

SENIOR CENTERS: Delivering Vital Connections

NATIONAL SENIOR
CENTER MONTH

September 2020



MIND | BODY | SPIRIT | COMMUNITY

2020 National Senior Center Month
Program Guide

ncoa
National Institute of
Senior Centers

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Welcome to National Senior Center Month

Senior Centers: Delivering Vital Connections Mind | Body | Spirit | Community

September 2020

National Senior Center Month is celebrated every year in September. And although we are in challenging times there is still a lot to applaud. During the first days of the pandemic, senior center professionals ensured that vital services were maintained. They stepped up to deliver meals, made wellness calls and creatively connected older adults to activities, exercise and each other. And now, as they scale back to on-site programming, they will continue to be indispensable.

Our national celebration theme is *Senior Centers: Delivering Vital Connections*

This year's theme was chosen to highlight how senior centers deliver vital connections to support older adults aging well. Preventing social isolation is vital and a core senior center mission. While the delivery methods have changed during the pandemic, centers have succeeded in continuing to provide knowledge, programming, and resources. During senior center month showcase your center and its vital role in your community, promote a positive image of aging, and create interest among prospective new participants.

Our key words this celebration are **Mind, Body, Spirit, Community**. They are important reminders to take a holistic approach. During your celebration share programs that connect to:

- **Mind:** Offer a Spanish class, start a creative writing class or a meditation group.
- **Body:** Deliver a new evidence-based program or a healthy cooking class.
- **Spirit:** Develop a gratitude journaling group or a volunteer led wellness call program.
- **Community:** Create a community virtual Talent Show or a letter writing campaign.

Follow these easy steps to celebrate during National Senior Center Month:

- 1. Start planning now!** September is just around the corner. Knowing your plans early can make it easier to promote your activities and events.
 - **Use this Program Guide** to find great ideas to create a memorable celebration. You'll find suggestions to help you, your staff, volunteers, and board members educate the community about the wide range of activities, services, and benefits you offer.
 - Consider planning a different event each week or choose one week out of the month to hold several activities.
- 2. Use the Publicity Guide** to capture awareness and promote community involvement and support for your celebration. The guide offers a step-by-step media plan with timelines and specific methods.
- 3 Use the 2020 Poster** to bring recognition of National Senior Center Month to your center. Two versions are available—one with national photos and one that can be customized for your center.

Happy Senior Center Month Celebration!

— NISC Best Practices Committee

Scaling Up to Offer On-site Programming

Senior Center Month gives you the opportunity to celebrate the good work you are doing in your community, but your current concerns may be focused on scaling up your operations to offer on-site programming. This page offers resources and examples of guidance that may be helpful.

Many centers have contributed to the development of this NISC resource guide that includes virtual programming and service continuity ideas: [Senior Centers Connect](#).

NISC collects State Departments on Aging, State Senior Center Associations, and other senior center guidance plans and tools. Please let us know if you have a resource to share. Here are a few resuming state specific senior center on-site programming resources:

Recommendations for Reopening/Scaling Up Senior Center Operations

From Massachusetts Councils on Aging (MCOA)

The MCOA Task Force has provided suggested guidelines for consideration in working with your local Board of Health and other municipal officials regarding the prospective reopening and/or the scaling up of operations at your senior centers. These are based on guidance from the State of Massachusetts, CDC, and other sources. The following are fluid documents and will be updated as warranted.

Stage 1

- [Overall Considerations for Transportation Services provided by COAs](#)
- [Overall Considerations for Senior Center Facilities](#)

Stage 2

MCOA also provides COVID-19 Operations and Communications Plan templates for each of the following areas: Reopening/Scaling up Centers; Reopening/Scaling up Transportation, and Reopening/Scaling up Remote Programs. The Operations Plan templates are based on the State's guidance for businesses. To download initial plans go to <https://mcoaonline.com/recommendations-for-reopening/>.

From the Pennsylvania Association of Senior Centers (PASC)

The PASC Board of Directors drafted and adopted a [Re-opening Recommendation Plan](#) for Pennsylvania senior centers, which was submitted and accepted by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging. These recommendations should be used in collaboration with the [Department's guidelines](#).

- **How many participants per space guide:** This number is determined by taking the total square footage of programming space and dividing it by 113. The number 113 is the square footage needed around an individual for six (6) feet of social distancing.

[NCOA Crossroads post](#) — KovirPage LLC's CEO Marie Gress shared a booklet of guidance for resuming senior center on-site programming informed by medical providers.

Program Implementation

As centers gear back up to offer on-site programming, the reality remains that some former participants will remain home because of safety concerns. They may be apprehensive about the health risks for their age category or because of a chronic condition, or they live with someone with a chronic condition. It is important that virtual programming be developed and sustained throughout this health crisis.

Blended Program Delivery

Consider offering programs that are delivered in a blended format, with programs that include in-person programming at the center and the ability to participate virtually. This will be helpful for those who feel they can go to the center and those who would like to connect from the safety of their home. It will also allow for accommodating more individuals since class size will be reduced due to social distancing.

Many of the programs in this guide are from the 2019 Programs of Excellence submission and were developed for on-site delivery. However, with a little creativity, they could be delivered in a blended format with both on-site programming and virtual delivery.

Virtual Without Technology

We know that not every older adult has access to technology. Senior center professionals are delivering a vital connection by making wellness calls, finding out their participants needs and concerns, and connecting them to local resources. If you started this program in the Spring, consider surveying your members to see how often they would like a call. Some may be ready for a change and may prefer a regular email blast. For other ideas to connect without technology, review [Senior Centers Connect](#).

Minimal Technology

STEPtember Walking Challenge

STEPtember was a two-week-long physical activity challenge where members of the **Port Angeles Senior Center in Washington State** tracked their steps and worked to achieve the highest overall step count. Participants tracked their steps in a variety of ways, including pedometers that were provided, smartphones, or fitness trackers. The center used an app called [Stridekick](#) and, to keep it free, they split people up into groups of 10. The person with the highest overall step count over the two weeks was crowned the STEPtember winner and won a gift card to a local sporting goods store, as well as a water bottle with the senior center's logo. They had 25 participants, and everyone walked away with a prize. Water bottles were given to people who were averaging 5,000 steps or more per day. Reflective armbands that can be used while walking at night were given to those who participated but didn't meet the 5,000 steps per day.

They repeatedly heard people say how tracking their steps motivated them to do more. It was a wake-up call for people who thought they were doing a lot until they began monitoring and found out they were doing much less than they thought. Also, because they were participating with their peers, they became inspired by others of the same age. Others gained confidence in themselves when they realized they could do a lot more than they were expecting. Walking is one of the best forms of exercise because it's free and can be done anywhere by almost anyone.

This program of excellence nomination is a good candidate for blended delivery, with small in-person group meetings/walks and a virtual component to engage those walking independently.

Technology Needed

Yoga with Yoni on Facebook Live

Yoga with Yoni on Facebook Live is a weekly program offered at the **Kinship Care Resource Center** in Georgia. The class was developed prior to the pandemic. It is available anywhere with an internet connection. Kinship Care participants can come to the center for Yoga class or they can follow along in the privacy of their own home. Yoga instructions are broadcast on a live feed on Facebook.



The center’s yoga instructor Yoni hosts a traditional exercise session in the center on a specific date and time. A second staff member will connect to Facebook, position the webcam, and begin live-streaming the class. During the live feed, off-site participants are encouraged to “check-in” by commenting or liking the feed.

This class offers a blended format and could easily work in today’s environment. While a group meets at the center, through the use of technology, the program is available to all who have a computer, tablet, or smartphone with internet capabilities.

Masters in Aging

The **Winona Friendship Center in Minnesota** has developed the Masters in Aging program. The program teaches older adults how to film, produce, edit, and interview their cohort in order to create a high-quality documentary series.

With the assistance of Winona State University’s Mass Communication department staff and students and the local public television cable company Hiawatha Broadband Communications (HBC), and a grant from the Mardag Foundation, participants learn interviewing skills, camera operation, and video editing.



