

ultimate activity guide

hundreds of activity ideas for all levels of care, interests & situations

made for you by  Leversound

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activity ideas for all year

1 the best (or worst) advice I ever received

Enjoy passing the time talking about the best (and worst) advice handed to you. Applaud good advice and laugh about how things worked out despite the bad.

[Download the program here](#)

2 fact or fiction?

This great game for small to medium-sized groups can easily be socially distanced. Give everyone the opportunity to win a prize and provide a fun way to learn new things. Very few supplies are needed, so with a quick setup, you can play over and over again!

Residents exercise their brains and have loads of fun by deciding if a story or statement is True (fact) or False (fiction). Even create teams, so the group with the most correct answers wins prizes.

[Download the program here](#)

3 president for a day

In honor of all our past presidents, think about what you would do if you were president!

Make it a discussion:

- What would be your first act?
- Of past presidents, who'd be your running mate?
- Would you keep the White House white (why not purple)?

4 banana bread cooking class

Who doesn't love the taste of warm, comforting banana bread? Why not celebrate this delicious treat with its own day! Host a cooking class to have residents make their own loaves or have an instructional class and allow residents to reap (and eat) the rewards!

Need a recipe? [Try out this one!](#)

5 city of love

If your residents were lucky enough in their lives to visit the city of love they know how magical it is! For those who have never been able to visit, take them on a virtual vacation to Paris! A virtual vacation can be educational, engaging and awe-inspiring. Use a short video [like this one](#) or there are plenty of DVD documentaries for purchase.

6 are you feeling lucky?

Learn your luck! With your residents, brainstorm different kinds of luck they would like to have for this month and year. For example, love, friendship, faith, wisdom, rest, laughter... Once you collect enough luck to go around, you can take small baggies and fill them with a few gold chocolate coins and one piece of luck written down on a paper (your residents can help make these)! Place all the lucky bags in a jar or container to mix them around. Once mixed, you can ask residents and even staff to pick out a bag of luck.

7

mouth-waterin' grilled cheese

Cook up some gourmet grilled cheese and ask residents how they would put unique twists on the classic Grilled Cheese - [find some inspiration here!](#) Need some fun facts about grilled cheese? [We've got you covered.](#)

After sharing some fun facts, get the dining staff involved for an ultimate "Grilled Cheese Cook Off" competition and allow staff and residents to enjoy and vote on their favorite!

8

bus trip scavenger hunt

Print off sheets of paper with visuals of things you might see on a bus ride — pictures of a stop sign, school bus, police car, etc. Give each resident a clipboard with the sheet of papers and a crayon or marker. Have residents cross off the items as they see them during the ride!

Using Eversound for this program makes it a lot of fun to act as a "tour guide" throughout and allows the residents to focus more.

9

pjs and prizes

Encourage staff, residents and volunteers to be extra comfortable in their pajamas on this day. Make it fun by having a contest for most creative PJs and offer a prize!

Bonus points for those comfy bunny slippers!

10

look alike day

Social/happy hour with a theme! Grab a friend and become twins! With dollar store props (goofy sunglasses, funny hats, crazy wigs etc.), set up a photo booth in the community and take photos with a friend, resident, or staff member that dressed up as a "look alike". Create a scrapbook or hang photos on the wall to commemorate a fun day.

11

pack up picnic

Enjoy the flowers with a picnic in the park! A picnic might bring back some nostalgia of days spent with loved ones, children and friends. Pack a lunch of sandwiches, snacks like pretzels, chips, or fruit. Invite family members to join on this outing with loved ones and enjoy fresh air and reminiscing.

12

milk-shake things up

A little chocolate can go a long way! On this delicious day, have residents make their own milkshakes with different types of chocolate ice cream and toppings. Some favorites include Moose Tracks, Mint Chocolate Chip and Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough.

tips to increase movement

Find out more ways to increase movement in in your community [on this page.](#)

13 3D tulip craft

They say April showers bring May flowers! With May springing up on us in just a couple of days, make this eye-popping craft that is sure to bring spring fever to your community.

