

# ALONE OR LONELY?



***A Resource for Addressing  
Isolation of Older Adults  
in Rural Communities***



**Saskatchewan  
Seniors  
Mechanism**

*Seniors Working Together*



**This resource was developed for people who live in rural Saskatchewan in order to assist them in overcoming social isolation of older adults in their community.**

**This resource is funded by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program.**

Published May 2016

**Canada** 



## INTRODUCTION

*For the purpose of this resource, we will focus on older adults and specifically those living in rural communities where services or a variety of programming is often unavailable without having to travel significant distances.*

The Provincial Policy and Framework and Action Plan for Older Persons, Saskatchewan Provincial Advisory Committee for Older Persons, May, 2003, states that keys to a healthy senior life include:

- Dignity
- Independence/self-determination
- Participation
- Fairness
- Safety and security
- Self fulfilment
- Recognition



All these ideals are threatened when a person's health, abilities, or circumstances (such as being caregiver to a frail partner) cause them to be isolated – either voluntarily or involuntarily – from the community.

Isolation is a serious threat to quality of life for older adults both urban and rural. It needs to be – and can be – addressed, alleviated, and indeed, prevented.

We hope that the suggestions in this resource will give you a place to start as your community seeks to address isolation. This is not an exhaustive resource – the possibilities are as limitless as a community's creativity.

## What is isolation?

Isolation refers to the circumstance in which a person is no longer able to participate in community, civic, or social life in the way in which they would choose to do.

It often includes:

- Loneliness
- The lack or loss of close relationships
- Being cut off from society
- Loss of independence and choice.

It should not be confused with an individual's preference for being alone.

## Who is at risk?

Anyone who, by circumstance or health, is cut off from desired social interactions has the potential for being affected by isolation. Older adults in rural areas are highly susceptible to becoming isolated.

Older adults who are particularly at risk:

- Those with declining physical or mental health
- Those with mobility challenges
- Those who have had to give up driving
- Those who live alone
- Those who have been widowed
- Those who have low or no contact with family
- Caregivers for frail or chronically ill partners
- Farm-dwellers

## Why is addressing isolation important both for older adults and for the community?

There is evidence that isolation increases susceptibility to illness and depression, and may in fact lead to a shorter lifespan. Even when health is not adversely affected, quality of life is lowered in older adults who are isolated.

The community is affected both in increased medical and psychiatric costs, and in the loss of the valuable contributions these people could be making to others, even with diminished health and mobility.

The paper *Social Participation and Its Benefits*<sup>1</sup> from the Center on Aging of the University of Manitoba cites studies that show that participation in social activities and events can help to:

- alleviate depression
- increase memory
- increase ability to sleep
- guard against cognitive decline and advancement of dementia
- increase health

### **Random Acts of Kindness**

***No one knows the impact a small act can have on another person's life. As we go about our day, we can watch for opportunities to impact others in a positive way without a large time commitment on our part. One action can make a powerful difference in another person's life. Think about taking a few minutes to pick up the phone and have a quick visit with someone who needs a friend (while you are washing your dishes), popping in to say hello (when you are out for a walk) or offering to pick something up at the store (you are going anyway). This will be a rewarding experience for you and will enrich your life as well as being of benefit to another.***

***Give a little of yourself to others!***

<sup>1</sup> *Social Participation and Its Benefits*, prepared by Sheila Novek, Verena Menec, Tanya Tran and Sheri Bell for the Centre on Aging, University of Manitoba, August 2013, page 2, Findings.

## What can we do?

We need to start by considering these questions:

- How can we work to prevent and/or alleviate isolation in our rural communities?
- How do we assess who is in need/at risk?
- How do we gain the trust of those who are isolated?



Throughout this resource, we will give suggestions for answering these questions. The suggestions are meant as a springboard to action in your community. You needn't feel pressured to try everything, nor to accomplish great things immediately. Small actions can make a noticeable difference in a person's life. You may also find that the ideas here inspire more ideas, plans and programs.

Some of the suggestions in this resource are intended as long-term projects for a community or group of individuals, others can be used as one-time program ideas for groups. Some address the prevention of isolation – keeping people involved so that they don't succumb to isolation – while others seek to reach those who are already isolated and suggest ways to alleviate their isolation.

## The Eight Age-Friendly Domains or Focus Areas and the Issue of Isolation

In 2006, the Global Age-Friendly Initiative of the World Health Organization began. It encourages communities to create systems and programs to enable healthy and active aging for persons within the community, based on several criteria known as ‘domains’ or ‘focus areas’.

Age-Friendly Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism are working toward this goal in our own province, ‘Creating communities that are safer, smarter, healthier, happier, more inclusive places for all people which also reduces one of the significant factors that contributes to elder abuse – isolation.’

The Age-Friendly focus areas provide a good framework to address isolation of older adults and collaborate with Age-Friendly groups in communities.



In this resource, we will use the eight focus areas as a guide for our suggestions for alleviating and preventing isolation.

The eight domains or focus areas of Age-Friendly are:

- Outdoor Spaces & Buildings
- Transportation
- Housing
- Social Participation
- Respect & Social Inclusion
- Civic Participation & Employment Opportunities
- Communication & Information
- Community Support & Health Services

***Many seniors live in isolation and many do not even realize they are isolated.***

As you can see, these domains cover the full range of what goes into making a healthy community.



The Review of Federal/Territorial/Provincial (FTP) Services and Policies and Analysis of Impact on Social Isolation, published in 2007, gives some useful guidelines. We have paraphrased them here:

- Involve older adults in designing, carrying out, and evaluating programs and policies affecting them
- Programs/policies need to be specific
- Promote programs/policies widely, in a variety of ways
- Take transportation issues into account and look for solutions
- Make sure services are affordable
- Make sure leaders of programs are sufficiently trained and prepared
- Deliver programs in ways that suit the needs and abilities of participants
- Make sure programs and services can be maintained in the long run
- Be flexible, and be sure to evaluate

## What's next?

### How to Hold a Focus Group in Your Community

You may already be a part of a group that has expressed interest in and concern about the issue of isolation in your community. Start there and identify if there may be others from the community you could ask to get involved – people that can offer their wisdom and experience to make things happen. Consider people of different ages; perhaps it could become an intergenerational team. It does not have to be a large group of people; you can start by inviting 3 or 4 people to the focus group discussion.



#### Pre-Meeting of Focus Group

- Make a logistics list – what you need for the meeting
  - o Facility to accommodate your focus group with good wall space if possible or maybe your kitchen table if it is a small group
  - o Newsprint sheets or large wall Post-it sheets for people to write their ideas on
  - o Markers/pens
  - o You may want to prepare a PowerPoint presentation – this will require a laptop, projector and screen
- Plan how you want your meeting to run
  - o Appoint or be the chairperson/lead of the focus group – a person that can keep everyone on track and allow everyone to have a voice
  - o Prepare an Agenda (see sample agenda on next page)

## Sample Agenda (adapt as needed)

### Introductions

Invite everyone to share their name.

### Introduce the Purpose of the Meeting

To provide an opportunity to find ways older adults, including those who are isolated, can engage and participate fully in community life, by exploring ideas for presentations, discussions, or activities.