- 1. Participants begin with a six-week course** taught by the local television company. During the course participants learn equipment use and storage, editing software, interviewing skills and technique, research strategies, and production. Student interns are available during class and during office hours to assist with questions and provide support to the participants.
- 2. After completing the film education portion**, participants begin the documentary process. Participants select the crew, create interview questions, conduct necessary research, collect information, prepare the interviewee, and begin the process of interviewing an older adult.
- 3. After the interviewing and filming is complete**, participants are then tasked with editing footage. These completed films are eventually aired on community television, as well as archived at the local history center.

Now is the perfect time to connect with your local community television station and develop the volunteer skills needed to broadcast your programming.

MIND

Learning never exhausts the mind.

— Leonardo da Vinci

Showcase your educational, informational, and support programs that expand individuals' horizons and present new choices and new adventures.

Minds in Motion

Minds in Motion is an intellectual and emotional adventure, filled with spirited discussions. **The Center at Medfield, Massachusetts** has developed this lively program. It is part college seminar, part self-examination, and part backyard barbecue. Each 4-week term includes four sessions. Due to its emphasis on discussion, Minds in Motion is limited to 15 participants.

During each session, participants engage in several thoughtful challenges. Topics includes food photography, etiquette, Tin Pan Alley, limericks, African American Spirituals, Picasso, the Supreme Court, emotional intelligence, American protest songs, ethical conundrums, contemporary women painters, and many more.

The unique appeal of Minds in Motion is that it isn't a lecture hour. Rather, it's a fully interactive experience, with each participant called on to voice their thoughts and feelings on the topic at hand.



UPSLIDE (Utilizing and Promoting Social engagement in Loneliness, Isolation and Depression in the Elderly)

UPSLIDE was created after identifying many seniors in the community who were completely alone. The program is designed at **Tallahassee Senior Center, Florida** to help adults 50+ who feel isolated or alone and want to connect with others in a meaningful way. The program interventions aim to break the cycle of loneliness and isolation that leads to poor health, cognitive decline, and early death by ultimately connecting them with other people and meaningful activities

Led by a licensed mental health counselor, the program has five components. Friends Connection has continued during the pandemic along with weekly phone calls.

- 1. Assessment Visits** — To examine an individual's situation and to determine if they are a candidate. Meeting can take place in home, in public, or private office.
- 2. Individual Counseling** — Offered (at no-cost) by MSW or licensed mental health counselor to provide emotional guidance and address barriers to social engagement.
- 3. Friendly Chat Groups** — Called Friends Connection, these groups offer interaction with others in a creative, relaxed, therapeutic environment. There are currently four groups.
- 4. Social Engagement Support** — Assistance with identifying an individual's interests and options, and supporting involvement in activities. Also includes organizing events for UPSLIDE participants.
- 5. Transportation Assistance** — Facilitation and funding of transportation for participants.

Individual counseling and the Friend Connction group continues to meet in a virtual format using Zoom.

Virtually Travel — Travelogue

One of the most popular programs at the **Naples Senior Center, Florida** is their monthly Travelogue Presentation. The Travelogue Presentations are an opportunity for socialization, interaction, and mental stimulation for seniors. Travelogue presentations take members on a visual and entertaining journey to places around the world.

Through a Powerpoint slide show created by the presenter, members are exposed to new cultures and given an insight into the lives of people in other parts of the world. For some members, the Travelogue provides an opportunity to reminisce about places they have visited in the past. For others, it provides an opportunity to learn about new sites. Each presentation is like taking a mini-vacation to a new location. The travelogues cover countries and cultures from around the world, allowing seniors the chance to increase their knowledge base and expand their understanding of other cultures.

This is a low-cost production and could be a structured program incorporating design using technology classes and oral speaking classes. It could also be presented through an online platform.

Intergenerational “Play/Toy” Painting Project

The “Play/Toy” Painting Project was inspired by a gift of stuffed animals and toys to the **Maynard Council on Aging’s** Senior Watercolor Class in Massachusetts to be used as painting subjects. The seniors were teamed up with students from the Maynard Green Meadow second grade class to paint artistic expressions of the stuffed animals and toys.

The second grade students chose what were meaningful to them and painted with acrylics. The seniors then chose from the stuffed animals and toys selected by the children for their watercolor paintings. The project culminated in a show of 21 pairs of paintings at the Maynard Library. In addition to the seniors and students, parents, grandparents, grandchildren, members of the community, and the town administration attended.

Toys were chosen based on personal meaning for each individual. In both classes, participants shared feelings about their choices and personal feelings. The teachers taught new techniques in order for both classes to paint on a larger scale.



Aging Mastery Program®



Aging Mastery Program®

National Council on Aging



JOIN THE ADVENTURE!

Small steps lead to positive changes.

*Find out how to bring Aging Mastery
to your senior center by going to
www.ncoa.org/AMP*



Savvy Saving Seniors® Financial Education Toolkits

For many vulnerable and disadvantaged older adults, the path to economic security begins with basic money management. Learning how to budget, avoid scams, apply for benefits, and use prepaid cards wisely can help them stay secure and independent longer.

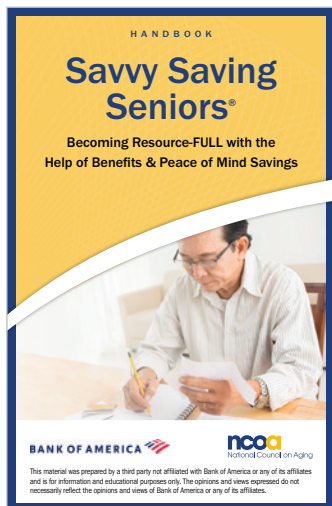
With support from the Bank of America Charitable Foundation, NCOA developed the following toolkits to help professionals educate older adults about good money skills. Use them to hold a Savvy Saving Seniors financial education workshop in your community!

Each Savvy Saving Seniors toolkit comes with:

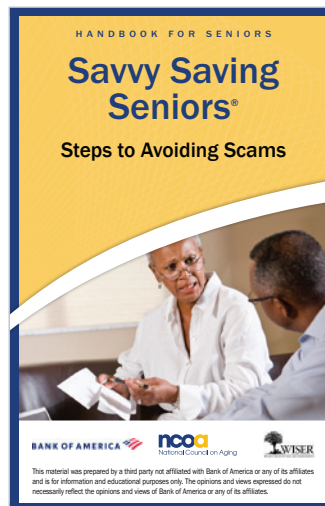
- **Marketing materials:** Flyers, calendar listings, and newsletter posts
- **Training guides:** Get step-by-step instructions to host a 90-minute training
- **Presentation slides:** Use the PowerPoint presentation during the workshop
- **Participant handbooks:** Quizzes, checklists, FAQ, and useful links
- **Evaluation forms:** Let us know what you think

All materials are available at ncoa.org/SavvySeniors.

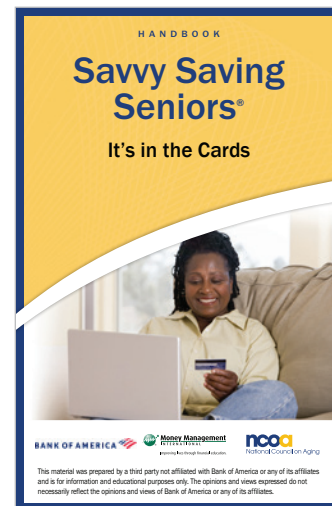
Toolkit 1: Becoming Resource-FULL with the Help of Benefits & Peace of Mind Savings



Toolkit 2: Steps to Avoiding Scams



Toolkit 3: It's in the Cards



Ready, Set, Bank™ Partner Toolkit

Community-based organizations can use this step-by-step guide to host a mobile banking workshop for older adults. **Ready, Set, Bank™** is an online video course that empowers older adults to be successful with online banking. The course was produced with support from Capital One and tested with seniors at Older Adults Technology Services in New York City and in a NISC pilot. This toolkit provides a timeline, tips, and materials to host a workshop.