All you'll need is green, red, yellow, and orange cardstock, scissors and a glue stick. [Follow these instructions or video tutorial](#) to bring these Tulips to life. Hang the tulips on bulletin boards, on doors, or in windows to add a pop of color!

14 decoration station

Spring cleaning isn't just about cleaning out your home, it's also about bringing freshness into your life! Have residents decorate their walker or wheel chairs with this fun craft with this [Decoration Station program](#).

Encourage your residents to decorate their walkers, canes, or wheelchairs to best reflect themselves! Once everyone has finished decorating, set up a runway and let your residents strut their stuff.

15 the price is right

In this Eversound program, residents play the price-guessing part of The Price is Right, just as if they were called to "Come on down!" With a few everyday items, the game is quick and easy to set up to play. Use the items as prizes or offer prizes from your bingo stash!

[Download the program here](#)

16 oh the places you'll go!

A childhood icon and fantastic gift to kids and grandkids alike, Dr. Seuss transcends generations. Have residents read their favorites or even their family's favorites. Finish the activity by challenging residents to right their own whimsical stories and share with the group.

[Write Like Dr. Seuss](#)

17 pay it forward

Host a discussion around small acts of kindness that your residents have done for others.

Have residents volunteer, do a small act of kindness for fellow residents or a staff member and ask that they pass it on themselves. The small act may be picking up something someone has dropped, or telling them their

haircut looks nice, or even help a staff member set up for a program. [Get more inspiration here!](#)

18 year of invention

Explore inventions by looking at everyday items in a new way. In this Eversound program, residents guess what year simple items were invented.

[Download the program here](#)

Mad Hatter Tea Party
Birch Creek Assisted Living



19 teacher appreciation

A good teacher can inspire hope, ignite the imagination, and instill a love of learning – Brad Henry.

Teachers play such a vital role in shaping the future of young children. We all have a teacher that we remember for the positive impact they played on our life. Do your residents have a favorite teacher from their childhood?

Purchase or make thank you cards and have residents spend time writing notes of appreciation or advice to teachers at a local school, daycare or after-school program.

20 tissue paper flowers

Create a bloom that won't wilt!

It is nice to be able to decorate your community with flowers but real ones only last so long. Creating and hanging paper flowers is an easy way to brighten your neighborhood and bring the "May flowers" inside!

[Follow these steps to create your own beautiful flowers!](#)

21 a picture is worth a puzzle

Have you ever heard "a picture is worth a thousand words"? That may be true, but sometimes there's a puzzle hidden beneath that picture!

Test your residents' brain power with a rebus puzzle! A rebus puzzle is a kind of illustration puzzle, often with letters or words, that depicts a word or phrase. Print out rebus puzzles for your residents and see who can come up with the answers the fastest! Or make it a group game – the group works out their puzzles the quickest gets a special prize!

Unsure where to look for puzzles? Here's a [pinterest board](#) to get your started.

22 grandfriends reading group

Research suggests that engagement in high-quality, meaningful intergenerational programs and relationships may decrease social isolation. It can also increase older adults' sense of belonging, self-esteem, and well-being.

Start a Grandfriends Reading Group where local elementary school children can visit the residents and practice their reading skills. Many communities use

Eversound by having residents wear the headphones and allowing one child to read their story with the microphone. It's a sure way to bring smiles to everyone!

[Here's how to have residents and children participate in a reading program together!](#)

23 "salsa silent disco"

Cinco de Mayo is a holiday that celebrates the victory of the Mexican army over the French in 1862. A common misconception is that Cinco de Mayo is the Mexican Independence Day, which was actually declared 50 years prior to this battle.

In Mexico, Cinco de Mayo is primarily celebrated in the state of Puebla, where the battle occurred. Today, it's often celebrated with parades, parties, traditional food and music.

To celebrate, host a Salsa Silent Disco complete with Salsa Music and chips & salsa. [Use this playlist to dance and enjoy Salsa music](#) while putting out various salsas for residents to have with chips as a snack!

24 pass it on

Your residents are full of wisdom and have plenty of life advice – help them pass that knowledge on to the younger generation!

