

Good Neighbor Team Engagement Ideas

This tool helps Good Neighbor Teams (GNTs) identify meaningful ways to engage with their matched program participants. It outlines nine focus areas, each paired with engagement ideas based on the participant's level of stability, using the framework of [Relief, Rehabilitation, and Development](#). This structure is guided by the [When Helping Hurts](#) principles developed by The Chalmers Center.

- **Relief** – Immediate responses to urgent needs
- **Rehabilitation** – Efforts to restore stability and function
- **Development** – Long-term strategies for growth and sustainability

Identifying which phase the program participant is in for each area is essential in providing the appropriate support. Tasks listed are just ideas and may not be appropriate for, or desired by a particular program participant. This resource can be used to help guide the development of a [Good Neighbor Team Program Participant Plan](#).

	Relief	Rehabilitation	Development
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure housing • Pay rent/utilities • Coordinate with landlord/property manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build family & landlord relationship • Teach home maintenance skills • Teach ways to reduce cost of utilities • Teach where to locate affordable household goods • Teach sanitation and cleaning techniques • Assist with finding more suitable or affordable housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore homeownership options • Renters/homeowners insurance • Secure tools and resources for upkeep of home and yard • Assist with move • Celebrate move

Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide interpretation for essential services • Teach basic English • Enroll in ESL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide or find tutoring or conversation practice opportunities • Set language goals • Provide access to online language tools • Digital literacy support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support advanced ESL/GED pursuit • Transition to better-fit ESL programs • Access job-specific ESL • Opportunities for program participant learn English or another language that they speak
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help obtain work authorization • Connect with local employment services and job fairs • Provide interview transportation • Assist with job search • Support with applications and interview prep • Leverage networks for job leads • Access unemployment benefits as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect to credential evaluation services • Help build resumes • Teach U.S. workplace culture • Provide job readiness training • Teach workplace communication (e.g., time off, sick days) • Find sustainable job transportation solutions • Educate on worker rights • Help understand and access employee benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match jobs to skills and interests • Coach for career growth • Access networking opportunities • Access technical skill training • Support upward mobility through personal networks
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide transportation • Teach local transit system • Assist with gaining other means of transportation (bike, scooter, stroller, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach transportation safety, laws, and maintenance • Explain basic driving and pedestrian laws • Help with route planning and transit apps • Access carpools, rideshare, or other options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with permit/license process (including driving and written tests) • Explore vehicle ownership options • Educate on vehicle care, safety, laws, maintenance, insurance, etc. • Vehicle registration and taxes • Parking permits • Considering being a carpool or rideshare driver

Community Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit family at their home • Invite family to your home • Go to events and outings together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tour the neighborhood • Introduce to nearby or like-background individuals/groups • Connect with faith communities • Encourage engagement in school/local events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote local opportunities (sewing class, community garden, etc.) • Partner in creating community groups (ex. starting a church, cultural heritage group, sports team, or hobby club)
Health & Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address urgent health needs • Obtaining initial health screenings • Secure primary care and dental healthcare providers • Assist with medical needs and health education • Apply for Medicare or other health insurance • Secure needed medications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach how to access prescription and over-the-counter medications • Explain appropriate use of 911, ER, urgent care, and doctors' appointments • Promote greater self-sufficiency in healthcare navigation • Assist with accessing mental health services • Teach RMA/Medicaid transportation use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote preventative care and self-advocacy • Introduce options for sport, exercise, and physical recreation • Access to healthy foods • Access lower cost healthcare options • Help access safe, natural remedies from their culture that may be hard to find
Finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete DHS (public aid) Applications • Cover initial expenses • Provide grocery gift cards • Connect to local resources (e.g., food pantries, discount stores) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up bank accounts • Teach bill payment (rent, utilities) • Explain account security (bank, credit, EBT) • Encourage tax filing • Introduce saving strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach family on budgeting, credit, and resource management • Teach investing basics • Share financial coaching/workshop opportunities • Identify and plan towards long-term financial goals (home, car, education, starting a business, etc.) • Teach emergency and retirement planning

School/Youth Parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete school assessments • Explain school bus system • Submit immunizations and documents to school • Enroll in school • Explain school schedules/routines • Support parent-teacher communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate on parent-school partnerships • Connect to tutoring and after-school programs • Teach U.S. education expectations • Assist with homework • Access to school's extracurricular activities • Educate on parenting laws and norms in the U.S. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage Parent-Teacher conference attendance • Celebrate youth achievements • Access parenting classes and resources • Learning & sharing positive parenting techniques • Promote college or technical training
Legal Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with securing state IDs • Provide information on legal rights • Assist with securing Social Security cards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with finding a reputable & affordable immigration law representative • Support next steps on legal status (green card, asylum follow-up, etc.) • Develop plan for funding immigration process expenses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore best immigration status options in partnership with authorized legal representatives • Assist with citizenship/ naturalization process • Encourage civic engagement and U.S. legal system understanding