

Attending Maplewood Porchfest



A Social Narrative of
Community, Music, and Belonging
for Adolescents and Adults

 By
**Together
We Bloom**
CONNECTION • COMMUNICATION • COMMUNITY

About Social Stories

Social Stories are first-person narratives written to introduce a new, unexpected, or challenging situation with simple language and pictures . They help the reader know what to expect and provide options for support.

Anyone can benefit from learning about situations ahead of time but social stories are often particularly helpful for neurodivergent individuals including Autistic people or people with anxiety.

Social stories should be used as a tool to empower and support inclusion and access, not to force compliance with social norms.

This Porchfest Social Story was created by Together We Bloom. We are also hosting the Porchfest sensory-friendly quiet room located at St Joseph's Church, 767 Prospect St, Maplewood. Please visit us at our Porchfest Bakesale on Franklin Ave between Prospect and Princeton.

Together We Bloom is a local 501(c)3 nonprofit with a mission to empower young children with disabilities and their families through equitable access to connection, communication, and community. We advance this mission through two vital strategies: sliding-scale, neurodiversity-affirming speech and language therapy and disability justice, equity, and belonging initiatives to make our community a more inclusive place.

To learn more or support our work for inclusivity please visit: www.TogetherWeBloom.org.

I am going to an event in my community called
Porchfest.

Porchfest is on Sunday, August 31, 2025 from 1:00PM
to 5:00PM. Since it's an outside event, if it rains on that
day, then Porchfest will be on Monday, September 1.

I might go by myself, with family, or with friends.



Porchfest is a celebration of music and community in
Maplewood, NJ in the Hilton neighborhood.

At Porchfest, musicians perform on neighbors' front yards or porches. I can go around to see the different musicians.



Some of the streets in the neighborhood are closed to cars to keep the event safe. I might need to park nearby and walk over to the Hilton neighborhood.

At the start, there is a "Honk Parade" through the neighborhood with music and dancing. I can participate in the parade or watch if I want. I can bring an instrument to play.



The parade begins at DeHart Park at 120 Bennett Ave
Maplewood. There is a parking lot there.
Rehearsal begins at 12:00PM and the parade starts at
12:30 PM



I will hear lots of different types of music at Porchfest. Some performers are bands with loud and fast music and other performers play or sing quieter, slower music. I can choose the type of music I like or visit many different performers.



I can view the map and schedule of performers at www.maplewoodporchfest.com/schedule. The interactive map has descriptions of the performers.

There are lots of people who come to watch the performers at Porchfest.

Some performances might have large crowds around them and others might have a smaller group of people. The “Lightening Brook Section” (marked on the map at the end of the book) typically has much smaller crowds

Some people chose to stay in one location to listen to a performance. Other people may walk around, talk with friends, dance, or do something else that is fun for them.

There is no right or wrong way to enjoy Porchfest. I can chose to do whatever feels right for me.



There are lemonade stands and bake sales that have food and drinks for people to buy. These locations are also on the interactive map at www.maplewoodporchfest.com/schedule.

I can bring my own drinks and snacks too.



Everybody's experience of Porchfest is different. I may need to take a break from the music or crowds.

If I need a bathroom break, I can go to DeHart Community Center at 120 Burnett Ave, Maplewood, in the Hilton neighborhood.

If I need a quiet, calming space, I can take a break at the sensory-friendly quiet room inside St. Joseph's Church, 767 Prospect St. In the sensory-friendly room, there is no music. There are soft lights, a glider, and sensory tools.



If I need a space to sit in the shade or if I need to cool down in a water mister, I can visit the Together We Bloom Community Tent (182 Franklin Ave)

The space is free to use and hang out. There are snacks and popsicles for sale too.



If I need to move, walk, or run away from the crowds, I can take a break at DeHart Park. There is a big grassy field, a playground, a basketball court, and adult-sized exercise equipment.



I can stay at Porchfest for as long as I want and go home when I feel ready. The bands play from 1:00PM-5:00PM but people will come and go throughout the afternoon.



I am an important part of my community.

**Music and Community are for everyone!
Porchfest is for everyone!**



Special thanks to the Maplewood Porchfest Committee and the following musicians and photographers for use of their photos available on the Porchfest website, www.maplewoodporchfest.com.

Musician and Photo Credits:

Cover: Rites of Springfield - Photo by Tracy Sham Photography

Page 3: City Roots - Photo by Gregory Burrus Productions.

Page 4: "Maplewood Porchfest Honk Parade" - Photo by Tom Melee.

Page 5:

A. Lady Rose - Photo by Gary Stein

B. Sarah Hodd + Mark Loughney- Photo courtesy of Sarah Hodd

C. Willie Williams + Ace Williams - Photo by Tracy Sham Photography.















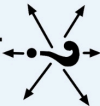



















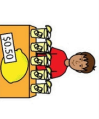




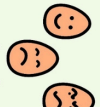









Page 6: "Porchfest 2022" - Photo courtesy of Vic DeLuca

Page 7: "Lemonade Stand" - Photo by Tracy Sham Photography

Page 10: Sarah Partridge + Band - Photo by Gary Stein



Porchfest Picture Communication Board

what 	I 	is 	want 	not 	yes 	porchfest 
who 	you 	can 	like 	more 	no 	Let's dance 
where 	it 	do 	go 	all done 	later 	Rock on! 
when 	he/she/they 	have 	stop 	see 	bathroom 	I like this song 
why 	we 	help 	eat 	drink 	loud 	lemonade stand 
how 	my 	play 	make 	feel 	AAC 	bake sale 
which 	hi 	awesome 	this is fun 	I need a break 	bye 	sensory room 



Hilton Neighborhood

