

# Homeownership and Stable Communities

Go Hand-in-Hand



Washington, August 12, 2010 / NAR: Leanne Jernigan [ljernigan@realtors.org](mailto:ljernigan@realtors.org)

Homeowners are more active in their communities, benefit from improved education opportunities, and report higher levels of self-esteem and happiness when compared to renters, according to leading research. A new report from the National Association of Realtors®, [Social Benefits of Homeownership and Stable Housing](#), explores the impact of stable housing and the positive social outcomes resulting from homeownership.

“Homeownership is an investment in your future – home is where we make memories, build our lives and feel comfortable and secure,” said Vicki Cox Golder, owner of Vicki L. Cox Real Estate in Tucson, Ariz. “Owning a home has long-standing government support in this country because homeownership benefits individuals and families, strengthens our communities and is integral to our nation’s economy.”

NAR’s study identifies research from government, industry and academia that identified the relationship between homeownership and stable communities. Homeowners move far less frequently than renters, and therefore are embedded into the same neighborhood and community for longer. This allows for social cohesion, ultimately resulting in social benefits and stronger communities.

“Realtors® care as much about keeping families in their homes as they do about helping them find the home of their dreams,” said Golder. “Social benefits do not arise solely from ownership, but also from greater housing stability and social ties associated with less frequent moves among homeowners.”

Several research studies cited in the NAR report have found that homeownership has a significant impact on educational achievement. For instance, the decision by teenage students to stay in school is higher for those raised by parents who are homeowners compared to those whose parents are renters. Access to economic and educational opportunities are also more prevalent in neighborhoods with high rates of homeownership. Furthermore, studies have shown that changing schools frequently due to moving impacts negatively a child’s educational outcome.

Civic participation is another social benefit resulting from homeownership and stable housing. Homeowners are proven to be more politically active and are more likely to vote in local elections compared to renters. In addition, homeowners have a higher membership in voluntary organizations.

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Studies have shown that homeowners are more likely to believe that they can do things as well as anyone else, and they self-report higher ratings on their physical health. “The research shows that homeowners report higher self-esteem and happiness than renters, resulting in better overall health, both physically and psychologically,” said Golder.

When it comes to property, homeowners have more invested both financially and emotionally. Property crimes affect homeowners directly, but nonviolent property crimes can impact the property values of the entire neighborhood. Therefore, homeowners are more motivated to deter crime by forming and implementing voluntary crime prevention programs. In addition, it is easier for homeowners to recognize perpetrators in stable neighborhoods because of extensive social ties. Unstable neighborhoods often display social disorganization which can lead to higher levels of crime.

Along with protecting their home and neighborhood from crime, homeowners spend more time and money maintaining their home than renters. Neighbors also influence other homeowners to improve their property, resulting in a better overall quality of the community.

“Homeownership certainly contributes to positive social outcomes, but those outcomes are truly a result of stable housing communities,” said Golder. “With strong social ties and a cohesive community, homeowners can enjoy not only the long-term financial benefit of owning a home, but also a more satisfying life – which is what’s really at the heart of the American Dream.”

To download a copy of the entire report, visit [www.realtor.org/research/research/reportsbuysell](http://www.realtor.org/research/research/reportsbuysell).

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