



# The Big Question

*Connect Knox is a community-centered initiative that connects people who have ideas and energies to invest in our community with others who are equally passionate about making big, new ideas happen.*

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## WHY **THE BIG TABLE**?

Connecting and interacting with others in person is important mentally and socially. In today's world, human connection and interaction is still very relevant and much needed. With new technologies being developed daily and more "conversations" taking place online, human connections are critical to the future of our community.

Families sit around the table over dinner, sharing our views, discussing passionately, and building towards a common view that takes into account collective opinions. That is what **The Big Table** is about - our city is a family with different needs and different viewpoints, but we are all collectively invested in the long-term health of our community. *The dining table is the safe space to bring all that together.*

**The Big Table** takes place on one day in various locations across our area. It is a day of community building designed to bolster understanding of one another in these challenging times. Volunteers will host tables of 8 to 10 people around the city to create conversation and encourage people to talk to one another. By coming together around tables, everyone has the opportunity to talk, listen, and learn from each other. These are not scripted or facilitated conversations but an opportunity to talk openly about how we are doing as a community.

**Taking place on August 23, The Big Table** Knoxville will bring together thousands of people representing different backgrounds, neighborhoods, and interest groups by convening more than 150 tables to connect and discuss of our community.

The focus of the day is **not** about looking for faults or issues or finding immediate solutions for them, but rather on creating authentic human connection and civic engagement through the conversations that occur and the ideas that are shared.

## HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

There are two ways to participate in *The Big Table*:

1. Table Host
    - a. As a host, you believe in each person's power to make a difference. As an engaged resident of our community, you are committed to convening others so they can collectively explore issues important to our community and share innovative ideas that will build and sustain our community moving forward.
    - b. *Anyone* interested in convening a conversation may host. Your conversation can happen at any time of day in any place where guests are comfortable. Food and drink can range from light snacks to full-course meals. The only requirement is that the hosts provide productive environments for authentic conversations about our community.
    - c. Table Hosts will receive *The Big Table* Toolkit facilitator guide to help with recruiting attendees, using social media to promote the event, and best practices for staying in touch. Hosts should fill their tables with 8 to 10 attendees. Hosts can invite 8 to 10 people that they already know through their networks or they can invite 4 to 5 friends and then ask those friends to bring a guest.
  2. Attendee
    - a. Everyone interested in *The Big Table* is encouraged to host a table, however attendees are also needed!
    - b. Plan to attend a conversation and invite a friend, colleague, or complete stranger.
    - c. Be present and listen and engage in the conversation happening at the table.
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## WHERE ARE EVENTS HELD?

Conversations can happen anywhere in the Greater Knoxville area. Table hosts will select venues to host their "Big Table" event including their homes, at churches, community centers, businesses, restaurants, backyards, and picnic areas.

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## DO WE ACTUALLY EAT?

Like the location, refreshment choices are up to the table host. Hosts may choose any food and drink that guests can enjoy together. Refreshments may range from light snacks to full meals and everything in between. Table hosts do not have to provide the meal and can ask everyone to bring a dish to share or to pay for their own meal at a restaurant.

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## QUESTIONS?

Contact us at [info@connectknox.com](mailto:info@connectknox.com) or visit [www.connectknox.com/the-big-table](http://www.connectknox.com/the-big-table).

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