

GOOD NEIGHBORS

Make Safer Communities

Watching out and helping out is a key principle of crime prevention.

Not everyone knows and trusts his neighbors. How can crime prevention practitioners encourage the development of more neighborly relationships? How can practitioners themselves develop better relationships with the public? Here are some recommendations.

- **PLAN EVENTS TO HELP NEIGHBORS GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER.** Hold neighborhood block parties, beautification efforts, and safety fairs. They will provide opportunities for neighbors to meet each other, build positive relationships, and show children that they have a community safety net of caring adults who are willing to help them. Neighborhood events are also opportunities for residents to meet law enforcement officers and other professionals who provide services to the community.
- **HIGHLIGHT COMMUNITY CRIME PREVENTION EFFORTS.** Send consistent messages that local law enforcement and community partners are working to prevent crime and build safer communities. Highlight crime prevention efforts in the local media or through the fliers and newsletters of apartment buildings or condominium or homeowners' associations.

- **WORK WITH SCHOOLS TO REACH PARENTS.** A 2008 survey by JustKid on behalf of NCPC found that more than 90 percent of parents reported that they often or occasionally attend school activities and meet with their children's teachers. Among African American and Hispanic parents, more than 80 percent said they believe it is important to meet with school administrators and nearly 70 percent said they believe it is important to join a parent-teacher group at school.

Crime prevention practitioners should work with school administrators to schedule times to speak to parents. A short presentation at a back-to-school night, PTA meeting, school concert, or sporting event can raise awareness of what parents can do to keep their children safe. Practitioners can offer to conduct longer awareness sessions on topics such as bullying and drug abuse prevention at brown-bag lunches or evening seminars and introduce school resource officers and other safety personnel whenever possible.

- **CONTINUE TO USE MCGRUFF IN CRIME PREVENTION EFFORTS.** Crime prevention practitioners should tell parents about NCPC's website, www.ncpc.org, where they can learn about crime prevention and download or order all sorts of free or low-cost materials.