### Background

- What is Isolation?
- Who is at Risk?
- Introduce the Age-Friendly Focus Areas/Domains as a Framework for Addressing Isolation (Refer to pages 13 to 31)

### Brainstorm

Create a list of possible ideas for presentations, discussions or activities. You can also solicit suggestions from community people not present at this meeting to get their input. Sometimes holding an activity and having that conversation with them while they are at a particular event works well.

### Refreshment/Snack Break

Feeding people is always a good idea! It also gives people a chance to pause and think as well as chat with the rest of the group.

### Action Plan

- **Who** is willing to work on this project/activity (to avoid burn out spread the work out amongst different people – have part of your group work on one activity and another part of the group work on a different activity). Space out your projects or activities over a period of time.
- **How** do we identify isolated people in our community and how do we engage/involve them in planning or coming out to sessions/programming? Will people need rides – who will be the contact person?
- **Prioritize** the list of activities – start with a couple of items to work on and implement. Having success inspires participation and planning future activities. What resources (people, facility, business, etc.) do you have within your community to hold this activity?
- **Communicate** – how will we inform people about these activities? How can we encourage people to attend?

### Summarize the Meeting

What tasks are needed for the first one or two activities you prioritized and who will do what? (i.e. date, time of day, place, food or refreshments, once a week, once a month, etc.)

### Plan to Evaluate (this may need another meeting)

- Develop a simple evaluation form – refer to page 33 & 34 for more information

## IDEAS FOR PRESENTATIONS, DISCUSSIONS OR ACTIVITIES

This section is organized by focus area. We give suggestions for projects intended to reach those who are currently isolated, as well as programs that may help to keep people from becoming isolated, based on the Age-Friendly focus areas. You will undoubtedly find that there is some overlap between the different focus areas. They are all interrelated.

There are long-term, long-reaching program suggestions as well as one-time workshops, presentations, or group activities suggestions.

This list is not meant to be exhaustive. You don't need to try everything we have suggested! It's meant as:

- A smorgasbord from which you can pick and choose
- A springboard to start you off and ignite further creative ideas





## Focus Area 1: OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS

It may not seem that the buildings and outdoor spaces of a community have much to do with isolation, but think about:

- How many people have to stay indoors when sidewalks and roads are snow-covered and icy?
- How many buildings have steps that make them difficult for people with mobility issues?
- Some older adults have some level of dementia or cognitive impairment that means they get lost easily.

Such things can have a great impact on people's ability to move around, interact, and connect with others.

### Ideas for presentations, discussions or activities:

- Assessment of community buildings:
  - o Are all buildings in your community easily accessible?
  - o Where are the washrooms?
  - o Are building doors easy to open?
  - o What would you like to see your local businesses do to make their buildings more senior friendly?
  - o Might you invite local store/building owners to talk with the group?
- Assessment of washroom facilities:  
Some older adults have minor to major incontinence problems. This can add to or lead to isolation as people may be fearful of having 'an accident' in public.
  - o Is there easy access to public washroom facilities in your community?
  - o Are there grab bars and raised seats in at least one washroom stall?
  - o Are the public washrooms in a building that is sometimes closed?
- Assessment of outdoor spaces:
  - o Are sidewalks even or do they have bumps and cracks that can lead to falls?
  - o Are there graduated curbs to allow for walkers, scooters, and the like?
  - o Are there places in the community where there are no sidewalks, meaning that people have to walk on the street?
  - o How thorough is snow removal? Do people stay in their houses because they can't shovel the walk? How might this be addressed by your group?
  - o Is street lighting adequate and signage easily readable?
  - o Do older adults feel safe walking alone?



- Create senior-friendly walking paths with benches to rest on, water fountains (easily operated), and no fast-moving bikes or skateboards to threaten balance or safety.
- Environmental issues
- Recycling



- Options to traditional gardens such as:
  - o Container gardening
  - o Community gardens
  - o Raised beds
  - o Wheelchair-friendly planter boxes
  - o Gardening boxes with benches

- Might your group initiate a walking-buddy program?
- Is there a place for an indoor walking club?
- Have a walking assessment tour of the community
- Install outdoor exercise equipment at the community park. Check out these websites:[www.xccentfitness.com](http://www.xccentfitness.com) (1 Stop Playground Ltd, Humboldt, SK can be contacted regarding pricing and installation)[www.activefit.ca](http://www.activefit.ca)



## Focus Area 2: TRANSPORTATION

Transportation – or the lack of it – is a key concern of rural older adults. Research has indicated that “there is a close association between the lack of transportation and low life satisfaction, isolation, loneliness and self-reported poor health.”<sup>1</sup>

Things to consider:

- What are the circumstances when transportation is an issue?
- What has worked for you?
- What hasn't worked?

Keep in mind that for some older adults it can be difficult to ask for assistance:

- What are ways to deal with this?
- How can we make sure there is always someone available to provide transportation?



Consider asking others for ideas as well – do a survey or invite others to a meeting.

### Ideas for presentations, discussions or activities:

- Volunteer Drivers: Have a team of volunteer drivers available who can be booked to drive older adults to appointments. This should be formally organized rather than simply asking a friend to provide transportation.
  - o SGI will provide a certificate that indicates that your team of volunteer drivers is not performing a taxi service (this will eliminate the possibility of a fine for unlicensed taxis)
  - o Drivers need to have their own package policy
  - o For those who need assistance, it is best to have a travel companion to provide this, rather than this being the responsibility of the driver. See pages 39-45 What Others Are Doing for more detailed information.
  - o Visit the Sunrise Health Region website for an example: [www.sunrisehealthregion.sk.ca](http://www.sunrisehealthregion.sk.ca)
- Check-in System: Even with older adults who are still driving themselves, there can be concerns. A possibility is to set up a system in which, if someone is driving a distance to an appointment, there is someone they can check in with when safely home. In this type of system, there would need to be a procedure in place for times when the person did not check in.

*The local Lions Club hosted an evening of food and entertainment for seniors in the community. It is an annual event and much anticipated by the seniors. However, not all have access to transportation to get themselves there. I posted a sign-up sheet for anyone who required a ride, and we were able to transport 7 seniors to the event. A good time was had by all.*

*- Lumsden Pilot Project*

<sup>1</sup> The Mobility Needs and Transportation Issues of the Aging Population in Rural Manitoba, Institute of Urban Studies, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 2006, page 1.

- Older adult driving safety courses:
  - o The Mature Driver Refresher Course from the Saskatchewan Safety Council website: [www.sasksafety.org/training/traffic/maturedriver](http://www.sasksafety.org/training/traffic/maturedriver)  
Toll-free telephone number: 1-855-280-7115
  - o Read and discuss the Older and Wiser Driver Guide from SGI: [www.sgi.sk.ca/pdf/older\\_wiser.pdf](http://www.sgi.sk.ca/pdf/older_wiser.pdf)
  - o CAA also has information about older adults and driving at their main website: [www.seniorsdriving.caa.ca/](http://www.seniorsdriving.caa.ca/)
  
- Travel:
  - o Travel tips for older adults
  - o Tours designed for older adults
  - o Practical issues – insurance, mobility, accessibility
  
- Organize trips, outings
- Invite someone from STC or Greyhound to discuss making services more accessible and senior-friendly
- Travelogue presentations and discussion – this could involve anyone in the community who has gone on an interesting trip





## **Focus Area 3: HOUSING**

When we consider healthy aging and aging in place for older adults, a key question is always 'is there adequate housing within the community to allow this?'