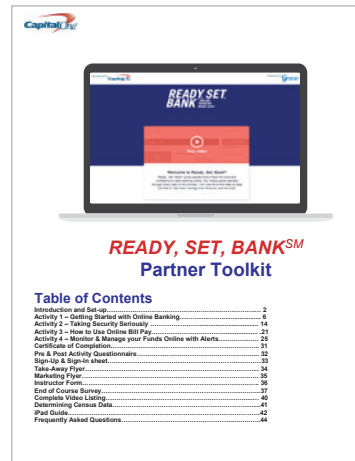
Host an Online Banking Workshop

The partner toolkit has everything you need, including:

- A timeline to help you schedule and plan a workshop
- Step-by-step instructions on how to use the videos
- Customizable materials to promote the workshop
- Useful handouts, including signup sheets, questionnaires, flyers, and more

[Download the free toolkit.](#)

[Download the marketing flyer.](#)



Seniors Against Scams

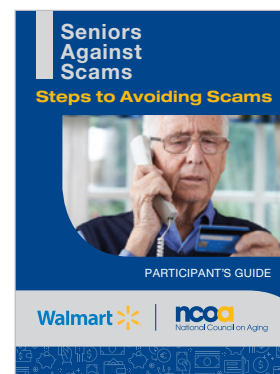
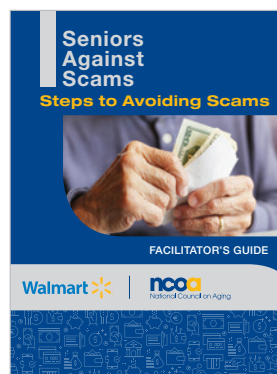
Seniors Against Scams, an education curriculum that highlights popular scams targeting vulnerable older adults and offers next steps for those who experience financial fraud, is available for you to hold at your senior center.

Four nationally accredited senior centers piloted the NCOA-designed program. This program is part of a national partnership with Walmart and NCOA. The goal is to empower older adults to recognize when they are being targeted and to protect themselves against financial fraud through in-person workshops at local senior centers.

Discussing vulnerability to scams can be uncomfortable and embarrassing for any generation. Although older adults may be interested in learning how to manage and protect their money, they may resist sharing their financial management choices. It is comforting to frame this training as empowering the individual to take advantage of available resources and begin making incremental steps to ensure their economic security by being proactive in safeguarding their money.

Materials:

- [Facilitator Guide](#)
- [Participant Guide](#)
- [Seniors Against Scams Introduction Slides](#)
- [Post Survey](#)



BODY

If your compassion does not include yourself, it is incomplete.

— Jack Kornfield

Highlight the programs that provide the knowledge and tools for optimal physical health, including exercise, nutrition, and chronic condition management.

Fitness Appreciation Week

This extraordinary week was implemented to provide **J. Charley Griswell Senior Center, Jonesboro, Georgia** members the opportunity to explore all of the fitness activities that the center offers.

Before the start of the week, the center's goal was to market the program to their seniors. They sent an invite to all instructors, as well as instructors in the community to participate in the week-long celebration. They created marketing materials and a schedule of the classes offered. All of the fitness activities were scheduled at different times so that the members could attend many sessions. Due to limited space, they used "the first-come, first-serve" rule. Members were signed in by staff in the allotted space available for each class.

During this week, staff took the time to honor their fitness instructors for their dedication to the seniors by providing healthy snacks. The grand finale of the week-long celebration concluded with a dance party with over 60 people in attendance. They discussed how to stay motivated, get in shape, and live an overall healthier lifestyle.

Fitness Appreciation Week was an innovative idea designed to allow new members of the center the opportunity to experience all the fitness activities that they offer from Pilates to Dancercise, free of charge, gain motivation to attend classes, and make better lifestyle choices.

This September, highlight the many fitness programs you are providing, thank your instructors, highlight your goals, and celebrate your achievements.

The Time of Your Life: Tips for Aging Well

The Time of Your Life: Tips for Aging Well project was developed at **Mid-County Senior Center, Wilmington, Delaware**. It provided older adults with information and education about aging well and community resources to help them enjoy physical, mental and social well-being while growing older. The monthly topics were integrated with **National Health Observances** from the National Health Information Center. Materials were obtained from www.healthfinder.gov and Delaware organizations.

At each of the monthly presentations, healthy snacks were served. Individuals who stayed for the full session and submitted an anonymous evaluation at the conclusion were eligible for a monthly drawing for a \$10 gift card to Walgreens. Participants who attended 9 or more of the monthly presentations received a "Time of Your Life" certificate at the end of the program.

The program was designed to recognize that older adults need both user-friendly and useful information presented in a way that accounts for how they learn, building on cognitive strengths and compensating for some of the losses that can occur with aging. They used an integrated, targeted approach that included written, visual, online, and oral presentation of material that was sensitive to older adult learners. Be inspired by this program and kick off a monthly Aging Well Education Series at your center.

Senior Health Olympics

In honor of National Senior Center Month and Falls Prevention Awareness Day, **Overlea Fullerton Senior Center in Baltimore, Maryland** held an Senior Health Olympics on September 23, 2019, where vendors presented on a variety of health-related topics and seniors were given a score card that was stamped for every presentation and game/activity attended. Participants with the highest score at the end of the day were awarded with a Bronze, Silver, or Gold medal and a food gift card. All participants received free giveaways and a free salad bar lunch.

Over 12 vendors/agency representatives included education and interactive games on topics such as community outreach programs, proper nutrition, how to look for assisted living, home safety, breast cancer awareness, medical transportation options, emergency alert systems, evidence-based programs through the county, regenerative medicine, improving memory, nutritional supplements, and natural remedies.

Baltimore County Department on Aging sponsored the event on a bronze (\$25), silver (\$50), or gold level (\$100+) to cover the food, awards, and cost of all supplies. They are a small community center and over 80 people enjoyed this event. It was a unique alternative to a traditional health fair. It fostered fun, active involvement, and education. The event was not meant to be a fundraiser but did cover all the cost of supplies and make additional funds to support additional programming in the future. Giving the vendors a choice of the bronze, silver, and gold sponsorship worked well for both small and large companies.

Hanover Township Fall Food Truck

Hanover Township Senior Center in Bartlett, Illinois hosts an annual Fall Food Truck Festival in September to promote awareness about services and programs for adults age 55 and better, as well as raise funds for their home-delivered meal program. The event is held on the last Thursday evening in the parking lot of the senior center, with eight trucks serving gourmet grill cheese, slow roasted barbeque briskets, funnel cakes, ice cream, Asian dumplings, and tacos. Food trucks are asked to participate at no charge. Next to each food truck is a carnival game hosted by a staff member or volunteer to interact with the community and talk about programs/services. Eight baskets filled with gift cards and items donated from various restaurants and local businesses are raffled off at the end of the night. A rock band playing music from the 1960s to present day played to the crowd on a large stage. The band, stage, and rock-climbing wall were sponsored by local businesses. The use of food trucks and an outdoor lunch venue are attractive features of this program.

Deliciously Nutritious

Deliciously Nutritious is an interactive healthy nutrition education program that combines cooking instruction, a cooking demonstration, and hands-on recipe preparation by program participants at the **South County Senior Center, in Edgewater, Maryland**. The instructor is a professional chef, caterer, and nutrition educator. Classes meet approximately quarterly, with a special holiday class in December.

Participants learn how to prepare healthier versions of recipes. Titles include: "Farm Fresh" offered in late spring; "Pumpkin Palooza" in the fall, which featured pumpkin in every recipe; "Cookie and Candy Workshop" in December on how to prepare lower fat and sugar sweet treats; and "Love is in the Air" in February featuring heart-healthy foods. Participants received recipes, and some classes had take-home items. This is a perfect program for blended format, with those at the center and on Zoom.

5 Ways to Promote Healthy Aging at Your Senior Center

NCOA's Center for Healthy Aging provides technical assistance and support to community-based organizations on implementing evidence-based health promotion programs and educating older adults about important health topics. For up-to-date news on healthy aging, sign up for the Center for Healthy Aging [monthly e-newsletter](#) or [email us to join our listserv of professionals](#) implementing evidence-based programs.

1. Learn more about evidence- based programs (EBPs).

EBPs offer proven ways to promote health and prevent disease among older adults. They are based on research and provide documented health benefits, so you can be confident they work. Learn more about [evidence-based programs](#) in these areas:

- [Falls prevention](#)
- [Chronic disease self-management education](#)
- [Physical activity and senior fitness](#)
- [Behavioral health](#)

2. Consider ways to host an EBP while following physical distancing guidelines.

While the country is following physical distancing guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic, community-based organizations have canceled or limited in-person health promotion programs and are creating new opportunities to connect remotely. [Check this page](#) regularly for updates from individual evidence-based programs on whether it's feasible to continue implementation by phone, mail, or videoconference. Also, find best practices and resources for continuing to engage participants including [archived webinars](#), [instructions for using Zoom](#), and [frequently asked questions](#) — ways to support individual's access to the internet and technology.

