or even Children’s Day Cards

- Plan a Field Day with low-preparation outdoor games
- Host a family walk/run – all you need is a start line and a finish line
- Provide free haircuts from a local barber
- Hold a Poetry Contest
- Hold a Neighborhood Clean-Up Day and invite families to help out
- Simply invite your residents to participate in an on-going community event

Too small or too busy to do it on your own? Get a partner! In the past, participants have partnered with:

- Neighboring PHAs or Affordable Housing Owners
Local service providers (and their federal partners!)
- Local churches, schools, Boys & Girls Clubs, Departments of Parks and Recreation, YMCA, etc.
- Local businesses – can often be a great source for donations too!
- Invite a local radio station to broadcast from the location of your party – music, prizes, and advertising all at once!

- Libraries often have great services, like a mobile library truck, experienced storytellers and other productions perfect for children.
- Lions Clubs, Kiwanis, community organizations, community colleges.

Provide a service to families:

- Flyers/hand-outs from local services/agencies on topics of Financial, Medical, Educational, Gang intervention, Parenting, Domestic Violence services, Food and shelter programs, etc.
- Solicit the support of community agencies or local civic groups to host a resource fair, volunteer opportunities, or job fair
- Invite health organizations or a local gym to provide health screenings and/or a fitness expo

As you get bigger, consider incorporating these ideas from previous year's celebrations. It doesn't take much to create a memorable event:

Go bigger:

- Pony rides
- Petting zoo
- Dunk tank
- Live entertainment

- Baseball game outing
- Host a spaghetti dinner--can be paired with ongoing activities, such as a Resident Association meeting.

For food and snacks:

- Partner with a Caterer – BBQ restaurants have been very popular
- Seek donations from local grocery stores
- Cook out with Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, and buns
- Popcorn Machines, Cotton Candy Machines, or Snow Cone Makers
- Invite food trucks, the ice cream truck, or other vendors on wheels to park at your location and serve food

Fun and Games

If indoors or in case of rain, provide Coloring Activities, Board Games, or Popcorn and a Movie

- Invite Puppet Shows, Magic Shows, Balloon Animals, Face-painting
- Live Music • Basketball Shoot-offs, 3-on-3 games, Basketball clinics
- Favorite yard games include kickball, sack races, and relay races

- Rent or request donation of a water slide or bounce house
 - Set up a reading center with children's books
 - Invite Story-telling organizations or acting groups to put on a show

Sentimental and Fun!

- Set up supplies for kids to make cards for Father's/Mother's Day – can also make cards for Grandparents, etc.
- Host an essay contest the week before the event, have “celebrity” judges and announce the winner at the event
- Invite a motivational speaker or local hero to talk

Get people excited:

- Give-aways, door prizes, raffles, awards for competitive games, etc. Ask local businesses and organizations to donate these items.
- Invite the mascot from local sports teams – professional or college—to attend, teach dance moves, or take photos with attendees.

How to get the word out?

- Community flyers

- Advertise in your local paper
- Invite the news stations to cover your events
- Utilize resources available at HUD.gov
- Tweet, blog, post on your website, and ask partners to do the same

Ideas we haven't seen? Share with us by going to:
hudstrongfamilies@hud.gov