Do so by teaming up with a local high school and have your residents write letters with their best advice to graduating seniors. The teachers can pass the letters out to their students a few days before their graduation or during their graduation rehearsal.

You can also provide a list of the residents who wrote advice and the address of the community so the high school students can write thank you notes.

[Find this activity on Eversound Engage!](#)

25 pen pals

Having a pen pal is a unique way to form a bond with someone who lives further away. It allows residents to express themselves through writing and to share more about themselves. Help your residents connect with other residents from a different community!

Get started by having residents write a general letter about themselves: where they're from, their career or profession, family and interests. Turn this into a monthly activity by coming together to share letters received, discuss new ideas to share, and write the next letters together.

[See the bonus tip here!](#)

28 heritage & history

Each of us has a ancestry full of fascinating history! Survey your residents to find out their ethnicities. Let them get as specific as they can or help them with generalizations (Irish v. Northern European).

[The World Factbook](#) is a great place to start for fun facts, national anthems, population facts, and more. You can also find virtual vacation videos to share with your residents on YouTube by searching "[Country] virtual vacation".

These presentations and videos are a great use for Eversound so you can ensure residents catch all of your facts and can fully enjoy the virtual vacation!

26 a berry delicious day

Go strawberry picking at a local farm. Strawberries are in full season in May (ideal picking between April and June).

Pick some plump, red deliciousness today while you enjoy learning about the farm and soaking up some sun. Maybe take some strawberries back to the community for a baking class - [try one of these recipes!](#)

29 out of this world

In 1610, Galileo was the first to turn a telescope to the sky to observe space. Since then, the technology behind telescopes and what we've learned about the universe has vastly expanded! On May 20, 1990 the Hubble Space Telescope sent back its first picture of outer space.

[Check out that photo and others here!](#)

Host a discussion with your residents! Try discussing, the advancements in space exploration technology; if there is life outside of our planet; the launch of the [James Webb Space Telescope](#).

27 gratitude stones

One way to show gratitude is to present it in a way for all to see.

By creating gratitude stones with your residents, you will help to spread joy and appreciation while providing a unique bit of decoration to your community! You can place these stones in a garden outside, in a fountain, in a bird bath or in a flower pot inside the community.

[See full instructions here!](#)

30 bottle bingo

Bingo is one the most popular activities but why not spice it up by playing Bottle Bingo?

Bottle bingo is a great way to combine bingo and happy hour!

Split up your group into separate tables and give each table two bingo playing cards and one Eversound headphone. Each table chooses a "captain" who wears the headphones and plays bingo while the rest of the table mingles and enjoys happy hour. Whichever table wins the bingo then gets to choose a bottle of wine for the table to enjoy. Play at least four games of bingo, switching off captains, so every table has a chance to win!

31 it's 5 o'clock somewhere

Beer has come a long way, historically used by monks to stave off hunger during fasting periods to the craft beer movement of today. Similar to a wine tasting, have residents taste test different kinds of beer and see if they can guess what type. Pair with some snacks as residents discover new flavors.

32 you quack me up!

Feed the ducks at the park on a beautiful spring day! When you think of feeding the ducks, you traditionally think of feeding them breadcrumbs. However, breadcrumbs are actually not good for ducks. It's like duck junk food, there isn't much nutritional value and uneaten bread crumbs easily grow mold which could seriously harm the next duck that comes along to eat that breadcrumb.

Instead, consider getting corn, peas, beans or [something else off this list.](#)

33 sun's out, buns out

On National Hamburger Day - grill out and play BBQ games!

Consider having a hamburger bar with all types of toppings available for residents to make one of a kind burger creations. [Here are some options](#) for toppings beyond just ketchup and mustard! Also put out some games for residents to mingle and play as they enjoy their burgers. Games to put out may be Frisbee, cornhole, horseshoes, or bocce.

34 DIY lava lamps

Watching those misshapen bubbles float up to the top of the lamp and sink back down can be mesmerizing. Help your residents create their own lava lamps in this safe and easy to make activity! This is also a fun activity for when kids, local schools, or grandkids come to visit. You can even bring in local school to make this a fun intergenerational program. Have residents help the kids organize and construct these DIY lava lamps and enjoy their creations!