3. Improve your EBPs with tips and resources from state and community-based organizations across the country.

Don't reinvent the wheel! The [Best Practices Toolkit: Resources from the Field](#) includes over 300 resources focused on leadership and management, strategic partnerships, delivery infrastructure and capacity, marketing and recruitment, quality assurance, and business planning and sustainability.

4. Explore the Community Malnutrition Resource Hub.

Malnutrition among older adults is a real problem with serious consequences. Check out the [Community Malnutrition Resource Hub](#), designed to provide practical resources, tools, and ideas to help community-based organizations develop and implement a plan to reduce malnutrition among older adults.

5. Follow and share NCOA's Healthy Living blog posts.

Visit our website to see [recent blog posts](#) from NCOA staff and partners on hot topics related to aging and healthy living. Find resources and tips for senior center professionals and older adults.

Falls Prevention Awareness Week

September 21-25, 2020



Falls Free®

National Council on Aging

The 13th annual Falls Prevention Awareness Day is now Falls Prevention Awareness Week, a weeklong event!

Our goal remains the same: Raise awareness about how to prevent falls among older adults. During the week, national, state, and local partners will educate the community, share strategies, and advocate for evidence-based programs. National, state, and local partners collaborate to educate others about the [impact of falls](#), share falls prevention strategies, and advocate for the expansion of evidence-based community [falls prevention programs](#).

Top 4 activities for senior centers

- 1. Explore our new Falls Free CheckUp tool:** Kick off Falls Prevention Awareness Week by introducing our new Falls Free CheckUp tool to older adults in your community. This is a no-cost online assessment consisting of 12 questions older adults can answer to understand their risk of falls. At the end of the assessment, the tool will display a score, and older adults can email the results to themselves to share with their health care provider. Check the NCOA website in September for the new Falls Free Checkup Tool.
- 2. Host a virtual educational presentation or workshop:** Educate older adults about fall risk factors and prevention strategies. The American Occupational Therapy Association and the Academy of Geriatric Physical Therapy developed a [falls prevention presentation toolkit](#) that includes a PowerPoint with sample narration notes, a brief presentation guide, and a list of resources and references.
- 3. Plan a remote falls prevention health fair:** Share [educational handouts](#), connect older adults with community resources and services, and/or demonstrate falls prevention workshops or classes.
- 4. Provide falls risk screenings:** Collaborate with community health specialists to host virtual falls risk screenings that include vision exams, balance and gait testing, home safety recommendations, and/or medication reviews. Ask your local optometrist, pharmacist, and physical/occupational therapists to volunteer their time. Or work with a local university to coordinate student volunteers, such as professional physical therapy, optometry, or pharmacy students. Customize falls prevention [brochures](#) from the CDC that help older adults and caregivers assess their falls risk and take steps to prevent falls. Brochures include [What You Can Do to Prevent Falls](#) and [Check for Safety: A Home Falls Prevention Checklist for Older Adults](#).

Additional resources

Download the following materials and more on our [Falls Prevention Awareness Week](#) website:

- **Educational handouts:** Share resources to educate older adults, caregivers, and friends about steps they can take to prevent falls.
- **Educational videos:** Share this video to educate older adults about steps they can take to prevent falls and the benefits of evidence-based falls prevention programs.

Hunger Action Month

In America, 1 in 6 older adults struggles with hunger. Senior centers can make a difference!

NCOA works with senior centers and other community organizations nationwide to enroll eligible older adults in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly Food Stamps).

SNAP helps seniors stretch their food budget. Yet, SNAP is highly underutilized by older adults, who participate at a much lower rate than the general population.

September is Hunger Action Month—here are a few ways your senior center can get involved.



Host a “Pass the Plate” selfie booth

Provide participants with a paper plate and ask them to write down what they can't do on an empty stomach. Next, have the participant take a selfie and post the photo to your senior center's Facebook page. You can also invite members of your senior center to post a plate to their own social media channels with the hashtag #HungerActionMonth. Don't forget to tag @FeedingAmerica. Visit their [Hunger Action Month](#) page to learn more.

Raise awareness in your community.

- **Adopt your local food pantry.** Ask them what they need and how your senior center participants can help. Provide volunteers, hold food drives, and collect needed items.
- **Invite older adults in your community to get screened** to see if they are eligible for SNAP. Use our free BenefitsCheckUp® tool ([BenefitsCheckUp.org/getSNAP](#)) to help seniors find out if they qualify and download their state's application.
- **Use our SNAP outreach materials** to reach older adults in your community and encourage them to apply for SNAP.
 - > Download our free customizable flyers, posters, placemats, and brochure and distribute these materials in places where older adults gather.
 - > Spread the word on social media and in your newsletter with our sample messages and images, and place our online badge on your website.
 - > Visit the nutrition advocacy toolkit for resources and calls to action for defending SNAP and other programs to combat senior hunger and foster nutrition.

Learn how you can advocate for food assistance.

Visit our [Nutrition & Hunger Advocacy Toolkit](#) to find out how you can educate Congress about the need for services in your community and help protect benefits like SNAP.

For more information on how to get involved, contact Erin.Kee@ncoa.org.

SPIRIT

Be who you are and say how you feel, because those who mind don't matter, and those who matter don't mind.

— Dr. Seuss

Highlight programs that inspire older adults to grow stronger and more confident, especially in controlling their life and in claiming their rights.

Educate Elected Officials

Educate your elected officials about how public dollars support services and benefits for older adults, caregivers, family members, and the community at large. Senior center staff and participants are well-positioned to explain how limited public investment, along with growing demand, is having a domino effect on programs and services that help older adults remain healthy and independent in their own homes and communities. That need is felt even more deeply during the COVID-19 pandemic. Here are some ideas:

Tell Your Stories about 2020 Realities: It's more important than ever that Congress understand how older adults and caregivers are being affected by funding and policy decisions. Much more work needs to be done in response to the pandemic, and our [COVID-19 Advocacy Toolkit](#) shares opportunities for you to tell your story and advocate for specific programs and benefits. September will also be a prime time for the FY21 appropriations debate so use our [Federal Budget Advocacy Toolkit](#) to stay informed and learn how and when your voice is needed.

Tips and Facts: Use our other [Advocacy Toolkit](#) resources and updated [issue briefs](#) to educate your elected officials.

Recesses: Members of Congress are back home for greater lengths of time this year, yet recesses are still good times to connect with them. Given this is another election year, there is more interest in reaching older constituents and voters, but you may have to look for virtual options to connect, such as new spins on [town halls](#). This year's recess dates when you can expect Congressional candidates to do more outreach are found on this [recess resource page](#).

National Senior Center Month Proclamation: Ask your mayor or other official to issue a proclamation in honor of National Senior Center Month and build an event around it. A sample proclamation is found in the Publicity Guide.

Letter Writing Day: If your center needs more federal investments, or there are proposed policy decisions that could affect older adults' services or benefits, particularly in response to the pandemic, organize older adults to write stories about what those federal decisions could mean to them and deliver the stories to an elected official or staffer. This can help you enlist a member of Congress for support and arm them with real stories for national budget debates. Use our [Advocacy Toolkit](#), especially the [story collection form](#) and our [10 Tips to Harness the Power of Stories](#) for ways to craft message and work with NCOA to get them delivered.

Media Outreach: Invite a local radio station to hold a remote broadcast to highlight your center's work even as older adults remain at home. Enlist participants, community partners, and other key people for interviews about your center's resources and aging issues. Or create your own video to share on social media. See the Publicity Guide for more ideas and a sample media plan.

Start a Consciousness Raising Group

To address the issue of ageism, hold a discussion group using Ashton Applewhite's book [This Chair Rocks: A Manifesto Against Ageism](#) and use her free booklet [How to Start a Consciousness Raising Group](#).

