

ACTIVITIES: Are You Doing All You Could Be?

What are Activities?

- Not just passing time but spending time meaningfully!
- Structured (not the "Couch Potato Syndrome")
- Doing something and being engaged
- Should give residents a reason to get up, to get dressed and get excited about something!

Types of Activities:

INTELLECTUAL

- Current events, discussions, educational classes, speakers, book reviews
- Trivia games, word games, Wheel of Fortune, card games, spelling bees, crossword puzzles, word searches, You Be The Judge
- Travel, poetry, creative writing
- House meetings/Resident Councils - decision making opportunities

CREATIVE/EXPRESSIVE

- Arts, crafts, dance, movement
- Writing poetry, stories, editorials
- Dear Abby, Life Review, reminiscence, Art-in-the-Making

PHYSICAL

Exercises can take on many forms: sitercise, scarves to music, bean bag, ring or ball toss, balloon volleyball, parachute, horseshoes, croquet, line dancing, basketball, fishing, bocce ball, shuffleboard, kickball, video programs, golf, darts, catch, dancing and gardening.

Weight/Strength Training

- Aerobic
- Stretching
- Free weights
- Resources: physical therapists, occupational therapists, exercise physiologists

SOCIAL

- Parties, special events, Happy Hour, Socials, teas, clubs, picnics, formal parties, Family nights
- Movies, slide shows, luncheons, coffee klatch, group discussions
- Entertainment: dancers, jugglers, choirs, accordion, barbershop, cajun, handbells, accapella, fiddlers, bagpipes, handbells, guitar
- Bands, school drama club, choir, marching band, drill team...
- Introduce residents to one another, inform of what they have in common.
- Outings - the sky's the limit! Considerations: insurance coverage, public transportation, in metro area RTD Senior Ride program.

MAINTAINING SKILLS IN REAL LIFE ACTIVITIES

Cooking, decorating, gardening, laundry, setting the table, writing letters, care for pets and plants, "painting"

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Intergenerational: day care, school children, Adopt-a-Grandparent, preschool
- Pet visitation: local pet programs, informal, birds, dogs, cats, rabbits, Zoo visits
- Clubs/organizations: Elks, VFW, auxiliaries, church groups, youth groups, women's circles, offer meeting space
- High schools, colleges, beauty schools
- Volunteer program

VOLUNTEER/SERVICE

- Volunteer or paid jobs: get permission, include on board and care plan
- Community: cut coupons, stuff envelopes, fold church bulletins, visit nursing homes, tutor or read to children, recycle cards, pen pals
- Committees: Activity, Food, Welcome, Sunshine, Adopt-a-Family
- Help with activity calendar, sign/make birthday cards, welcome signs, etc.

SPIRITUAL

Services, Bible studies/classes, Mass/Communion, Memory Celebration services, television, videos, tapes

PSYCHOSOCIAL

- Support or process groups for grief, losses, loneliness
- Resources: social workers, chaplains, pastors, mental health workers, Hospice

Holidays & Themes

- Meals, Special Foods
- Games, Reminiscence, Arts/Crafts, Trivia/History
- Entertainment, Music, Movies, Slide Shows, Travel
- Dress Days
- Sensory Stimulation

Activity Formats

- Group: large and small
- One-to-One: staff, volunteers, pets, children
- Independent: coordinate supplies, i.e. assistive devices, handwork materials, books, lamp, radio, tape player, etc.

Activities for High Functioning Residents

- Challenging
- Independent
- Educational
- Volunteer work

Activities for Low Functioning Residents (Alzheimer's disease/dementia)

- Adapt to level of functioning
- Small groups
- One-to-Ones
- Sensory Stimulation: Stimulation of the 5 Senses
Taste, Touch, Hearing, Sight, and Smell
Sensory Stimulation Kits (handout)
- Reality Orientation cuing
- Validation techniques
- Specialized staff training, increased staffing

Motivating Residents

- Don't settle for "She won't do anything." Something makes every resident "tick" - find out what does, i.e. coffee, refreshments, activities outdoors, etc.
- Experiment with how to invite, i.e. perhaps instead of "Do you want to come?" "Come with me, I want to show you/have you try something," etc. (without violating resident rights, however).
- Empower residents: always treat as adults, encourage, be a cheerleader
- Adjust/adapt activities to the level of functioning, cover/ignore mistakes
Create *successful* activities!

Resources/Activity Resource List

- Community
- Activity Newsletters/Journal
- Professional Organizations
- Volunteer Program

Activity Assessment: A worthwhile investment of your time!

- Assess activity needs and preferences
- Interview/investigate in increments, build trust, rapport and a relationship
- Gather facts, withhold judgments
- Interview family, friends, clergy, visitors for additional information.
- Why do an activities assessment?
- What makes a good activity assessment?
(separate handout)

Activity Plan

- Utilize the Activity Assessment
- A plan versus a description
- Individualized: No two plans should look alike.

Activity Calendar

- Multifaceted?
- Reflect religious and cultural, male and female preferences?
- Low and high functioning activities?
- Evening and weekend activities?
- Incorporate real life activities?
- Keeps residents informed.
- Good Public Relations tool.
- Substitute canceled programs.

Feel free to call an Assisted Living Program surveyor with questions:
303-692-2800.

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