Things that must be taken into account are:

- Safe, accessible housing
- Assistance for household maintenance chores
- Affordable access to options for modifying a senior's existing residence to ensure that it is safe (such as grab bars, ramps, etc.)
- Available supports and services (such as home care)
- Personal care facilities in or near the community



When we consider isolation these factors can become even more crucial.

### **Ideas for presentations, discussions or activities:**

- Set up a team of volunteers to be available for household maintenance assistance
- Look at a 'village' model – a group of older adults who band together to provide support and services, bring in services when necessary, and look out for each other (this is not a physical village, but more of a way of connecting people within a community)
- Safety in your home
- Fall prevention, including demonstrations of safe ways to get up from a fall
- Personal emergency alert service e.g. Philips Lifeline website: [www.lifeline.ca](http://www.lifeline.ca)  
Toll-free telephone number: 1-800-387-8120
- Home Care – assessing what you need & learning how to get it – contact your local health region for information
- What will you do when you need additional care?
- Decorating your home wherever it is – for example, make sure family/caregivers know what says 'home' to you – designate some portable items
- Making long-term care 'home'
- Speakers giving various housing options for older adults to consider when they want to leave their home



## **Focus Area 4: SOCIAL PARTICIPATION**

Social participation goes far beyond simply ‘giving people something to do’ and the benefits go beyond the obvious (and important), increasing enjoyment of life.

The Age-Friendly ideal for social participation includes community events that are:

- intergenerational, designed with a broad age appeal
- take into consideration varying interests
- cover a broad range of cultural, physical, and entertainment possibilities
- held in accessible venues
- welcoming of those attending alone, as well as with someone else
- open to finding ways to reach those who are unable to attend

There are two aspects to consider when planning for social participation of isolated older adults or those at risk of becoming isolated:

- those who are able to attend things within the community
- those who are unable to leave their homes (including caregivers)

### **Ideas for presentations, discussions or activities:**

- Fun activities – could include games and cards, but also think beyond these
- Organize people to go to a local event, such as the school drama night or Christmas Carol Festival
- Organize an intergenerational local event – perhaps for the whole community such as a talent night or memories sharing night, e.g. in the memories sharing there could be displays of photos and memorabilia, but also the opportunity for older adults to interact with those of other generations to explain the displays and share the memories
- Hold an intergenerational event for people 90+ or to honor those 90+. Such an event could be a slide show of photos of their childhoods, an awards night honoring older adults in the community, a fashion show of clothing people have kept from other eras – perhaps with school children as models
- Hold a community ‘Older Adults Games’ – make up your own activities or connect to 55+ Games. The Saskatchewan Senior Fitness Association holds district and provincial games activities “to promote active living, wellness and participation of adults 55 years of age and older” Website: [www.ssfa.ca/programs/ssfa\\_55\\_games](http://www.ssfa.ca/programs/ssfa_55_games)
- Organize a hobby day or craft day – as well as having items on display, there could be demonstrations, or opportunities for older adults to work one on one with others, particularly young people, to show them the basics of crocheting, knitting, tatting, and other crafts
- Have a game day or evening, such as a Trivial Pursuit tournament or other tournament, an English pub-style trivia night featuring local history



- Discuss current events – these discussions could be either just for older adults or could involve others in the community and schools. Invite speakers on a wide variety of topics that would be of interest to older adults, get DVDs from the library to spark discussion. Discussion questions could include, but aren't limited to:
  - o How does this issue affect our own community?
  - o How do different news sources report on this issue?
  - o How can we learn more?
  - o How can we do something about this issue?
  
- Hold a movie afternoon & discussion – again, the library is a good source (ask the librarian about Public Performance Rights). Popular movies that portray older adults include Quartet, The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel, The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel, Remember, The Bucket List, The Lady in the Van and others. Discussion questions could include, but are not limited to:
  - o What did you learn from the movie, if anything?
  - o What was the message of the movie? Did it do a good job of portraying this?
  - o What did you like best/least about the movie?
  - o Did you agree with the way older adults were portrayed?
  - o Did anything in the movie remind you of a real life situation? In what ways?
  - o What do you think the movie was saying about society or culture in general?
  
- Have presentations about volunteerism – how to get involved, what are the opportunities, how can different generations be involved together
- Choose a book and have a read-aloud marathon – this could be intergenerational
- Hold an Open House at the seniors centre (possibly for all generations)
- Explore setting up something similar to the Red Cross Friendly Visiting program

***We had decided to focus on revitalizing the Seniors Centre. We hosted a Seniors Open House and approximately 30 people attended! Since then, the average attendance has been approximately 20, previously it used to be 3 or 4. It certainly did not take a lot of effort and the results were very rewarding.***

***- Strasbourg Pilot Project***



- Many older adults find it difficult to cook regular meals, particularly if they live alone.

Here are just a few suggestions that not only provide a nutritious meal, but also provide social interaction:

- o Have a regular 'eat-in' night, in which a volunteer cooks a hot meal, takes it to an isolated senior and eats the meal with the senior
- o Have a regular night when older adults meet at a local café for a meal
- o On days when the town café is closed, volunteers could prepare and serve a hot meal at an accessible location
- o Have a collective kitchen where older adults gather to learn how to prepare healthy recipes.

For those who are unable to attend such events, there are still ways of doing some of these things:

- Match school children (pre-teens and teens) with isolated older adults who are still able to do knitting or crocheting or other crafts, for one-on-one teaching sessions
- Have a visiting program in which isolated older adults can share memories of their childhoods, show photos and memorabilia
- Have a visiting program that involves reading aloud to older adults – this could be anything from reading letters or the paper to re-reading a favorite book
- Consider occasionally (or regularly) having the people from the seniors' centre go to the local care home for a games/activities afternoon or evening – if the people are not able to attend the program, take the program to them



## Focus Area 5: RESPECT & SOCIAL INCLUSION

In this section we will explore ways to educate people about ageism and how to combat it, as well as, how to promote the integration of all age groups into the community and advocate for intergenerational interaction.



To truly promote social inclusion there must be integration of all age groups, and education to ensure that all age groups can learn from each other and about each other, in order to foster respect. At the extreme, a lack of respect for older adults can put them at risk for abuse of various types.

The Age-Friendly initiative encourages people to consider the following when looking at the issues of respect and social inclusion:

- The diversity of all in the community, including all ages, and how that is addressed in:
  - Portrayals in media
  - Actions and attitudes of public and commercial services and organizations
- Access to and participation in community discussions and policy-making
- Ensure services and opportunities are available to those with fewer financial resources
- Accommodate age-specific needs while encouraging multi-age participation
- Encourage interaction between generations, including opportunities to learn from each other
- Educate younger generations in understanding and respect of older adults

### Ideas for presentations, discussions or activities:

- Projects connecting with school children/youth – for example, matching individual older adults with young people by interests, then encouraging visits
- Pairing young people and older adults for reading aloud, art-related activities (especially with young children) or ‘when I was your age’ story time
- How to change ageism – video & discussion in schools and in wider community
- Volunteering
- Talks from active older adults – there is great potential for sharing experiences: how remaining active impacts their life in general, how younger people can prepare for aging, etc.
- Activity with youth – perhaps a regular movie night alternating classic movies and current ones with opportunities for intergenerational discussion (check with library regarding DVDs with public performance rights). Discussion questions could include:
  - What did you learn from the movie, if anything?
  - What was the message of the movie? Did the film portray it well?