Create Your Own Lava Lamp: <https://members.eversoundhq.com/activity/diy-lava-lamps/>

35 save the bees & butterflies

Sometimes the smallest critters can play the largest roles! Although small, butterflies and bees play important roles in our ecosystem. Both are crucial in helping flowers pollinate. So how can we help? With your residents you can chose to support the bees, the butterflies, or both!

[Learn some fun facts to educate your residents here.](#)

36 adopt a team!

Do you have residents that are particularly into sports? Get them involved by having them share their love of sports! Partner with a local youth sports organization and have your residents follow the team's progress each week, go catch a local game in person for an outing, or invite the team to show off their skills.

[Sectionally-Painted Community Board](#)
Brookdale Dogwood Creek



37 night at the drive-in

Bring back the nostalgia of drive-in movie theaters in this two-part activity! To get your night at the drive-in started, have residents paint license plates to put on the back of their chairs. You can also ask residents to paint or color decorations that can be hung up around the room you are hosting the movie in such as stars or the moon. For an additional twist, hang string lights up to recreate the twinkle of the night time sky.

38 night at the drive-in part 2

“Oh those summer nights!” In 1972 musical “Grease” opened at Broadhurst Theater NYC for 3,388 performances. Stream Grease on Broadway or watch “Grease” the movie with John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John for a night to remember. For an added touch, set-up a concession stand with popcorn and candy!

39 horsin’ around

With the craziest Kentucky Derby in the history of the race earlier in May, what will happen at the final leg of the Triple Crown race? To celebrate, have your residents pick which horse they’d like to win. You could even have them place a bet on their pony and have them win a prize. Leading up to the race, ask residents what they would name their horse if they had one running and share the history of the race.

[Find facts here!](#)

40 what’s the scoop?

Trade coffee with your morning paper for ice cream in this fun twist. Treat your residents to a scoop of ice cream as you review the week’s current events. Keep the conversation going by inviting residents to discuss their opinions on current events, or even share video clips that match the headlines.

41 tai chi

Tai Chi is great for improving flexibility, muscle strength, and endurance through slow and gentle movements, perfect residents even if they are managing chronic conditions. Tai Chi is a wonderful addition to any exercise program that brings together the body and the brain by incorporating mindfulness elements.

Help your residents balance their yin and yang: <https://members.eversoundhq.com/activity/tai-chi/>

42 sing-along walkathon

Get your residents’ blood pumping and their voices singing by hosting a Sing-along Walkathon!

Plan out a course to walk around your community or a local park. When you’re ready to go, play music and encourage your residents to sing-a-long to their favorites! Walk around your course and sing along to get those heart rates up! For extra impact, gather your residents before walking and pass out your Eversound headphones to everyone. Your residents will be able to hear the music with perfect clarity!

[Check out the top songs from every decade on our Eversound Spotify Channel.](#)

43

you can dance if you want to

Never miss a beat with this great variation on Zumba that allows all your residents to participate. This variation of Zumba allows residents to dance from their chair while also getting in a great workout. Fun fact: Zumba was created by Alberto “Beto” Perez, an aerobics instructor in Cali, Colombia, when he forgot his workout music for a class. He improvised with some salsa and merengue tapes he happened to have in his backpack, and the class was an instant hit!

Sitting Zumba Video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GdHfXAeC_Ys

44

don't drop the ball(oon)!

Water balloon toss are a great way to get your residents outside and working together! Pair up residents and give them each pair a semi-filled water balloon.

Have residents line up in two lines facing one and other about 3 feet apart.

Each time a partner successfully catches the water balloon, they must take a step back from each other. Last pair standing wins! Reward winners with these [affordable prize ideas](#).

Water Balloon Toss Rules: http://www.mccshh.com/pdf/Pre_LaborDay_BBQ_Contest_Rules.pdf

45

farmer's market frenzy

Nothing quite marks the start of spring and summer like a farmers market. [Find a market near you](#) for a daytime outing and have residents pick out local, fresh fruits and veggies to take back to the community to incorporate into your menu for that week. For easy planning, choose a menu item that can be served each day of the week and buy ingredients around that such as salads or smoothies.