Reframe Aging

America is having conversations about varying sources of inequality—we're talking about how gender, race, economic status, or citizenship status can shape life trajectories and what the public response should be. We have become accustomed to hearing about “disruptions” or changes that create new opportunities, new challenges, and essentially, a new normal, but the topic of aging isn't coming up in any of these conversations.

Americans hear little about aging as a matter that requires a public response, and even less about ageism—discrimination based on age.

Knowing this, eight leading national organizations on aging, including NCOA, ASA, and AARP, came together in 2014 to change the way Americans think about aging through the Reframing Aging Initiative.

As research partner for #ReframingAging, the FrameWorks Institute conducted an investigation combining theory and methods from different social science disciplines to realize recommendations for reframing the national dialogue about aging.

Their research shows aging is misunderstood in America and, moreover, those misperceptions and stereotypes lead to discrimination against older people in many areas of life, from health care to the workplace.

[Gaining Momentum](#), a toolkit prepared by the FrameWorks Institute, aims to correct popular myths and misconceptions about older adults while highlighting the importance of word choice and context when communicating about aging.

Longstanding narratives perpetuated by the news and popular media lead many people to subconsciously assume that stereotypes about older people are true, with even well-intentioned profiles of older Americans pushing the idea that the aging process is something to be resisted or battled instead of embraced.

What's in the toolkit?

- A full research and recommendation report, ***Finding the Frame: An Empirical Approach to Reframing Aging and Ageism***
- A frame brief titled ***Framing Strategies to Advance Aging and Address Ageism as Policy Issues***
- A ***Quick-start Guide*** with phrases to use and to avoid
- **Staying on Frame in Real Time:** A list of common questions with guidance to help keep answers “on frame”
- **ReFrame cards** to help advocates find the right metaphor and structure for reframed communications about aging.

Exemplify Positive Aging

Research suggests that promoting positive age stereotypes could result in less illness and allow people to live independently longer. During Senior Center Month, consider holding a staff training to understand ageism and develop staff strategies and community outreach. Create a positive, age-friendly environment at your senior center by taking the important steps to understand our own views, train new staff, and educate participants and the community.

3 Ways to Change the Aging Conversation

After attending a workshop at the Frameworks Institute centered on [reframing the conversation around aging](#), Tracy Colagrossi, NISC Executive committee and Hanover Township Executive Director, IL, shared three ways she worked with her center to lay the groundwork for changing the aging conversation.

1. Train your staff

First, I began working with staff around the Reframing Aging research, and I emailed them the [Frameworks Academy video series](#) to view. Afterward, we discussed how we can best communicate with each other, as well as with our patrons. If a patron would comment, “I am too old for that,” staff would ask why? Staff would reframe their thought, acknowledging how the older adults have built experiences and gained momentum for the next moment, opportunity, or challenge. It has been a culture change.

2. Educate your participants

Secondly, I conducted a Lunch and Learn entitled Reframed Aging for 50 participants. My presentation included misconceptions about age in the media, as well as from themselves. This led to an engaging conversation with patrons embracing their ages and trying new things. Staff responded by adding an Adventure Series, which includes ziplining, archery, indoor skydiving, etc., in addition to our other program offerings. Our participants continue to build upon their experiences and push outside of their comfort zones.

3. Evaluate the public perception of your center

The third way to change the conversation is to evaluate how your senior center is perceived by the public. The best way to steer that conversation is through social media. Staff reviewed past postings on Facebook and Instagram, as well as on our websites. The challenge for centers is to attract baby boomers, and to do this we need to change our messaging. Baby boomers do not see themselves as “seniors.” Frameworks research states the recommendation to use “older person/people” rather than senior citizen, senior, or elder. We use the term senior citizens to define our funding and our service, and we use people, older adult, or people aged 55+ for the rest of our messaging.

Changing the conversation on aging within your senior centers is not an easy process, but it is completely worthwhile. When staff and patrons work together on a shared vision of building momentum, it creates a culture of “I can” rather than “I can’t.” Senior centers can be places where dreams become realized, people are valued, and experiences are built upon.

Senior Center Directors Excellence Award

In recognition of NISC's celebration of achieving 50 years of longevity and innovation, we are honoring one senior center director from each of the 50 states to celebrate their longevity and innovation.

Purpose: To recognize outstanding professional leadership in the senior center field and to enhance the senior center profession.

Eligibility: To apply, senior center (s) must be current NISC members. Individuals can self-nominate or be recommended by others.

Nominated individuals must currently be the director, executive director, manager, CEO, or other top management position in a senior center(s) and have been in the aging field for at least 20 years, 10 of those in the top management position. They must also have demonstrated leadership, innovation, and have contributed to the enhancement of their senior center(s).

Process: A nationwide call for nominees via the Senior Center Voice and the NISC website will be made. One winner will be selected per state (and territories). All awardees will be highlighted in a special report disseminated during September for Senior Center Month.

Criteria:

1. Currently leading a senior center(s) in their state (or territory).
2. Accrued contributions of 20 years in the field of aging (10 of those in the senior center(s) top management position).
2. Demonstrates outstanding leadership, innovation, accomplishments, growth.
3. One professional per state (and per territories) will be selected.

Link to Apply: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NISCDirectorsAward>



National Employ Older Workers Week

National Employ Older Workers Week is held annually the last full week of September, and it recognizes the vital role of older workers in the workforce. This year's recognition is held from Sept. 23-27 and led by the U.S. Department of Labor. Here are some ideas for your center:

- Recognize a **Senior Community Service Employment Program** worker and other older workers at your center.
- Present an award to an older worker in your community for exceptional work ethic and commitment to quality.
- Present an award to an exceptional business in your community that employs older workers.

Create a Virtual Community Fundraising Event

Senior centers often have annual events that highlight the spirit of older adults, their contribution to the community, and the importance of the senior center in the community, while raising funds. These events are needed. Here are a few ways to continue your community fundraising events virtually.

- **How to Host a Successful Virtual Fundraiser for your Nonprofit**
<https://www.wildapricot.com/blogs/newsblog/2020/04/14/virtual-fundraiser>
- **Virtual Bingo Fundraiser using My Free Bingo Cards (for 30 players)**
https://cdn3.rallybound.com/content/images/img/15227/AWSF20_-_Virtual_Bingo.pdf
- **20 Virtual Fundraising Ideas During Covid19 (updated Spring 2020)**
<https://www.soapboxengage.com/blog/1863-virtual-fundraising-ideas>
- **Seven Easy Steps to move any fundraising event to virtual**
<https://bloomerang.co/blog/seven-easy-steps-to-move-any-event-to-virtual/>
- **Maximize your virtual event fundraising revenue**
<https://www.classy.org/blog/virtual-event-maximize-your-fundraising-event-revenue/>
- **Seven Creative Virtual Fundraising Ideas You Can Use to Replace your Cancelled Event**
<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charity-life/fundraising-2/7-creative-virtual-fundraising-ideas-you-can-use-to-replace-your-cancelled-event/>

COMMUNITY

There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.

— Margaret J. Wheatley

Provide a welcoming space and opportunities to create and develop friendships that give added value to participants' lives. Offer community engagement and intergenerational connections. Highlight opportunities to give within the senior center and within the community.

See Them Shine Art Project

See Them Shine is an [Art of Edina project](#) created in partnership with the **Edina Senior Center and Senior Community Services, Edina, MN**. The project highlights the free spirit of Edina's older adult community.

In August, Art Director Jill Emmer spent two full days photographing several wonderful outgoing Edina seniors. The goal was to show senior citizens in the way they'd like to be seen: fun, artistic, full of life, laughter, and humor! We also wanted to draw attention to the two nonprofit partners: the Edina Senior Center and Senior Community Services.

They had 12 different photoshoots. Each shoot had one to four models in different locations around the Twin Cities. This project is impactful by highlighting senior citizens within our community and by encouraging others to see the senior population from a whole new perspective in a variety of settings with the creation of a 2020 calendar.



Create an LGBT Welcoming Senior Center

“First impressions go a long way. As a group of people who have been historically marginalized, LGBT older people have a tendency to ‘scan the room’ when they first enter a new facility looking for visible signs that it is welcoming,” according to *Inclusive Services for LGBT Older Adults: A Practical Guide to Creating Welcoming Agencies*. Read it and discover practical advice on how to create a welcoming senior center.