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- o What did you like best/least about the movie?
  - o Did you agree with the way older adults and other age groups were portrayed?
  - o Did anything in the movie remind you of a real life situation? In what ways?
  - o What do you think the movie was saying about society or culture in general?
- Have a board game night where older adults play board games with kids
  - Set up a 'penpal' program, possibly with school students, either by regular mail or by email (although regular mail would be accessible to more older adults)
  - Create a play or skit about older adults and ageism that can both educate and entertain
  - Get techno-savvy young people involved in recording older adults' stories, to create a digital record of these peoples' lives and of the history of the community
  - Investigate visiting programs such as the Red Cross Friendly Visiting Program  
Phone: 306-681-3123
  - Hold a "Let No One Be Alone Week" – There are many ways to do this. The possibilities are only limited by your imagination and ingenuity. For example:
    - o Phone an older adult who lives alone, and just chat for a little while
    - o Have a tea or a potluck to gather people in the community (and be sure to offer rides to those who are isolated because they no longer drive)
    - o Take someone out for a meal, or invite them into your home
    - o Bake a basket of goodies and take it to a lonely older adult



***The Legion Park was the site of a multigenerational gathering where the Hanley Seniors along with Hanley Composite School Grade 5 & 6 class spent the afternoon planting some spring into the flower beds. 12 students did an awesome job of planting the variety of flowers under the tutelage of the seniors. A few of the seniors and students also went to the Hanley Centennial Community Centre and planted another glorious selection of plants in the pots there too.***

***Since the day was very warm, it was fitting that the Seniors' President served up lemonade and pink lemonade with cookies for all the helpers. Everyone enjoyed this treat and parted knowing a fine job had been done to assist in the beautification of our community.***

***- Hanley Pilot Project***



## **Focus Area 6: CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

While employment may or may not be a need for older adults, the need and desire for civic participation often remains strong within individuals. Becoming more active in civic issues and concerns can help older adults to connect or re-connect with those around them, of various ages, interests, and skill levels.

Becoming involved as a volunteer can go a long way to preventing isolation. Even if a person is unable to attend meetings but still wishes to be involved, conference calls, Skype, and other technology can allow the person to participate from home.

Older adults have a unique role in civic matters as they have a lifetime of experience to draw on. They have seen various systems and ideologies come and go, and they often have wisdom and knowledge that can guide younger people as they seek to make the community and the world a better place.



The Age-Friendly Initiative stresses the importance of ensuring that people of varying ages, backgrounds and abilities are represented on decision-making bodies. This includes older adults. There is also an emphasis on preparing people for retirement so that they do not simply become isolated in their homes, without a sense of purpose, once they are no longer gainfully employed.

### **Ideas for presentations, discussions or activities:**

- Connect with a local politician – MLA, MP, Mayor or Council Member – to discuss concerns relevant to older adults
- Discuss questions to ask candidates in an election, and possibly hold a local all-candidates forum on seniors' issues
- Invite people to discuss what issues are important to older adults and how best to find more information or take some action – write letters (individually or as a group), sign or start a petition, etc.
- Read and discuss current issues in the news – e.g. refugee crisis – who has been a refugee in the past? What helped? What didn't?
- Invite someone who is active in some issue significant to older adults to make a presentation
- To work or not to work – when to retire – as part of an ongoing discussion, invite a speaker who has work that does not 'require' retirement, such as an older writer or music teacher
- Mentoring/sharing skills & knowledge





## Focus Area 7: COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION

As we consider the impact of communication, or the lack thereof, on those who are isolated or at risk for isolation, we should also consider:

- Sharing information in a variety of ways, realizing that not everyone has (or wants) computer access
- Making information not just available but understandable
- How to provide computer access for those who would like access but cannot afford a computer
- If printed information is easily readable by someone with sight or cognition issues
- How to sift through all that is available in the various media and how to understand what is accurate and what is not



### Ideas for presentations, discussions or activities:

- Analyze advertising or a program on TV – for example, read Terry O'Reilly's books or listen to his programs/podcasts on CBC radio regarding advertising, and base presentations or group discussions on these excellent resources. [www.cbc.ca/radio/undertheinfluence](http://www.cbc.ca/radio/undertheinfluence) or his previous show: [www.cbc.ca/ageofpersuasion/](http://www.cbc.ca/ageofpersuasion/)
- Start a newsletter for older adults – include shut-ins, possibly for the whole community
- Learn how to use computers, smart phones, etc. This could be a good activity to involve youth:
  - Consider if young people would need some training/information about interacting with older adults (see Resources/Links at end of this resource for suggestions)
- Discuss an episode of a TV program or a movie. Discussion questions could include, but aren't limited to:
  - What did you learn from the movie, if anything?
  - What was the message of the movie? Did the film do a good job of portraying this?
  - What did you like best/least about the movie?
  - Did you agree with the way older adults and other age groups were portrayed?
  - Did anything in the movie remind you of a real life situation? In what ways?
  - What do you think the movie was saying about society or culture in general?
- Signage in your community – is it easily read? How could it be improved? Invite someone from town council to an open discussion on this.
- Have a presentation on 'What is Facebook?' How can it be used to alleviate isolation?



Note that email and Skype, too, can be a boon for connecting isolated older adults to family and friends

- Hold regular computer clinics in which tech-savvy older adults in the community can teach other older adults how to use computers, laptops, tablets and other technology

## Focus Area 8: COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES



Having access to health and support services is important to older adults. Community support and health services are key factors to aging in place.

Those who are isolated, who are at risk for isolation, and who are caregivers, often have health and/or mobility challenges that may be made worse by their isolation. They may develop depression or anxiety. Addressing health and support services concerns can help alleviate these difficulties or make them easier to bear.

### Ideas for presentations, discussions or activities:

- Fitness sessions – for example, yoga for older adults, yoga for arthritis, laughter yoga, seated exercises, dance
- Exercise programs in the home for both those who are confined to home and for their caregivers
- Forever...in *motion* – a program of the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association which promotes physical activity for older adults.