[Seven Perfect Salads for Healthy Eating](#)

46

picture this

For an ongoing activity, start a scrapbook committee that meets monthly. They'll be in charge of suggesting which events photos will be taken at. During the monthly meeting, help residents make pages that can be added to a scrap book that will be kept in the community for all to enjoy! For an added bonus, at the end of the year, scan the pages of the scrapbook and create a “yearbook” for families to enjoy!

47

local landmarks

A great way for residents to explore their community, create a scavenger hunt using [local landmarks](#) in your city. Create a checklist of items for residents to search for on the bus tour, and have them mark each item off as they find it. Make it a round trip and share interesting facts about the landmarks once the scavenger hunt has been completed!

48

head in the clouds

This multi-day activity is a great way to give residents a hands-on learning experience that can be used in the community year round. Residents will be their own meteorologists and build 4 easy to make weather gauges including a rain gauge, a barometer, a weather vane and an anemometer.

[How to Build Your Own Weather Station Video Tutorial](#)

49

telephone pictictionary

Sit in a circle and give everyone a notepad (with plenty of sheets) and a pen. Have everyone write down an object, phrase or person on the second sheet of their notepad, close it, and pass over to the person on their right. Now everyone picks up the new pad, reads the phrase on page two, and draws it as best they can on page three. Pass the notepads again, only this time, you can only look at the illustration and try to guess the phrase on the next page. Keep passing and drawing or guessing until you have your original pad in front of you. Flip through the pages in front of the group for mega laughs as your phrase gets distorted, telephone-style, through the drawings and guesses.

50

“gone fishing”

Fishing isn't for everyone but this at home fishing game makes sure there are enough fish in the sea for everyone. This activity doubles as a craft and game experience where residents can color and create the fish, then try to catch them.

[Get fishing here](#)

51

dog days of summer

A great way to collaborate with your community is to identify a local shelter that can bring their pets to your community for adoption day. Animal shelters are always looking for places to host their adoption days and as an added bonus, residents can engage with the pets or take them for walks in between sessions.

[Find an animal shelter near you](#)

52

leave your (book)mark

A fun and affordable activity, residents can create their own bookmarks for their favorite stories. Head to your local hardware store and collect some paint samples to act as the base of the bookmark. Then set-up a variety of stamp stations where residents can stamp fun designs onto their paint cards. Residents can even hole punch the card tops and tie their favorite ribbon or strings to them.

[Check out this site for more inspiration](#)

53

set up camp

The first activity in a 4-part series, get your residents excited by kicking off with some camping crafts. Have residents create campside decorations to hang up around your community and activity room such as paper birds, squirrels, bears and trees, to name a few. After decorating, set up a pop up tent in the middle or hang up some sheets using clothes lines!

[Camping Activity Room Ideas](#)

54

guess that sound: camping

For an interactive game that sets the mood for an indoor camping trip, play noises you might hear on a camping trip and have residents guess the sound. Examples include crickets, a babbling brook, campfire crackling, birds, etc. Enhance the experience with lighting incense that smells like campfire or have a video of a campfire scene playing in the background on mute.

[Check out this video with relaxing campfire sounds to play](#)

55 s'mores & more

Who says s'mores have to be chocolate, graham crackers and marshmallows? Create unusual s'mores by experimenting with ingredients like cookies, bananas, mini candy bars, flavored marshmallows (or even marshmallow fluff to help hold things together) and white chocolate. Set-up a bar with multiple ingredients where residents can pick and choose their toppings and get assembling for their camp night!

[Making s'mores without a fire](#)

58 sparks will fly

It's no secret, kids love fireworks. This activity is a great intergenerational program that is just in time for Fourth of July. The best part about this craft? No fire necessary! These pop-up fireworks are recyclable, and can be used at birthdays or other year round celebrations. Residents can help their grandchildren decorate their firework or your community can partner with a local school during their art class.

