



Active Aging Week 2

Resources aid last-minute planning



With this year's celebration fast approaching, there is still time to build or expand your participation with campaign 'theme days' and resources

Across North America and beyond, organizations dedicated to older-adult wellness are getting ready to celebrate aging and living well with a bevy of opportunities for Active Aging Week®. In 2016, the weeklong health-promotion event takes place September 25 through October 1. Adding to the festivities this year, October 1 is both the International Day of Older Persons (whose 2016 theme is "Take a Stand Against Ageism") and the 15th Anniversary of the International Council on Active Aging* (ICAA), which leads Active

Aging Week nationally. All three occasions are reminders of the efforts made at all levels to improve quality of life for older adults.

Active Aging Week animates local communities. Walks and dances, health fairs and art classes, seminars and outdoor adventures—event organizers in all kinds of settings prepare their offerings. The goal? To deliver fun, educational wellness events and activities in an atmosphere that warmly welcomes participants, perhaps encouraging them to adopt a wellness lifestyle.

Developing a schedule of no-to-low cost events and activities is an opportunity to get creative with programming. In fact, this is one of the most enjoyable

Active Aging Week 2015 included socializing via Skype and in person for 'Say Hello' day at Highgate Bellingham, in Washington. Image courtesy of Highgate Senior Living



aspects for organizers of Active Aging Week events, who have tremendous freedom and flexibility to shape how their organizations participate. It can be a lot of work, they admit, but it's also a lot of fun. And the end result—the positive life experiences and meaningful moments shared by participants and hosts—is deeply rewarding for everyone.

Many local hosts use Active Aging Week's yearly theme as a "hook" to plan and promote their events. They also use it to create interest among participants and sponsors. In 2016, that theme—submitted by Elim Park's Barbara Womer—is "Explore the possibilities." Inspired by Womer, the campaign encourages participants and hosts to keep an open mind each day as they explore the possibilities for wellness across life's different dimensions.

As Active Aging Week approaches, the pressure mounts to finalize schedules and arrangements. There's still time, however, for event organizers who want to make late additions to their sched-

ules, as well as those who decide to host the week at the last minute. Free resources and tools are available to help.

'Theme day' details

For the third straight year, Active Aging Week offers theme days developed by ICAA and the campaign's national sponsors for host organizations to use. These featured days can simplify, build or expand programming for busy event organizers. Host organizations are free to introduce any or all of the theme days, complete with resources and support, into their schedules. Topics may be included as dedicated days in the week or specific sessions in the schedule, or incorporated into educational events, health fairs or festivals, for example. The 2016 theme days are as follows:

Sunday, September 25

"I just called to say..." (CaptionCall)
CaptionCall returns in 2016 with a new activity designed to encourage older adults with hearing loss to stay socially engaged. The "I just called to say" program offers a 30-minute presentation about hearing health and hearing loss, as well as a 30-minute mini-expo with games, refreshments, raffle prizes and a live demonstration of a CaptionCall phone.

Tuesday, September 27

Get Skin Health Smart (Nestlé Skin Health)
Healthy skin is vital to overall health. For Active Aging Week, Nestlé Skin Health provides a weeklong educational program, "Get Skin Health Smart," with a director's guide for hosts to use. PowerPoint slides and talking points are included, along with videos, fact sheets, handouts, quizzes and tips for additional programming.

Wednesday, September 28

Dive into AquaYoga (SwimEx, Inc.)
SwimEx presents an AquaYoga class created by Maria S. Zmijewski, a registered physical therapist at Bel Air Manor in

Newington, Connecticut. Resources feature a guide to these pool exercises and a recorded meditation, plus a video of an AquaYoga class. A downloadable flyer ("Why Water Works!") highlights the benefits of hydrotherapy.

Thursday, September 29

Eat Healthy, Stay Strong (Abbott Nutrition)

Abbott seeks to increase understanding of muscle health, nutrition and healthy aging through its "Eat Healthy, Stay Strong" program. The four-module program includes a downloadable PowerPoint presentation, as well as infographics, articles, research findings, fact sheets, nutrition tips, games, quizzes, and additional sources of information.

Saturday, October 1

The WALK! with Aegis Therapies Event (EnerG® by Aegis Therapies)

The six-day "WALK! with Aegis Therapies 2016" features a daily walk (or seated alternative) and a featured activity to support a different wellness dimension each day. Outside Aegis communities, participants can register online for the program and log their daily steps, plus access an at-home participation guide and resources. The week culminates in a "Celebration of Wellness." In partnership with ICAA, Aegis will focus the Grand Finale on celebrating not only each dimension of wellness, but also ICAA's 15th Anniversary and successes in changing the way we think about aging.

Whether local hosts use theme days or not, Saturday will end a week focused on exploring the possibilities for wellness. It's the perfect time to recognize everyone involved and celebrate the week's experiences. Among the promotional materials available, downloadable certificates of participation are provided for hosts to present to participants and partners.

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For Active Aging Week 2015, the Kerby Centre in Calgary, Canada, built giant Jenga and Kerplunk games for a picnic party at a local park. 'We had a terrific amount of fun not only building the games, but also playing them,' commented Chad Geiger, senior manager, Facilities. Image courtesy of Kerby Centre

Helpful resources

The Active Aging Week website houses numerous planning and promotional resources that event organizers can turn to when time grows short. These include announcements and fact sheets, campaign logos, PowerPoint presentations, posters, T-shirt designs, and plenty of planning advice and programming examples. Also available are webinars focused on Active Aging Week theme days and promoting events (the latter webinar features such a concise, yet comprehensive, promotional plan that organizers will want to watch it again prior to planning next year's events). See the "Campaign snapshot" on this page for information.

Host organizations that have yet to register online as host sites are urged to take that step—it's free, quick and easy! Registration is the only way ICAA knows which organizations host the week and in which local communities. This information helps with media referrals. It also

allows ICAA to quantify support for the campaign and its positive message when talking to sponsors, allies and the media.

While finalizing arrangements is the top priority in the last weeks before Active Aging Week, veteran organizers in local communities consider what comes afterwards. Efforts to evaluate and report on the week's experiences can improve programming and support for next year. Numerous host organizations also report their Active Aging Week activities, key moments, results and recommendations to ICAA. Not only does this help the association evaluate the results and value of the campaign each year, but it also allows the *Journal on Active Aging*® to showcase the experiences and spirit of Active Aging Week, and the joyous celebration of aging and living well that hosts and participants share. Good luck to everyone! 🍀

ICAA organizes Active Aging Week 2016 in partnership with the President's Coun-

cil on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition. This year's sponsors include Abbott Nutrition, Aegis Therapies/EnerG® by Aegis, Caption-Call, Nestlé Skin Health, and SwimEx, Inc. To learn more about the campaign, access resources and register as a host site, visit www.activeagingweek.com.

Campaign snapshot

**Active Aging Week 2016:
Explore the possibilities**
September 25–October 1

Website: www.activeagingweek.com

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/
ActiveAgingWeek](http://www.facebook.com/ActiveAgingWeek)

Twitter: #activeagingweek,
@AAW_ICAA

Webinars & PowerPoints: [www.
activeagingweek.com/themedays/
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