

Age Friendly and the Senior Friendly™ Program



Alberta Council on Aging

An Independent Non-Profit Charitable Organization Since 1967



What is the Senior Friendly™ Program?



A tool for communities to become age friendly

Myth Busting



Understanding Older Persons



Aging



The rate of aging is dependant upon genetics, diet, economics, environment and lifestyle

Hearing



- Ability to hear diminishes
- Hearing loss is the most common sensory impairment in relation to aging

Unfair Hearing Test



Answers to Unfair Hearing Test



1. fill
2. catch
3. thumb
4. heap
5. wise

6. wedge
7. fish
8. shows
9. bed
10. juice

Helping People with Reduced Hearing



- Speak one to one
- Reduce background noise
- Speak clearly and slowly

Vision



Healthy Eye



Age-Related Macular Degeneration



Glaucoma



Healthy Eye



Vision with Glaucoma



Diabetic Retinopathy



Healthy Eye



Vision with Diabetic Retinopathy



Cataracts



Healthy Eye



Vision with Cataracts



Helping People with Vision Loss



- Identify yourself and use the person's name
- Provide ample lighting
- Reduce glare – floors and windows
- Use contrasting colors on stairs, walls, and floors
- Keep all areas free of clutter
- Provide magnifying glasses

Cognition



- Normal Aging
 - Ability to process and integrate slows
 - Slower reaction times
- Dementia
 - Overall term used to describe a set of symptoms
 - May be temporary or permanent

Helping People with Affected Cognition



- Use reminders and visual cues
- Offer a clear, one step explanation
- Be patient

Mobility and Agility



- Reduced mobility & agility as we age
- Centre of balance shifts, endurance and strength decreases, flexibility is reduced
- Spine compresses and shoulders round; arthritis may develop
- Slower reaction times

Helping People with Reduced Mobility and Agility



- Make doors easy to open with level access
- Provide 'rest stops' with sturdy arms both inside and outside
- Ensure pavements and sidewalks are smooth
- Wide passages, even flooring, accessible washrooms
- Remove or tape down area rugs
- Offer assistance with tasks

Senses



- Sense of taste, touch, and smell diminishes
- Vulnerability to temperature change
- Reduced touch affects fine motor skills

Helping People with Affected Senses



- Reduce packaging
- Turn down hot water heater settings
- Ensure smoke and gas detectors are functional
- Adjust room temperatures

Summary of Changes



- Hearing not as acute
- Reading fine print challenging
- Thought processes change
- Mobilizing with less ease
- Sensation is different

Why Seniors Matter



Did You Know?



- Seniors are the fastest growing age group in the world
- Seniors are powerful consumers
- Seniors contribute greatly to our society

Seniors as Consumers



Some seniors have more:

- Expendable Income
- Expectations
- Education



But this is not the case for all older people

Seniors Are a Valuable Resource



- Are “Top Volunteers”
- Have workplace knowledge, technical skills and leadership
- Offer stewardship



What are the characteristics of an age friendly community?



Eight Domains



Lobby / Entrance



Corridors



Doors



Washrooms



Rest Stops



An Age Friendly Community



- Ensures the environment is accessible to all
- Is aware of and meets seniors' needs
- Treats everyone respectfully
- Includes everyone

Additional Outcomes



- Addresses ageism and age discrimination
- Increases empathy which reduces elder abuse
- Promotes fall prevention

To be Age Friendly We Must Recognize and Meet the Needs of Seniors



Senior Friendly™ Soundbite

Make things easy:

to see, to hear, to use, to understand...





Contact Information



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