[Pop-up Firework Instructions + Materials](#)

56 fireside chats

You don't need a fire to tell a good story, just good company. Have residents sit in a circle and ask them to share stories of their favorite time camping or in their life! To create a night time ambiance, use electric candles and dim the lights.

Feeling spooky? You could also tell creepy campfire stories [like these](#) or encourage residents to make up their own.

59 knock 'em dead

Unleash your resident's inner Picasso and create something abstract with this interactive painting activity. This activity uses water guns and acrylic paint to create works of art. Fill up water guns with different paint colors and have residents squirt canvas or any object you'd like to paint - canvases, vases, or even t-shirts. No painting skills required for this one! This activity is Eversound friendly, so as an added bonus have residents paint to a playlist of your choosing to inspire their creativity!

[Watch Squirt n' Paint Tutorial](#)

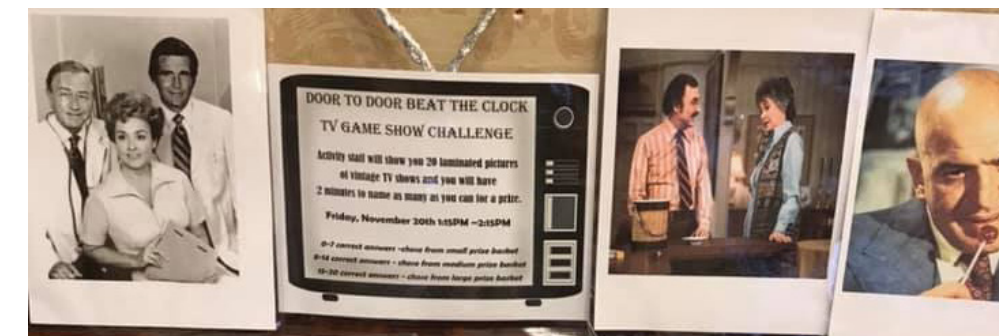
57 sunrise yoga

Exercise is key to keeping your residents happy and healthy. Yoga is a universally recognized exercise that accommodates all levels of fitness while also providing therapeutic benefits. In the spirit of National Great Outdoors Month, have residents partake in an early morning yoga session in your community's outdoor spaces or find a free class in your local park. For added serenity, play a relaxing playlist using Eversound.

60 summertime strollin'

Enjoy the simpler things in life with a stroll at your local park. Local parks often offer monthly walking clubs or nature outings that can be found online or on the parks on-site bulletin board. Encourage your residents to share stories from their life on the walk to make the time fly!

[Door-to-Door TV Photo Trivia](#)
Five Star Quality Care



61 photo puzzle race

Love puzzles? Look no further! In this activity, residents complete jigsaw puzzles of themselves and each other while working to beat the clock!

[Download the program here](#)

62 3 things in common

This activity is perfect for introducing new residents to your community and even getting residents to learn more about one and other. 3 Things in Common is an interactive game that encourages residents to mingle and is very easy to implement for an afternoon activity. For complete instructions on setting up this activity, [visit here](#).

63 apples to apples

Caramel apples are fixtures at fall festivities including fairs and apple-picking activities. In this tasty activity, create a variety of caramel apples with an assortment of toppings including sprinkles, chocolate chips and even white chocolate. At the end, slice the apples and let every resident taste each creation.

[Caramel Apple Recipes](#)

64 when life gives you lemons, make a volcano!

Science never gets old, which is why this volcano building activity is sure to be dynamite! This activity uses seven simple steps and seven household materials to create Lemon Volcanoes! These colorful explosions are mesmerizing and low maintenance, and also a perfect way to use any extra leftover lemons from Lemonade Stand Day.

[Lemon Volcano step-by-step instructions](#)

65 what floats your boat

This science experiment will bring out the curiosity and competitiveness in your residents. Using only a select few materials, residents will be challenged to create their most buoyant boats and then, put their strength to the test. Residents will test their boats durability, and the boat that holds up to the challenge wins!

For instructions on how to set this activity up, [visit here](#).