Reach out to your lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community. This September, launch a movie viewing night and discussion centered on LGBT themes. The **SAGE** (Services and Advocacy for LGBT Seniors) Technical Resource Center has created a guide in consultation with organizations around the U.S. that serve LGBT older adults: *LGBT Programming for Older Adults: A Practical Step-by-Step Guide*. This program is simple to organize and can be an important step toward a number of goals, including welcoming LGBT older adults to your organization or agency; creating a safe space for the LGBT older adults you already serve to identify themselves and/or more fully integrate into your agency; and fostering an agency-wide culture of openness and acceptance.

LGBTQ Senior Resource Fair

On September 26, 2019, the City of Phoenix Human Services Department Community and Senior Services Division held an LGBTQ Senior Resource Fair at the Paradise Valley Senior Center. The Resource Fair was produced to encourage LGBTQ elders to become aware of resources available to them in city of Phoenix, Arizona, senior centers.

The event featured exhibitors who addressed the unique needs of the LGBTQ community, educational sessions, free HIV testing, adult crafts, a free lunch, and door prizes. In addition, the Arizona LGBTQ “Hip”storian was the keynote speaker. He spoke about the history of the LGBTQ community in Phoenix and Arizona. Other fun events included a Pickleball clinic and a performance by the Voices of the Desert, an LGBTQ community choir. Educational sessions included “Rx Matters” to discuss medication misuse, HIV Prevention, Life Care Planning, and Bias Crimes.

The resource fair was attended by over 200 people, including friends, family, staff of other metropolitan area cities, and allies of the LGBTQ community.

Schedule an LGBT Aging Staff Training

At SAGE’s National Resource Center on LGBT Aging, your staff will learn about the culture, needs, and concerns of LGBT older adults and why they are less likely to access senior centers and other activities. SAGE will identify best practices and tools for helping LGBT older adults feel more included at senior centers. [Learn more about SAGE’s in-person and online trainings.](#)

Grandparents Day: Sept. 13, 2020

The official commemorative Grandparents Day is the Sunday after Labor Day. Use these resources from Generations United to Do Something Grand this year.

- Visit the [Grandparents Day website](#) for tips and tools.

Generation to Generation

Gen2Gen has intergenerational programming resources to share. In their [Learning Hub](#) you'll find ideas, tips, and best practices to unleash the skills and talents of older adults to help kids thrive.

Investigate the [Do It Yourself Resources](#) and download:

- **5 Ways for Senior Centers to boost Intergenerational Connections**
- **Too Small to Fail** — Community Volunteer Toolkit
- **Unique ways to boost literacy** by starting a Little Free Library book exchange or setting up a program through Project Night Night for homeless children

The Grand Plan

The Grand Plan is a user guide for senior centers in leading a short film discussion focused on the important role grandparents play in providing childcare for infants and toddlers. It was developed in partnership with [Zero to Three](#) and NISC.

Herbs: Thyme for Health & Flavor

The Seven Oaks Senior Center, Baltimore, MD was fortunate to have a member's granddaughter complete her Girl Scout Gold Award Project at the Center. The Girl Scout built a container garden and planted herbs on the outdoor patio and shared her knowledge and enthusiasm for gardening and nutrition using herbs by leading programs at the center. She invited members to join her when it was time for planting.

The Girl Scout engaged center members in her wonderful and well thought out programs, which included how to grow and care for herbs, how to cook with them and their health benefits, how to make pesto and oils and potpourri, how to dry and store herbs, and how to start an indoor herb garden. She also included a nutritionist and a naturalist who shared their knowledge of cooking with and caring for herbs. The Girl Scout used her cookie sales as well as donations from local stores to buy the supplies needed to construct the container and the supplies needed for planting.

Tools & Resources to Help You Celebrate

10 Tips to Harness the Power of Stories

Putting a face on your center's work by highlighting participants' experiences helps people connect to the personal nature of your senior center. You can give voice to your participants and create a powerful way to gain the attention of potential participants, funders, legislators, and partners.

What makes a good story and how do you use them? Here are 10 tips to get started:

- 1. Decide what you want to accomplish.** What is your goal and who is your audience? Do you want to attract more participants? Highlight the value of your center? Get noticed by local politicians? Obtain or protect funding? Answering this question first will help shape the stories you seek.
- 2. Develop a set of questions in advance.** Let your interview subjects read the questions in advance, so they can collect their thoughts. This year try asking questions that reflect the National Senior Center Month theme of **Senior Centers: Delivering Vital Connections**.
Sample questions might include:
 - Where did you first hear about (Name) Senior Center?
 - Why and how often do you attend (Name) Senior Center?
 - What are your favorite activities?
 - How has the center helped you during the pandemic?
 - If funding for (Name) Senior Center went away, what would you do?
 - What would you tell a friend who is considering joining (Name) Senior Center?
 - How does (Name) Senior Center help you age well?
- 3. Ask a diverse set of people.** Old, young, male, female, black, white, Asian, Hispanic. Show the breadth of the people you serve.
- 4. Take photos or ask for selfies.** People see themselves in photos, and they add greatly to the overall narrative. The media loves using photos, as well. Make sure the photo is print/web quality — 300 dpi or better.
- 5. See if the participant is willing to speak to the media once their story goes live.** Media love stories in first-person format and often want to follow up with their own interview. Have each interviewee sign a release form, so your center is covered legally. NCOA has a [sample photo release](#) form you can edit and use.
- 6. Keep your stories short and to the point.** Answer the main questions of: who, what, where, when, and why — then edit as much as you can. The more succinct the point, the more impact the story has.
- 7. Be transparent.** Tell readers that the older adult attends your center and how you obtained the information. This adds credence and authenticity to your story.
- 8. Plan how to use the stories.** Sometimes it's great to use the whole story at once, or one per month. Sometimes you can chop a story in half and leave people hungry for more!

9. **Capture video of your interviewee.** Thanks to smart phones, video has become an easy and incredibly effective way to tell a story. Let older adults tell their story in their own voice if possible! See the Publicity Guide for tips on making videos with a smart phone.
10. **Make the pitch.** Send your story and photo to your local newspapers, online news sites, city officials, and the local offices of your state and federal legislators. A well-packaged story that hits on a hot topic is likely to get noticed.

Remember—don't be shy! The work you do in the community is incredibly valuable. Telling your story shows the public why.

Interviewing Tips

Smile, look the person in the eye, and gently shake their hand.

1. **Identify a location** that would be comfortable to sit for the 10-15 minute interview. It is usually better to do it on the interviewee's home turf where they feel most comfortable.
2. **Keep your questions simple and short**—the interview is about them not you.
3. **Prepare questions in advance.** This helps organize your thoughts and serves as a safety net in case your mind goes blank for a time—it happens to the most experienced interviewers. But avoid “reading” the questions. Instead, use your natural listening skills and try to have a conversation.
4. **Listen to the answers.** Adjust your prepared questions from what you have just heard. Don't always fill in with conversation if there are pauses by the interviewee.
5. **Ask one question at a time** rather than multiple-part questions because the interviewee will likely only answer one question or go on too long.
6. **Never ask “yes” or “no” questions** because you will only get one-word answers. Instead use open-ended questions such as: “How did you go about determining whether you would have enough retirement income to live on?”
7. **A good follow-up question is:** “That's interesting, can you tell me more?”
8. **Ask for specifics.** If an interviewee says they didn't realize how much money could be saved by asking for the generic vs. brand-name prescription drug, follow up and get a concrete example.
9. **End the interview by asking:** “Is there anything you wanted to add?” or “What am I forgetting to ask you?”

Prepared by Professor Jill Olmsted, Journalism Division Director, School of Communication, American University, Washington, DC.

2020 NISC Programs of Excellence Awards

Every day, senior centers across the country offer an exciting array of programs for older adults. The annual NISC Programs of Excellence Awards honor and promote these outstanding efforts. All senior centers are invited to submit a senior center program in one of 7 categories. Recognition will be given for the top entries in each category. There is an additional highlighted area called “the Arts” that each center can apply for in addition to the general categories. NISC will recognize the winners on ncoa.org, and entries will be posted in the NISC Members Resource section.