Website: [www.spra.sk.ca/programs-services/physical-activity/ForeverInMotion/](http://www.spra.sk.ca/programs-services/physical-activity/ForeverInMotion/)

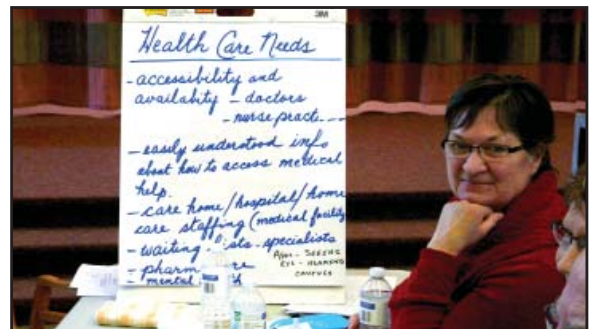
- Consider how to offer respite to caregivers:
  - Informal or formal arrangements for volunteers to provide respite, even for an hour or two
  - Possible training
  - Possible activities to do with the person being cared for
- Healthy food choices:
  - Discussions or presentations on how to eat healthily on a fixed income
  - Exploring the possibilities of a food security program (regular delivery of a box of nutritious food, particularly vegetables) and such a program's feasibility in a rural area
  - Group cooking sessions such as were suggested in the social participation section
  - Eating together
- Falls prevention – invite a public health nurse or other health professional to speak and demonstrate
- Host a demonstration of Philips Lifeline personal medical alert system
- Hold a speakers series on health issues or chronic conditions such as 'Living Well with Chronic Conditions' or 'Living Well with Chronic Pain' – contact your local health region for information and potential speakers
- Have a session or sessions to learn about older adult abuse: the warning signs and what to



do if you suspect senior abuse or are experiencing senior abuse (see page 31)

- Arrange for a speaker on drugs & drug interactions
- Arrange a session with a pharmacist to do one-on-one discussions with people on the interactions of their medications or services offered by pharmacies
- Have a discussion/presentation on topics such as:
  - o Mental health and older adults
  - o Vision and aging
  - o Home hazards
  - o Other issues that affect the lives of older adults
- Caregiving – how to address the situation when another older adult is the caregiver and there is risk of isolation for both the caregiver and the cared-for
- Have a presentation about Alzheimer Disease or other dementias and how to prevent or reduce their impact – find information on the Alzheimer Society website: [www.alzheimer.ca/en/sk](http://www.alzheimer.ca/en/sk)
- ‘Brain Gym’ or other programs: [www.braingym.org/](http://www.braingym.org/)
- Hold sessions on dealing with end-of-life issues (at least some of these sessions could involve other family members)
  - o Advance care directives
  - o Wills
  - o Communicating your wishes to family
  - o Funeral pre-planning
- Education/information sessions on how to recognize when a senior needs more care than is available at home, and what the process is – knowing what to expect ahead of time would be helpful for both seniors and family members

**Health risks associated with social isolation have been compared in magnitude to the well-known dangers of smoking cigarettes and obesity. It also increases the risk of abuse.**



## **Summary/Things to Keep in Mind:**

- Always consult with older adults regarding their needs and what programs would best serve those needs PRIOR to establishing programs
- Approach isolated older adults sensitively, with the awareness that not all people perceived to be isolated wish to participate in programs
- Consider whether criminal records checks for leaders may be needed in some situations
- Volunteer transportation programs should ensure that liability insurance coverage is in place
- Consider what training may be needed, if any – for example, for youth on how to relate to older adults and vice versa





## EVALUATION

### Plan for evaluation:

- How can we evaluate/measure our success?
- When do we evaluate?
- What do we do with our conclusions?

*We make a living  
by what we get,  
but we make a  
life by what we  
give.*

*-Sir Winston  
Churchill*

### Evaluating is essential so you can learn if:

- You are achieving what you wanted to achieve
- You are reaching the people you wanted to reach
- There are any changes that need to be made
- How to proceed

Note that with all evaluations it is helpful to make them brief and to the point. The more questions there are, the less likely people will fill them out. Even for an in-depth questionnaire, try to keep the main questions to a manageable 5-7 or fewer, with space for written comments.

You may or may not want to include a brief evaluation form at the end of every event you hold. Such an evaluation can be as simple as one page with questions such as:

- What did you like best about the event?
- What did you like least?
- What programs would you like to see us offer?
- How did you learn about this event?

### For major projects, you will need to do more in-depth evaluation:

- With the people who participate (for example, those visited)
- With the people who offered the service/project (if applicable, such as with a friendly visiting program or an intergenerational project)
- Within your own group

### To prepare such an evaluation:

- List the goals you have/had for the project
- List questions that will help you see if the goals were achieved
- Target questions toward the people who will be answering them, for example:
  - o Isolated older adults who are receiving visits could be asked what they liked most and least, and what they would particularly appreciate
  - o People who are doing the visiting could be asked how the visits went, if there was any resistance, if there was anything they thought could be done

- differently, if there was anything they discovered worked well
- o Participants in intergenerational events could be asked what they learned about the other generation, if they would participate in such an event again, if they have suggestions

## **After receiving feedback from participants, your group can then do their own in-depth evaluation to see:**

- If your goals have been met
- If the program should or should not continue
- If changes need to be made
- If there are other opportunities that the initial project has led to

## **The website Evaluation 101 lists potential questions, which are paraphrased here:**

- How did participants find out about the program/event?
- Who participated? What were the general age groups?
- Is the program having the intended effects?
- Were some things accomplished that you didn't expect?
- Can this program be sustained in the long run?

Be sure to ask what didn't work, as well. Ask for thoughts about why things worked and why they didn't.

After you have all the results of your questionnaires, it's time to look at the data collected and decide what action you will take as a result. This is the essential purpose of the evaluation process. When everything's said and done, where do you go from here?

Wherever your process leads, know that you are doing important work in reducing isolation for the older adults in your community.

## OLDER ADULT ABUSE



### **Definition:**

In the broadest sense, older adult abuse is the infliction of harm on an older person. It often occurs within a relationship where there is an expectation of trust. It is abuse whenever someone limits or control the rights or freedoms of an older person.

There are several types of abuse, including:

- Physical abuse – causing pain, injury, or discomfort to an older adult
- Sexual abuse – any form of sexual activity with a person without the person's consent
- Emotional abuse – causing anguish or emotional pain. Name calling, humiliation, threats or intimidation, treating the older person like a child, are some of the ways this can happen
- Financial abuse – unethical or illegal misuse of the money, property, or other assets of an older adult, including placing inappropriate pressure on an older person in order to gain access to her or his assets
- Neglect – the failure to provide the necessities of life such as proper food, fluids, suitable clothing, a safe and sanitary place of shelter, proper medical attention, personal care, and necessary supervision
- Self-neglect – the person refuses assistance or medical care, neglects personal hygiene and household hygiene, neglects personal nutritional needs, etc.

### **Warning signs include:**

- Unexplained injuries
- Denial of access to visitors
- Person is not seen out in the community
- Sudden confusion or signs of nervousness/fear
- Unusual weight loss
- Unsanitary living conditions
- Unusual poor personal hygiene
- Unpaid bills, or multiple payments to someone
- Items or money missing from home
- Person inadequately dressed for weather
- Untreated medical conditions

## What to do:

- Educate yourself about the risk factors and warning signs of older adult abuse
- Speak to the person alone (not in front of the suspected abuser)
- Be willing to listen
- Ask what you can do to help
- If there is an immediate threat to an older person's safety, call 911
- Be aware of the Mobile Crisis Line for your area (see Resources/Links section)

## What the community can do:

- Educate the community about the risk factors, warning signs, and what to do
- Raise awareness
- Consider creating a 'Gatekeepers' group in the community – this is a group of people in the community, such as store clerks, bank tellers, postal workers, etc., who regularly come in contact with older adults. They are trained to recognize the signs of abuse and to provide referral suggestions for services to help the person who is at risk. Note: the older person must consent to the services. This does not infringe on personal rights.