66 napa valley bottle bingo

Napa Valley, the heart of America's wine country, is only a cork away! Split your group into two and give each table two bingo cards and one Eversound headphone. Each table chooses a captain to wear the headphones and plays bingo. Whichever table wins can choose a bottle of wine for the table to enjoy! With the Napa Valley Wine Festival this month, celebrate with bottles of Napa Wine for an added twist.

67 **bye bye birdie**

Encourage a sense of accomplishment and get residents working with their hands in this bird house building group program. Great for men's groups, have residents assemble pre-cut bird houses, including everything from sanding, nailing and painting. Hang finished birdhouses in your courtyard and see what visitors fly by!

[Pre-Cut Wooden Birdhouses from Home Depot](#)

68 **hot air balloon festival**

Bring a little science into your programming this month as you have residents make simple hot air balloon in this easy science project. Residents will learn about air density and the important properties of gas. This activity uses items you can easily find around your community and is simple to construct. [Full activity instructions can be found here.](#)

69 **recycled poetry**

Still have magazines and newspapers from last month or even last year? Don't throw them out just yet...make some recycled poetry! To get started, cut out words from these magazines and newspapers. Pick words that are interesting, and make sure to also choose simple words (the, a, at, to, and, from). Have residents use these cut outs to assemble different types of poetry, such as haikus or limericks. At the end, hold a poetry reading session and invite residents to attend.

[Full activity instructions can be found here.](#)

70 **putt-putt parade**

Golf is a timeless sport. Putt-putt...not quite as timeless, but it sure is fun! For a kickoff to summer, get every department to decorate their own putt-putt hole! You can have all the holes fall under the same theme or let each department create their own theme! Get residents to team up and walk around the community putt-putting with stops for lemonade, photo ops, and more!

Decorations can get pretty elaborate but for the simplest version, make a putting green by laying down green felt in different shapes – skinny long rectangles, squares, curves. Complicate holes by adding obstacles like a bucket to putt around, a 2X4 backboard to putt off of, or a hill. The options are endless!

[Full instructions can be found here.](#)

71 **build-a-bouquet**

Create beautiful flower arrangements using real or silk flowers in this crafty art activity. If using real flowers, take residents on a walk to select their own wildflowers or to a local farmers market for a few large bouquets. Silk flowers can be purchased online or your local craft store. Check their site in advance for deeply discounted coupons to purchase flowers with! Have residents arrange their flowers in vases or paint plastic bottles. After residents can decorate their rooms or place their arrangements around the community for all to enjoy! Add music to make the session more enjoyable using Eversound.

Find free playlists for your session on our Spotify [channel here.](#)

72 **in full bloom**

For this activity, residents will create their own cards that they can send to relatives. This is a wonderful activity for residents with mild to moderate cognitive decline. To get started, have your local print shop or drug store print out 4 x 6 cards (Walgreen's, CVS, Walmart). During the activity, talk to residents about each flower, and then have residents choose their favorite for their cards. Have residents look through stickers or other small decorations that they can decorate the inside of their card with. At the end, have them sign the card and send them out to the family members of their choice!

You can find royalty-free stock photos of flowers from [Pixabay.com](#)

73 bird to the wise

Bird watching is a great hobby for residents to partake in that peaks curiosity while getting residents outdoors. Create a pamphlet or print out with pictures and quick facts about common birds in your area that residents can reference on an outing. Find a local park or easy nature trail for residents to explore, and see how many birds they can spot!

For some information on some of the most common birds, use this [reference guide](#)!

74 the great cookie dunk challenge

A tasty science experiment, this activity uses a variety of cookies and milk to learn about buoyancy. Have residents guess which cookies will float and which will sink and turn the experiment into a friendly competition. The resident who guesses the correct cookies, gets a prize. This activity is ideal for residents who enjoy science or learning and is cognitively stimulating.

[Cookie Challenge Instructions](#)

75 fiddler on the roof

This Broadway classic premiered in 1964 and still runs to this day. This musical is based on the stories written by Sholem Aleichem, whose names literally means “peace be with you”. Take a trip to Broadway by playing [original cast recordings](#) of the hit songs! In between listening sessions, teach fun facts about the show.