How to Apply

Programs must have been conducted in a senior center between July 1, 2019 and Sept. 30, 2020. Judges will look for programs that are innovative, creative, and easily replicated. Award categories are:

General Categories:

- **Community Development, Leadership, and Intergenerational** – Programs that increase community involvement in senior centers, enhance diversity appreciation and understanding, and develop strong leaders and volunteers
- **Cultural Programs** – Programs that showcase performing and visual arts, music, and literature
- **Fundraising** – Programs designed to generate revenue or in-kind sponsorship for the senior center
- **Health and Wellness** – Programs designed to improve the health of seniors through screenings and education
- **Nutrition** – Programs geared to improving nutritional health or combating malnutrition
- **Special Events** – Programs designed as one-time events or projects; may be intergenerational, thematic, seasonal, or patriotic
- **Technology** – Programs that teach the use of technology or use technology in program delivery

Highlighted Program Area: Virtual Programming Campaign

This year, the NISC Programs of Excellence highlighted category will be Virtual Programming Campaign. To be considered for an award the submission must engage older adults in a series of at least 3 virtual programs. The programs must include at least one program that does not use technology, like activities delivered with a grab and go meal and programs that include technology, like an online tai chi class.

There are two applications below. You may apply for an award in the General Category AND the Virtual Programming Campaign. The rules are included in each form. Due to the potential volume of submissions, each senior center may submit only ONE entry in the General Category *and* ONE entry in the Virtual Programming Campaign Award.

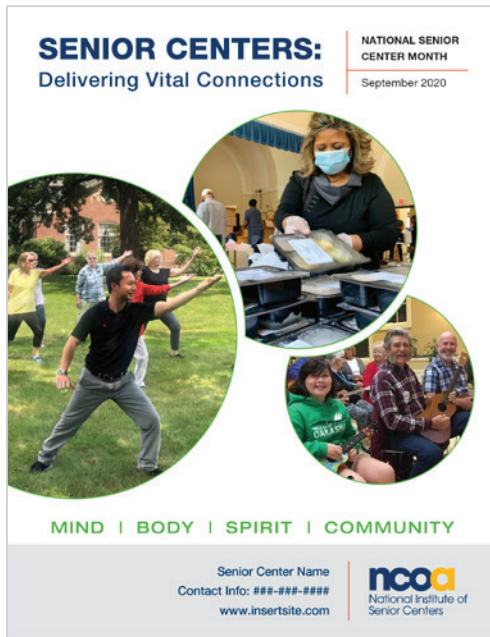
- [Apply for General Category](#)
- [Apply for Virtual Programming Campaign Award](#)

DEADLINE: Completed nomination forms must be received no later than Friday, Nov. 20, 2020.

Please direct questions and materials to NISC Senior Membership Coordinator at Scott.Harlow@ncoa.org, with “NISC Excellence Awards” in the subject line. Many thanks to Malia Fox and her team for organizing the NISC Programs of Excellence Awards!

Customizable Senior Center Month Poster

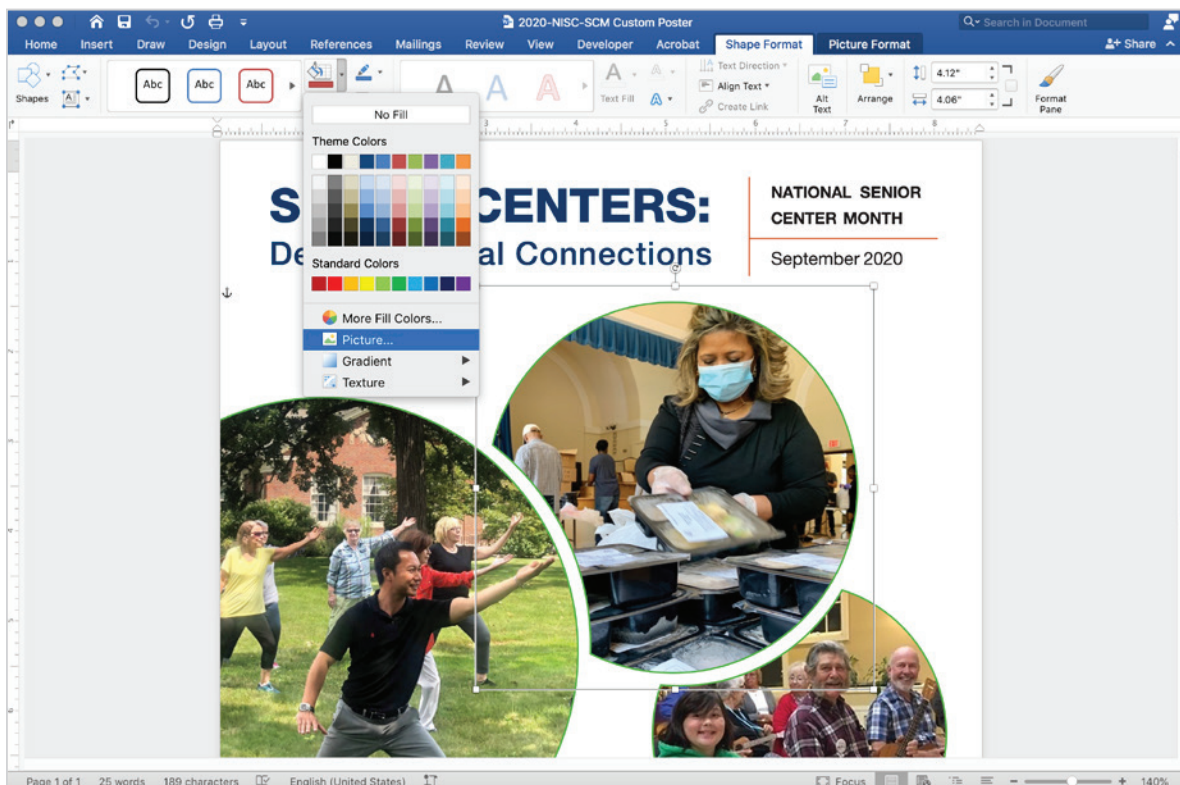
Tailor the National Senior Center Month poster to your center! This is a NISC member-only benefit. Add your own photos and contact information. Here's how:



Directions:

1. We will email members the customizable poster.
2. Save the poster to your computer.
3. Open the poster using Microsoft Word.
4. Select any of the three circles in the poster.
5. Under Drawing Tools — Format, select Shape Fill — Picture — From a File.
6. Select a photo from your computer to use. This will work best if the photo is high resolution and square shaped.
7. Click Insert.
8. If the photo does not fit the circle, select the circle and click Picture Tools — Format — Crop — Fill.

If you customize your poster, please save it as a PDF and share it with us at membership@ncoa.org.



September Holidays and Observances

Visit the following websites for more information around which to build programs and activities.

HEALTH & FITNESS

National Food Safety Month

www.foodsafety.gov/

National Cholesterol Awareness Month

www.cdc.gov/cholesterol/cholesterol_education_month.htm

Hunger Action Month

www.HungerActionMonth.org

Falls Prevention Awareness Week: Sept. 21-25

www.ncoa.org/FPAD

National Women's Health & Fitness Day: Sept. 30

www.fitnessday.com/women/index.htm

ENRICHMENT

International Women's Friendship Month

www.kappadelta.org/international-womens-friendship-month/

International Literacy Day: Sept. 8

www.internationalliteracyday.org/

American Red Cross Home Fire Campaign: Sound the Alarm. Save a Life: Sept. & May

www.redcross.org/sound-the-alarm.html

National Employ Older Workers Week: Sept. 21-25

www.doleta.gov/Seniors/html_docs/NatEmplOldWkr.cfm

National Voter Registration Day: Sept. 22

www.nationalvoterregistrationday.org/about

FUN ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGES

Grandparents Day: Sept. 13

www.grandparentsday.org/

Checkers Day and Dogs in Politics Day: Sept. 23

www.holidayinsights.com/moreholidays/September/checkersday.htm

RECOGNIZED HOLIDAYS

Labor Day: Sept. 7

www.timeanddate.com/holidays/us/labor-day

VJ Day: Sept. 2

www.holidayinsights.com/moreholidays/September/vjday.htm

Patriot Day: Sept. 11

www.timeanddate.com/holidays/us/patriot-day

POW/MIA Recognition Day: Sept. 18
www.timeanddate.com/holidays/us/pow-mia-recognition-day