*In life you can never be too kind or too fair; everyone you meet is carrying a heavy load. When you go through your day expressing kindness and courtesy to all you meet, you leave behind a feeling of warmth and good cheer, and you help alleviate the burdens everyone is struggling with.*

*-Brian Tracy*

## WHAT OTHERS ARE DOING

Other rural communities, in Canada and elsewhere, have developed ways of alleviating isolation. Some possibilities are mentioned here.

### Transportation

#### Volunteer Drivers

##### Sunrise Health Region

Sunrise Health Region in southeast Saskatchewan has an extensive handbook for volunteer drivers, which can be viewed at: [www.sunrisehealthregion.sk.ca](http://www.sunrisehealthregion.sk.ca)



##### Canadian Cancer Society

The Canadian Cancer Society has a program for cancer patients to help them get to their treatment appointments. “The program is based in Regina and Saskatoon, but drivers also do weekly bus depot pick-ups to drive people coming from rural communities. Over 600 people required this assistance last year, with 250 of them being from rural Saskatchewan.” [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)

##### Washington State Department of Transport

The Washington State Department of Transport has produced a detailed Volunteer Driver’s Guide: a Guide to Best Practices that is worthy of study. The specifics would have to be adjusted to comply with Saskatchewan laws and insurance policies. It can be found at: [www.wsdot.wa.gov/Transit/Training/vdg/](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Transit/Training/vdg/)

#### Older Driver Safety

##### Candrive

The Candrive research program is looking for ways to extend the time that older adults can drive, and to develop a screening tool to be used to evaluate older drivers’ safety behind the wheel. You can learn more at: [www.candrive.ca](http://www.candrive.ca)

##### Mature Driver Refresher Course

A free course provided by the Saskatchewan Safety Council to review safe driving practices: [www.sasksafety.org/training/traffic/maturedriver](http://www.sasksafety.org/training/traffic/maturedriver)

Older and Wiser Driver Guide from SGI: [www.sgi.sk.ca/pdf/older\\_wiser.pdf](http://www.sgi.sk.ca/pdf/older_wiser.pdf)

CAA also has information about older adults and driving at their main website: [www.seniorsdriving.caa.ca/](http://www.seniorsdriving.caa.ca/)

## Local Bus Service

An alternative to the use of private vehicles for things such as grocery shopping is to develop some sort of local bus system to run once or twice weekly. Some communities have made arrangements with local nursing homes, that have a wheelchair-capable bus, to use that bus and driver for a weekly pick-up and return-home trip for groceries and other local errands.



Others have arranged to use school buses and their drivers at times when the buses are not in use for school functions. One caveat about the use of school buses is that they are not designed to be accessible for those with mobility issues.

If funding exists or can be raised, the purchase of a van that can transport people in wheelchairs or with walkers could be a community goal/project.

## Buddy System/Transportation Escorts

There is also the concern of traveling alone. Even if public transportation is available, such as STC or Greyhound bus service, the senior still has to be concerned about getting onto the bus and off again, and getting from the bus to the appointment. Some older adults may not feel physically, mentally, or emotionally able to deal with all this alone.

In cases where it is not possible for a friend or family member to accompany the person, it may be possible to set up a volunteer pool of travel buddies – people who are willing to accompany others on such trips.

Taking this idea a step further, some communities have initiated Transportation Escort Programs, by which, for a fee, a trained person is provided to accompany the senior not just door-to-door, but ‘door-through-door’ – in some instances, even attending appointments with the person, where there is concern about hearing or understanding all that a doctor or other professional says.

The Easter Seals Disability Service has put together an excellent guide called *Transportation Escorts for Seniors: An Addendum to A Solutions Package for Volunteer Transportation Programs* which you can find at the website of the National Center on Senior Transportation (USA based): [www.seniortransportation.net/](http://www.seniortransportation.net/)

Putting such a program in place in a community or several neighbouring communities would go a long way to enabling isolated seniors to remain in their homes and to be able to get out of the house to run errands and attend activities.

Note that volunteers may need training in assisting disabled or mobility-restricted people (possibly from a local care facility, home care, or nurse). Also, if accompanying a person to a medical appointment, there may be a need for some form of confidentiality agreement.

## **Housing**

### **Villages**

Some communities are creating 'villages' made up of older adults who band together to provide support and services while still remaining in their own homes. For example, a handyman might be available to all the members of the village at an affordable rate, so that the older adult doesn't have to search for someone on their own. Members of the village can look out for each other, ensure that those in danger of isolation are checked on and visited, all as part of the way the 'village' operates.

The first of these villages was urban, but the idea is taking hold in rural areas, as well. It doesn't mean moving to a specific, purpose-constructed living community, but rather providing services to people wherever they live in the community, creating a 'virtual' village.

### **Co-housing**

Some areas are experimenting with co-housing. This involves older adults sharing a residence – either a house, group of houses, or a larger, purpose-built building. This can be done on an informal 'roommate' basis, or in a formal manner, although it isn't exactly the same as a seniors' apartment building or other similar residence. In this case, all the residents would share responsibility for the residence and for each other, in a communal/community way.

A cohousing community, Wolf Willow, has just begun in Saskatoon. Their website: [www.wolfwillowcohousing.ca/about-cohousing/](http://www.wolfwillowcohousing.ca/about-cohousing/), says this about cohousing:

Cohousing is based on private ownership of complete, self-contained homes centered around and focused on shared facilities (common house), which typically includes a kitchen, dining area, lounge, guest/caregiver suites, workshop, meeting spaces and other features the members may choose. Although each home has its own complete kitchen, shared dinners are typically available a few days each week at the common house for those who wish to participate.

It is also an alternative development model where the future residents participate in the planning and development so that it directly responds to their needs. The physical layout is designed to provide personal privacy as well as create opportunities for interaction with neighbours.

## **Respect and Social Inclusion**

### **Red Cross Friendly Visiting Program**

As mentioned briefly earlier in this resource, the Red Cross has started a project in communities in Saskatchewan to link carefully screened and trained visitors with isolated older adults. It involves a one-on-one visit for an hour every two weeks (at a minimum). This is mainly to pro-

vide companionship, to “chat, play a game, do a craft or discuss the news.”<sup>1</sup> The information on the Red Cross website also notes that “volunteers will be also trained to identify and flag physical and emotional risks in client seniors and ensure that assistance is offered.”

It is to be hoped that this endeavor, which has flourished in other areas, will be successful in Saskatchewan as well.



### **Haut-Saint-Laurent, Quebec**

In the municipality of Haut-Saint-Laurent, Quebec, a project seeking to “mobilize the community, organisations, municipalities and the general public in order to break isolation among seniors”<sup>2</sup> was set up. One particular effort of note was a play “dealing with the mistreatment and proper treatment of seniors” which was put on by a local group.

Such a dramatization, whether play or skit, could be created by groups of older adults or intergenerational groups to educate the community while also entertaining them.

### **Seniors for Kids, Cochrane, Alberta**

Quoting an article in the Rocky View Weekly online<sup>3</sup>, this program “brings local seniors to area schools for 45 minute sessions for one-on-one intergenerational programming occasionally [with] special activities, including board games, crafts and environmental projects but there are also opportunities for mutual learning and discussion.” The program co-ordinator said, “We try to match seniors with students who have similar interests, so they have stuff to talk about and things to share with one another. This is a way for [the seniors] to connect with youth and give back, and really benefits both age groups. It helps to build a stronger community.”

