

What are Villages?

Villages are grassroots organizations that strengthen communities and support neighbors' needs.

You do not need to be an expert to start a village.

Montgomery County can help you start a village in your community.

This publication contains information and resources on how to start a Village.



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Villages in Montgomery County: *Building a Community for a Lifetime*





Villages Build Local Networks of Social Connections and Support

How well do you know your neighbors? Do you feel comfortable asking for help or spending time together?

Many people would like to have better connections with their community and people who are connected to their community are happier and healthier.

It is never too late to form friendships and community!



What does the Village do? And how does a Village form?

Each community chooses the character of its village based on its interests and needs.

Village activities are volunteer run. Villages may choose to organize social events, offer transportation, computer help, and prepare meals for people who are sick and much more.

Villages typically form in the following way:

- A resident or two hears about this idea from friends, neighbors, the media or work.
- They talk about it with neighbors who share their interest.
- They form an exploratory committee.
- The committee develops the concept, surveys the community and builds the foundation for the village.
- The group develops its structure.
- The village is “launched,” usually after 18-24 months.



What resources are available to help form a village?

- 1. Montgomery County Village Coordinator:** This staff person consults existing and emerging villages on logistics and facilitates communication among local villages.
- 2. Montgomery County website:** This website contains relevant information including The Village Guide, which is a document that outlines village development process.
- 3. Village to Village Network:** This is a national membership organization for Villages. vtvnetwork.org.
- 4. Washington Area Villages Exchange:** A consortium of local villages who meet regularly to share ideas, resources and support. Wavevillages.org

Montgomery County, A Community For A Lifetime.