Citizenship Day: Sept. 17
www.timeanddate.com/holidays/us/constitution-citizenship-day

Start of Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year): Sept. 18-Sept. 20
www.jewfaq.org/holiday2.htm

International Day of Peace – Make a Difference Day: Sept. 21
www.internationaldayofpeace.org/

Native American Day: Sept. 25
www.holidayinsights.com/other/native.htm

National Good Neighbor Day: Sept. 28
www.holidayinsights.com/other/goodneighbor.htm

Year-Long Observances

FEBRUARY

American Heart Month
Feb. 4: **World Cancer Day**

MARCH

National Nutrition Month
National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month
4th Tuesday of March (March 24, 2020): **American Diabetes Alert Day**

APRIL

Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month
Financial Literacy Month
April 6-12, 2020 – **National Public Health Week**
World Health Day
World Immunization Week

MAY

Older Americans Month
Arthritis Awareness Month
National Osteoporosis Month
National Stroke Awareness Month
Mental Health Month

JUNE

Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month

National Safety Month

June 22: Olmstead anniversary (1999)

June 15: [World Elder Abuse Awareness Day \(WEAAD\)](#)

JULY

July 14: Older Americans Act anniversary (1965)

July 30: Medicare and Medicaid anniversary (1965)

AUGUST

National Immunization Awareness Month

Aug. 14: Social Security anniversary (1935)

SEPTEMBER

National Senior Center Month

Hunger Action Month

National Traumatic Brain Injury Awareness Month

World Alzheimer's Month

Sept. 13: Grandparents Day

Sept. 21-25: National Falls Prevention Awareness Week

Sept. 21-25: National Employ Older Workers Week (last full week of Sept.)

Sept. 29: [World Heart Day](#)

OCTOBER

National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

National Physical Therapy Month

National Down Syndrome Awareness Month

Oct. 5-9: Mental Illness Awareness Week

Oct. 12-20: Bone and Joint Health Action Week

Oct. 5-9: Malnutrition Awareness Week

NOVEMBER

National Family Caregivers Month

National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month

American Diabetes Month

DECEMBER

Dec. 3: [International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#)

National Influenza Vaccination Week

Additional Resources

NCOA Center for Healthy Aging

While the aging network has been moving toward evidence-based health programs for the past several years, Older Americans Act Title IIID funding now must be used only for programs and activities that have been demonstrated to be evidence-based. Learn more about evidence-based programs and get tools to offer them at your center:

- **About Evidence-Based Programs:** Get program overviews, descriptions of program goals, training requirements, references, and locations where programs are active.
- **Offering Evidence-Based Programs:** Download a variety of outreach and recruitment materials to support your evidence-based programs.
- **Delivering Aging Mastery® Online:** Understand how you can deliver AMP virtually.

NCOA Public Policy & Advocacy

Get the latest [news](#) and [action alerts](#) and review our [Advocacy Toolkit](#) for advocacy basics and issue-specific resources.

NCOA's BenefitsCheckUp®

If you have members with limited income, use this free online tool to screen them for more than 2,000 benefits programs to help them pay for prescription drugs, health care, rent, utilities, and other daily needs.

Elder Index™

What does it take for a senior in your community to be economically secure? The Elder Index can give you the answer. NCOA's new guide will show you how to use the Index to educate others about the true cost of aging in your area.

NCOA's My Medicare Matters®

Help your members get ready for Medicare open enrollment by pointing them to this free website that provides step-by-step help to make Medicare work for them.

FROM OUR NATIONAL PARTNERS:

COVID19 Resources

- **COVID-19 Medicare Scams Training:** Watch this new training video from the Senior Medicare Patrol
- **Successful Practices for Telework & Outreach:** Tips from the MIPPA, Senior Medicare Patrol and SHIP Resource Centers
- **Medicare Coverage During Coronavirus Q&A**
- **Q&A on How CARES Act Payments Affect Eligibility for Benefits**
- **COVID-19 Fraud Alerts and Resources,** from the Senior Medicare Patrol Resource Center
- **Counselor fact sheet: Medicare coverage and coronavirus:** A fact sheet developed by the SHIP TA Center
- **Tools for public health and community action:** A toolkit for public health professionals drawn from authoritative resources; compiled by the Center for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas
- **Operating Volunteer Driver Programs in a Pandemic:** Tips from the National Aging & Disability Transportation Center
- **Toolkit: Senior nutrition network COVID-19 response townhall** from the National Resource Center on Nutrition & Aging
- **Practical tips for meals and other package delivery** from NCOA, the National Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging (hosted by Meals on Wheels of America), and the American Occupational Therapy Association
- **Frequently asked questions: COVID-19 and health promotion programs** — questions from community-based organizations on how they can continue offering health promotion programs during the pandemic.
- **Program updates from ACL CDMSE and Falls Prevention grantees during COVID-19** — grantees share their methods and solutions to offering health promotion programs online for their participants.
- **Frequently asked questions: data collection & management for health promotion programs during COVID-19** — learn how community-based organizations are collecting participant data during this time period.
- NCOA's Center for Healthy Aging has hosted weekly grand rounds webinar, sharing best practices for participant registration, virtual delivery platforms, data collection, and more. View the recordings [here](#).

National Resource Center on LGBT Aging

Explore this valuable website that pinpoints the specific concerns, needs, and resources available to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) older adults.

Taking Your Medicines Safely

Get this free train-the-trainer program to educate older adults about medication safety and the Poison Helpline.

Gaining Momentum: A Communications Toolkit

Use this collection of research and resources to change the way you talk about aging in America.

Internet Access and Tech Education

- **Tools and Tips for Reaching a Remote Audience**; access the [webinar slides](#) and [related tip sheet](#) of tools for reaching a remote audience
- Rush University Medical Center developed step-by-step instructions to support participants accessing Zoom, a virtual platform. The guide can be downloaded [here](#) for community-based organizations to utilize.
- **7 Sources of Low-Cost Internet for Seniors** (specific to COVID-19)
- **Senior Planet** is hosting free online classes for older adults on topics including, introduction to social media, how to use zoom, and virtual social gatherings.
- **How to Become Tech Savvy Seniors in 10 Days**
- **AARP TEK workshops are free of charge to the public**
- **Instructions for Accessing Your Virtual Workshop through Zoom**
- **FREE App “Easy Tablet Help for Seniors**: Available at no cost, in the Apple, Google Play, and Amazon App Stores. Note: There are no ads or in-app purchases. The interactive tutorial teaches:
 - > **The basics**: Tapping a touchscreen, enlarging and shrinking a page, scrolling, location of buttons, how to navigate the the keyboard
 - > **Internet safety, searching, and communicating**: Texting, video-calling (Zoom, FaceTime, Skype), getting a Gmail account or using an existing email account
 - > **More**: How to use YouTube, the camera, attaching photo to an email, apps, etc.
 - > **Demo www.generationsonline.org/gol4ipad**
- Toolkit to [Implement Lyft Ridesharing at Your Senior Center](#)



Get shareable graphics and videos in an Ad Council toolkit created for the CDC at: <http://coronavirus.adcouncilkit.org/>

2020 NISC Contacts

NCOA's National Institute of Senior Centers (NISC) is pleased to provide you with this Program Guide and strongly encourages your support to advance the visibility and viability of senior centers across the country. For additional information about NISC, please contact Scott Harlow, NISC Membership Coordinator, at Scott.Harlow@ncoa.org, or to the NISC Chair.

Thank you,

Tracy Colagrossi, NISC Chair

National Senior Center Month Poster Credits: Tai Chi, Third Place 2019 Falls Prevention Photo Contest: Dickinson Hall-Lake Forest Lake Bluff Senior Center, Lake Forest; Meal Prep, Center in the Park, Philadelphia, PA; Woodbury Ukulele Band, Woodbury Senior Center, Woodbury,CT.

Many of the programs are from 2019/2018 Programs of Excellence Awards. [See the Award Winners to learn more programming ideas.](#)



Would you like to be on our next National Senior Center Month poster?

Share your great senior center photos with NISC, and you may find your center highlighted next year. Email your photos to Scott.Harlow@ncoa.org.

ncoa
National Institute of
Senior Centers



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