This program involves students from Grades 2 to 12, and can build lasting friendships as well as fostering understanding between the generations.

### **Digital storytelling in rural British Columbia**

In the summer of 2015, a master’s student from Simon Fraser University<sup>4</sup> held workshops to teach seniors how to record their stories using digital video cameras.

<sup>1</sup> Saskatchewan Friendly Visiting Program – Canadian Red Cross [www.redcross.ca/how-we-help/community-health-services-in-canada/saskatchewan-friendly-visiting-program](http://www.redcross.ca/how-we-help/community-health-services-in-canada/saskatchewan-friendly-visiting-program)

<sup>2</sup> To break isolation among seniors: Project “En Bonne Compagnie dans le Haut Saint-Laurent” by Daniel Grenier, reprinted in [www.gleaner.ca/communaute/2015/11/24/to-break-isolation-among-seniors.html](http://www.gleaner.ca/communaute/2015/11/24/to-break-isolation-among-seniors.html)

<sup>3</sup> Intergenerational Connections by Jessi Gowan, Rocky View Weekly, Airdrie, Alberta, January 25, 2016. [www.rockyviewweekly.com/article/Seniors-For-Kids-builds-intergenerational-connections-20160125](http://www.rockyviewweekly.com/article/Seniors-For-Kids-builds-intergenerational-connections-20160125)

<sup>4</sup> Summer Sojourns: Digital storytelling with seniors in rural B.C. communities by Allen Tung, Simon Fraser University News online, August 17, 2015 [www.sfu.ca/sfunews/stories/2015/summer-sojourns-digital-storytelling-with-seniors-in-rural-b-c-.html](http://www.sfu.ca/sfunews/stories/2015/summer-sojourns-digital-storytelling-with-seniors-in-rural-b-c-.html)



This idea could be used in communities to encourage young people to use their techno-digital knowledge to record older adults telling their stories, and to create a digital record of these peoples' lives and of the history of the community.

## **Let No One Be Alone Week**

Brenda Tonn, a Seniors Resource Coordinator in Manitoba, was the driving force behind a program started in 2012 which is "focused on increasing awareness about those who are alone and encouraging everyone to reach out to, visit, call and/or reconnect with someone who may be lonely."<sup>1</sup>

This is now an annual event, usually held in early May, in which people are encouraged to reach out to someone who is isolated and lonely. This program has great potential as an intergenerational program, and indeed, would be an excellent project for entire communities.



## **Civic Participation and Employment Opportunities**

### **Okanagan Regional Library 'Year of the Wise'**

Throughout 2015, the Okanagan Regional Library's 29 branches were involved in a Library-proclaimed 'Year of the Wise' in which older adults were invited to share their knowledge, wisdom, skills and experiences with others through one-on-one mentoring, group presentations, demonstrations, group discussions, or informal talks<sup>2</sup>.

The library region's website, [www.orl.bc.ca/Borrowing-services/year-of-the-wise](http://www.orl.bc.ca/Borrowing-services/year-of-the-wise), gives this invitation:

"We are looking for seniors that are interested in sharing their knowledge with others at the library. Share with other seniors, adults, or children. Share one to one, in small groups, or do larger presentations.

- Mentor others with your financial knowledge
- Teach someone how to play chess or bridge
- Share your talent in painting, sculpting, and knitting
- Teach a music class
- Share your cultural history with a group
- Share your knowledge of your local community's history
- Teach other seniors how to use their iPad or laptop
- Share your global travel experiences"

The 'Year of the Wise' idea could easily be adapted by local groups, whether as part of a library's programs or otherwise.

<sup>1</sup> [www.agefriendlymanitoba.ca/afm/news.cfm?news\\_id=343](http://www.agefriendlymanitoba.ca/afm/news.cfm?news_id=343)

<sup>2</sup> Newspaper article online: *Osoyoos library staff hoping seniors will share knowledge with local citizens*, *Osoyoos Times*, February 11, 2015. [www.osoyoostimes.com/osoyoos-library-staff-hoping-seniors-will-share-knowledge-local-citizens/](http://www.osoyoostimes.com/osoyoos-library-staff-hoping-seniors-will-share-knowledge-local-citizens/)

## **The Amazings**

The Amazings was a program based in London, England, that gave retired people an opportunity to both learn and teach, by “creating classes, online and offline, that were taught by older people with amazing passion, experience and skills.”<sup>1</sup>

This idea could be adapted to local or wider communities, encouraging retired people to band together to provide a way to share their skills and knowledge with others, either through short classes, a series of formal or informal talks, online courses (there are a number of ways to create online courses, some of which are reasonably affordable, particularly for a group that is willing to invest some resources), or other means.

## **Communication and Information**

### **Mobile computer lab**

The Saskatoon Public Library recognized that not everyone is able to go to the library to access their computer literacy training, so they now have a program that takes the training to the people with their mobile computer lab.

In this program, older adults were trained to be the teachers, who then traveled with a ‘lab’ consisting of six laptops, a projector, and access to wireless Internet. They taught computer basics, and there were opportunities for other courses that delved into using Microsoft Word, Facebook, Skype and the Internet.

Other communities could emulate this idea by having computer classes in smaller villages, in rural homes for a small group of neighbors, or even as one-on-one tutoring experiences in an isolated person’s home. This could involve peer-to-peer teaching situations where older adults teach other older adults or intergenerational teaching sessions.

## **Community Support and Health Services**

### **Boundary FoodShare – food security in a rural area**

This program in the south Okanagan in British Columbia has found a variety of ways to address the need for access to healthy, affordable food. In the program, farmers and gardeners donate their surplus produce to FoodShare for older adults and others who are unable to grow their own vegetables and cannot always afford to purchase nutritious food.

There are also community gardens cared for by volunteers, with other volunteers freezing some of the bounty for winter use.

One way this differs from regular Food Banks is that it isn’t relying on donations of pre-packaged food, such as soups, canned beans, and macaroni – it is making fresh, healthful produce available.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.positive.news/2013/society/10615/seniors-share-skills-knowledge-marketplace-wisdom-2/](http://www.positive.news/2013/society/10615/seniors-share-skills-knowledge-marketplace-wisdom-2/)

## **Community Kitchens**

Across Canada, many community kitchens are successfully bringing people together to prepare meals, to learn about nutrition and budgeting, and to build social connections in the process. As an article in the magazine *Alive* (online) says, “Sharing good, healthy food, breaking down social isolation, feeling less alone in a city, learning empowering lessons about how to choose high quality food for a healthy life: these are inspiring messages from community kitchens.”<sup>1</sup>

Older adults who often eat alone, or find it difficult to prepare proper meals, could benefit greatly from such a program.

## **Respite for Caregivers**

It is extremely important that caregivers not become isolated and burned out in the process of caring for a family member. The Family Means organization in Stillwater, Minnesota<sup>2</sup> provides volunteer non-medical visitors/companions for people who are being cared for at home so that the family member who is their caregiver can have a break. Volunteers receive training and are encouraged to engage the person they are visiting in activities that stimulate the mind, yet do not tax the abilities of the person.

