



Active Aging Guide

2026





Celebrate

Active Aging

Active Aging in Manitoba (AAIM) once again joins the International Council on Active Aging (ICAA) in promoting Active Aging Week, held **October 5th - 11th, 2026**. Active Aging week is a weeklong campaign that celebrates the positivity of aging and living actively and promotes the benefits of an overall healthy lifestyle!

This week is meant to celebrate how positive the process of aging can be. Active Aging Week encourages adults over the age of 50 to take advantage of all that life has to offer. Celebrating older adults is an important way to promote positive images of aging!

Many people have negative ideas and attitudes about aging. Positive images of aging can help get rid of myths and stereotypes. For example, some people believe that getting older means being inactive, unhealthy, and dependent – but this is rarely the case. In fact, older adults are living longer, healthier, more independent lives than ever before!

We are encouraging every community in Manitoba to take part and celebrate healthy, active aging, sharing their experience of being an active living community in Manitoba.

We want people to reflect and reconnect with activities. Take a walk with friends, try yoga or tai chi, take up a new hobby, or try a new sport. Experience your favourite park this fall - try Nordic Pole Walking, bird watching, or photography, and enjoy the fall colours Manitoba offers. The possibilities are endless, and AAIM believes you are never too old to try something new!

The guidelines are simple; events can be planned or a community can opt to highlight an existing program with older adult participants as the focus. Community organizers can take the lead by exploring creative ways to invite, introduce and involve older adults in events and activities. Take this opportunity to invite older adults to join in on the fun and experience what your group offers!

The Benefits of Active Aging Week

An active social life allows older adults to experience an array of benefits that help to enhance their overall well-being. Some of the main benefits include:

Enhanced Mental Health

Socializing can help older adults feel loved and needed as their lives are affirmed by their activities and those with whom they interact. Being around other people, especially if you're doing something fun or rewarding, helps us keep a positive outlook on life.

Sense of Belonging

Enjoying the company of others with similar personalities or interests helps us feel like we belong. The need to belong may be more intense for those who may have lost a spouse, family member or friend. Engaging with others can cultivate new friendships and can create lasting bonds.

Better Self-Esteem

The more people socialize or participate in activities with others, the more they benefit by feeling like they contribute to their community. Any positive interaction with friends, family or neighbours can help us feel confident in ourselves and our abilities.

Improved Physical Health

When we have good conversations or do things we love with others, our bodies release health promoting chemicals that boost the immune system and make us feel physically well. Also, socializing promotes an active lifestyle and better nutritional intake. Older adults who are isolated are more likely to skip meals, whereas socially active adults often share meals with friends and family.

Increased Cognitive Functioning

Socializing is also key to keeping the brain sharp as we age. An active social life encourages us to continue learning and observing. Conversation and activity are great for exercising the mind and can potentially lower the risk of dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

Purposeful Living

Having somewhere to go, something meaningful to do, or people to see helps us get excited for the day. When we build strong relationships with others, we gain a sense of fulfillment, and spending quality time with those we love reminds us that life is worthwhile.



How to Celebrate

Active Aging Week

Host an event

Consider hosting an Active Aging Week event in your community. This is one of the best ways you can help spread the word throughout your area! Make it fun and accessible!

Share a personal story

If you have benefited from becoming active and adopting a healthier lifestyle, consider sharing your story with friends, family co-workers etc. Others are sure to benefit from learning about your wellness journey - you never know who you could inspire to make some positive changes!

Talk about Active Aging Week on social media

Social media platforms are an excellent way to bring awareness to important initiatives. By discussing Active Aging Week on social media, you might just encourage someone to get out and start pursuing a healthier lifestyle.

Why Active Aging Week is so Important

Encourages older adults to get moving

Staying active and taking care of our minds and bodies is the secret to living, moving, and feeling better with age. For some older adults who reside in assisted living communities, or have mobility issues, just getting out and about can present quite a challenge. Active Aging Week highlights all of the different ways that someone can participate in simple exercise. There truly is something for everyone.

Challenges stereotypes

The focus of this week challenges society's expectations of aging by showing that older adults can live full, rewarding lives regardless of age or health. In fact, many adults have rekindled a former hobby or passion or in most cases, started a new one. They are more active. More social. More engaged.

Creates a sense of community

We're much more likely to accomplish our goals if we have other people helping to keep us accountable. Active Aging Week helps bring communities of adults together to work towards a common wellness cause or goal.



Ideas for Planning your Event or Activity

Hosting free events for older adults is an excellent way to celebrate Active Aging. People can feel isolated as they age, so these events provide opportunities to meet new people, have new experiences, and continue learning. Here are some great ideas for local events, however small or large you are planning:



Host an event

Open house events help to promote local community and give you opportunities to network and promote your facility or organization. You can connect with potential participants, members, or volunteers etc. You can serve a meal or coffee and snacks, offer entertainment, presentations/demonstrations or group activities.

Host a Speaker Series

Hosting a speaker series on different topics can be a great resource for older adults. Lectures by doctors, physical therapists, hearing specialists, and pharmacists are all great ideas. Some popular topics might include appropriate medical subjects like arthritis and anxiety/depression.

