

Family Mapmaking Activity

by Amanda Dargan, City Lore Education Director

(from [“Family Maps”](#) 2002 CARTS Sense of Place Newsletter)

Mapmaking is a wonderful way to engage family members in looking closely at how each experiences where they live. Family members may discover that each sees their neighborhood differently, that one includes a place that the others never noticed, or that certain neighborhood spaces, such as a vacant lot, are valued by one and considered an eyesore by others.

Supplies Pencils, pens, or markers; blank 8.5 x 11 paper

Directions Close your eyes and think about your neighborhood and its important places. Start at your home and move outward, locating significant places and the people, activities, or memories associated with them. You may look at the neighborhood from the ground or sprout wings and move up to view it from an angle or from overhead (children younger than seven may not be able to do this). Open your eyes and map the picture of the neighborhood in your mind. Don't worry about the scale or accuracy of the map. Work as a group or make individual maps. When finished, talk about your map—what you chose to include or exclude, similarities and differences, and stories the map making brought up.

Bonus Activities

- See a Brooklyn family's maps and learn what surprised them about their differences at [“Family Maps.”](#)
- Extended family members and friends may do this activity and share virtually.