Other groups provide specialized training for volunteers giving respite for caregivers whose family member has some form of dementia. The Center for Volunteer Caregiving in Cary, North Carolina, for example, regularly provides workshops for their volunteers, including “tips to enhance communication and accentuate the strengths still within the person with dementia.”<sup>3</sup>

Even without such a formalized process, people in rural communities can still provide respite for neighbors who are caregivers – even an hour or two in an afternoon, to allow for some personal shopping, a personal medical appointment or haircut, can mean a great deal.

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1 *Community Kitchens Cook Together*, by Bev Yaworski, *Alive* magazine online, August 21, 2012 [www.alive.com/food/community-kitchens-cook-together/#sthash.iajAKBWj.dpuf](http://www.alive.com/food/community-kitchens-cook-together/#sthash.iajAKBWj.dpuf)

2 [www.familymeans.org/become-a-respite-care-volunteer.html](http://www.familymeans.org/become-a-respite-care-volunteer.html)

3 [www.volunteercaregiving.org/caregiversupport](http://www.volunteercaregiving.org/caregiversupport)



## RESOURCES/LINKS

### Age-Friendly Communities

Age-Friendly Saskatchewan: [www.agefriendlysk.ca](http://www.agefriendlysk.ca)

Age-Friendly Manitoba: [www.agefriendlymanitoba.ca](http://www.agefriendlymanitoba.ca)

Age-Friendly Alberta: [www.seniors.alberta.ca/seniors/age-friendly-alberta.html](http://www.seniors.alberta.ca/seniors/age-friendly-alberta.html)

World Health Organization Age-Friendly Communities Initiative: [www.who.int/ageing/en/](http://www.who.int/ageing/en/)

### Aging in Place

Healthy Aging in Place: Improving Rural Seniors' Health Through Policy and Community Level Interventions, Action Plan Summary, April 2014 – March 2017, SPHERU: [www.spheru.ca](http://www.spheru.ca)  
Search on the website for 'Healthy Aging in Place' to locate various reports and newsletters

Aging Well in Rural Places: Development and Pilot Testing of a Community-Based Strategy for Addressing Depression in Seniors in Atlantic Canada Final Report – an initiative of the Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre: [www.seniorspolicyens.ca/Root/Materials/Adobe%20Acrobat%20Materials/FinalReport\\_\\_Aging\\_Well\\_in\\_Rural\\_Places.pdf](http://www.seniorspolicyens.ca/Root/Materials/Adobe%20Acrobat%20Materials/FinalReport__Aging_Well_in_Rural_Places.pdf)

### Evaluation

Evaluation 101 from Reichert and Associates, a commercial site, but with good basic information: [www.reichertandassociates.ca/resources/evaluation-101/](http://www.reichertandassociates.ca/resources/evaluation-101/)

Project Evaluation Guide for Non-Profit Organizations from Sector Source (Canadian) – in-depth look at evaluation creation and interpretation:  
[www.sectorsource.ca/sites/default/files/resources/files/projectguide\\_final.pdf](http://www.sectorsource.ca/sites/default/files/resources/files/projectguide_final.pdf)

### General

211 Saskatchewan – “up-to-date and complete listings of over 5,000 social, community, health, and government services across Saskatchewan” Note: when it is fully implemented across Saskatchewan, it will include a phone service. Currently it is online only: [www.sk.211.ca](http://www.sk.211.ca)

## Group Building

World Cafe – provides a process for “leading collaborative dialogue and knowledge sharing”:  
[www.theworldcafe.com](http://www.theworldcafe.com)

## Intergenerational

i2i Intergenerational Society “created in 2008 by educators, health care workers, older adults, community, youth and parents, to promote intergenerational programs and learning opportunities, and to assist in developing rich and sustainable connections between generations”:  
[www.intergenerational.ca/i2i/](http://www.intergenerational.ca/i2i/)

i2i resource/pdf kit Across the Generations: Respect All Ages:  
[www.intergenerational.ca/i2i/resources/across-the-generations/](http://www.intergenerational.ca/i2i/resources/across-the-generations/)

i2i resource/pdf kit Elder Abuse Awareness Teen Kit:  
[www.intergenerational.ca/i2i/resources/teen-kit/](http://www.intergenerational.ca/i2i/resources/teen-kit/)

British Columbia Care Providers Association has a number of publications including their Intergenerational Guide and Toolkit: Creating Caring Communities: a guide to establishing intergenerational programs for schools, care facilities and community groups at this link:  
[www.bccare.ca/resources/bccpa-publications/](http://www.bccare.ca/resources/bccpa-publications/)

Suggestions for intergenerational activities from Manitoba groups:  
[www.manitobaseniourcentres.com/resources/intergenerational-ideas/](http://www.manitobaseniourcentres.com/resources/intergenerational-ideas/)

Intergenerational Manitoba: [www.intergenerationalmanitoba.ca/](http://www.intergenerationalmanitoba.ca/)

## Isolation Related Sites and Articles

14 Ways to Help Seniors Avoid Social Isolation by Jeff Anderson:  
[www.aplaceformom.com/blog/help-seniors-avoid-social-isolation-8-14-2014/](http://www.aplaceformom.com/blog/help-seniors-avoid-social-isolation-8-14-2014/)

RISE (Reach Isolated Seniors Everywhere) – site is maintained by HelpAge Canada based in Ottawa: [www.rise-cisa.ca](http://www.rise-cisa.ca)

Risk factors/indicators of Social Isolation infographic:  
[www.rise-cisa.ca/resources/spectrum/](http://www.rise-cisa.ca/resources/spectrum/)

Napier Connects Toolkit (a resource designed to help “facilitate opportunities for better connections between our older residents and their community.”):  
[www.napier.govt.nz/napier/community-development/seniors/napier-connects-toolkit/](http://www.napier.govt.nz/napier/community-development/seniors/napier-connects-toolkit/)

The Nelson Allan Project Toolkit of the Burlington Community Foundation – a resource to “help integrate socially isolated seniors into the community”: [www.burlingtonfoundation.org/node/93](http://www.burlingtonfoundation.org/node/93)



## **Older Adult Abuse**

It's Not Right: Neighbours, Friends and Families for Older Adults: [www.itsnotright.ca/](http://www.itsnotright.ca/)

Government of Canada website with information for older adults, their caregivers, and their families: [www.seniors.gc.ca/eng/index.shtml](http://www.seniors.gc.ca/eng/index.shtml)

Taking Action on Abuse of Older Adults: A YWCA Awareness Workshop Facilitators Guide: [www.ywcavan.org](http://www.ywcavan.org)

Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (CNPEA): [www.cnpea.ca](http://www.cnpea.ca)

The Alberta Elder Abuse Network: [www.albertaelderabuse.ca](http://www.albertaelderabuse.ca)

General information site (American) with information on senior abuse: [www.helpguide.org/articles/abuse/elder-abuse-and-neglect.htm](http://www.helpguide.org/articles/abuse/elder-abuse-and-neglect.htm)

Fraud handbook for individuals – a print resource from Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism

Seniors Abuse and Neglect Response Line: (Mobile Crisis Services)

- Prince Albert & area 24-hour crisis line: 306-764-1011
- Saskatoon & area 24-hour crisis line: 306-933-6200
- Regina & area 24-hour crisis line: 306-757-0127