Host an Expo

You can rent a hall or community space. Invite organizations to sponsor tables and promote their programs and services. You can also invite speakers to run workshops or demonstrations. Prepare a presentation about your own organization as well.

Here are other types of activities that you can organize:

- Concerts/old time dances
- Classes (cooking, languages or art etc.)
- Group exercise programs
- Walking groups/nature walks
- Bake or craft sale
- Health fairs

You could also work with churches, libraries or community centres in your area to host workshops. For example, you could offer a workshop with tips for caring for an aging parent, or how to navigate new technology.

Events are a great idea and can provide great opportunities to get the word out about your organization while allowing you to make a difference in your local community!

Promoting your Event or Activity

Whether you are a motivated individual or part of a group or organization looking to inspire older adults to get active, special events and activities are a great way to encourage them to connect with their peers and stay involved within their local communities.



The event or activity doesn't have to be huge or complicated. It could be something as simple as offering a craft workshop at a local community hall, arranging a card tournament, cooking class or organizing walking or birdwatching outings. Or, simply showcase a pre-existing event, for example a regular yoga class or walking group. The possibilities are endless - and we want to emphasize that events do not have to be complex in order to be successful. Below are some guidelines and tips for planning an event:

Organization is key

Before you start promoting your event, make sure you are organized, be sure you know what your goals are and that you know who you are targeting in your promotion efforts.

Know your audience

It is useful to collect the names and contact information of all the attendees afterwards, so you can stay in touch. Follow up after your event on a regular basis to promote your centre, facility or organization and keep people informed as to what is coming up next!

Keep your message simple

People are busy and often bombarded with too much information. This can be particularly overwhelming for older adults. Make it easy to understand your message. Most importantly, keep it clear and consistent everywhere you promote your event.

Get people excited

Creating a buzz before your event is crucial in generating interest and promoting participation. Send out reminders, create a banner on your website 'Save the Dates', include fun facts, whatever you think will help get people thinking about your event!

Use relatable language

That doesn't mean you can't make things fun or interesting, it just means you should avoid using trendy slang, certain acronyms or terms that older adults may not be familiar with. Stick to fun, friendly and appropriate language in all of your promotions.

Be Mindful of Possible Limitations

Factors such as participants with physical limitations or cognitive disabilities will change the way activities will have to be organized. Therefore it is important for you to plan for your event to be as accessible as possible.



You will want to ensure that the activity allows everyone in the group to participate and enjoy themselves. Ultimately, the goal is not simply to get people in the door but to ensure that you are able to provide participants with a full and meaningful experience, regardless of ability.

Be aware of tripping hazards

The risk of falling increases with age, but you can take steps to lower that risk at your event. For example; if there are cables or cords on the ground, they need to be covered. Make sure walkways are well marked and clear of unnecessary obstacles. Make sure that your guests can get around as easily and safely as possible!

Have enough (and appropriate!) seating

Many older people are less comfortable on their feet. Having enough comfortable seating is important for those who cannot remain standing or mobile for long periods.

Keep a slower pace

Keep the pace a bit slower to make sure that all of your attendees are on the same page, giving them more time to enjoy and appreciate information, rather than rushing through. Make participants feel that they are worth your time!

Make sure there are enough breaks

Make sure there are regular and frequent breaks that provide attendees enough time to use the washrooms, make a phone call, take medications or have a snack etc.

Keep technology simple

Make sure that the technology that you ask your participants to use is appropriate for both you and them. However, be sure not to underestimate participants abilities either.

Accessibility and transportation

Remember to include information in all of your printed material, website, and e-mails for anyone who has a question about accessibility or requires an accommodation or local transportation in order to participate.

The Importance of Social Connection

For older adults, possibilities for social participation often change for various reasons, such as deteriorating health, the loss of a partner or friends or reduced opportunities for social interactions.



Activities that involve interaction with others can greatly improve health and quality of life. Those who engage regularly in activities and hobbies with friends or family, or who have someone to talk to often have a more positive outlook. Some of the main benefits include:

Enhanced Mental Health

Isolation is one of the leading causes of depression in older adults. Socializing can help older adults feel loved and needed as their lives are affirmed by the activities they do and by those with whom they interact. Being around other people helps us to keep a positive outlook on life.

Sense of Belonging

Enjoying the company of others helps us feel like we belong somewhere. For those who may have lost a spouse, family member or friend, the need to belong may be more intense. Engaging with others can cultivate new friendships and can create lasting bonds.

Better Self-Esteem

The more people socialize or participate in activities with others, the more they benefit by feeling like they contribute to their community. Any kind of positive interaction with friends, family or neighbors can help us feel confident in ourselves and our abilities.

Improved Physical Health

When we have good conversations or do things we love with others, our bodies release health promoting chemicals that boost the immune system to ward off illness and make us feel physically well. Also, socializing promotes an active lifestyle and better nutritional intake. Older adults who are isolated are more likely to skip meals, whereas those who are socially active often share meals with friends and family.

Increased Cognitive Functioning

Having an active social life encourages us to continue learning, observing and responding to the world around us. Conversation and activity are great for exercising the mind and can potentially lower the risk of dementia and Alzheimer's disease.



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