[50 Facts About Fiddler on the Roof](#)

76 the art of origami

Origami is the art of paper folding and is often associated with Japanese culture. This is a great activity to get residents to use their hands and can be incorporated into a day of learning about Asian cultures. Simple origami folds include fans, hats, foxes, frogs and even alphabet letters.

[Simple Origami Folding Instructions](#)

77 name that tune

A fun and interactive activity that is a great way to trigger memories and get residents to reminisce about a certain era. Play a game of “name that tune” with playlists from different genres. Check out our pre-selected playlists on our Spotify channel [here](#). This is also a great activity to use Eversound with. For residents struggling to name a song, provide visual aids such as the album cover or provide words and images provided in the song.

78 build me up, buttercup

This easy activity allows residents to combine food and science. This activity uses less than five items, most of which can be found around your community. Once the butter is made, you can have residents create specialty butters by combining jellies, fruits or even herbs. Serve the butter at your meals for the week and let residents try each combination and vote on their favorite!

[Butter in a Jar Instructions](#)

79

what am i?

Charades will get your residents moving and cognitively stimulated. This game can be played standing or seated for residents who have more trouble moving around. Add variations to the game such as having a single theme, or team play where the other team has a chance to steal to put a new spin on this classic game.

[Charades Words and Variations](#)

80

harvest moon

Did you know each month has a name for its full moon? In September, it is none other than the Harvest Moon, or the month closest to the autumn equinox. Prepare residents for a Harvest Moon viewing by teaching fun facts and science behind the moon and then, schedule a viewing on the appropriate night.

[The Science Behind the Harvest Moon](#)

81

recycled & upcycled

Have some plastic containers laying around from your kitchen? Upcycle plastic containers by decorating them using scrapbook paper and Modge Podge. Find various scrapbook sheets from your local craft store and foam brushes for the Modge Podge. Ideas for the containers can be to hold pens, brushes, make-up, plants or supplies.

82

speed dating

Whether you are introducing new residents to your community or want to encourage your current residents to get to know each other even more, a round of speed dating is a great place to start. Pair residents up around a table or create a space with two chairs facing each other in a row or circle and have each resident choose a partner. Give each resident 5 minutes to ask questions and then switch. Create notecards with questions to hand out to each resident to help the conversation along!

[Speed Dating Question Ideas](#)

83

murder mystery dinner

Dinner just got a little bit more mysterious. A popular past-time, murder mystery dinners combine entertainment with role play, giving all residents a part in the experience. Residents receive random roleplay assignments, some with speaking parts and others as audience members. Murder mystery games can be purchased or created using note cards. For an added bonus, allow residents to dress-up to match the theme!

[Free Murder Mystery Games](#)

84

backyard games

Enjoy the last days of summer outdoors with a variety of backyard games for residents to play. If you do not have a courtyard to set-up games, try setting them up in your parking lot or a large indoor space. These backyard games a great way to get residents up and moving as well as get some friendly competition going. This activity can also be a great intergenerational experience for visiting families.

[Backyard games ideas](#)

85 the hen that feeds

Bring birds to your community space by hanging these easy to make bird feeders around. This upcycling activity uses only a few materials and is a budget-friendly activity. Extend the life of the activity by monitoring the birds coming to the feeders and documenting them in your community for bird watching enthusiasts!

[Plastic Bottle Bird Feeder Instructions](#)

86 game night (family fun month)

August is Family Fun Month and this intergenerational activity allows you to play games from each decade! Set up a video game system such as a Wii that allows everyone to interact with the game by moving their bodies. You can also set up card games, board games, and even a karaoke machine so everyone can play their favorite!

87 where in the world

Get to know your fellow communities in this fun game that lets your residents interact with residents across the nation, or even the globe! Set-up a webcam or laptop in your community room. Using Skype, connect with a community in a different part of the country or globe. The aim of the game is to guess the location of the other community by asking each other questions. This is also a great opportunity for residents to learn about other parts of the country and world.

88 tie-dye extravaganza

Have some old fabrics lying around your community? Give them some love with a full fledged tie-dye session! Purchase packs of white t-shirts that residents can tie-dye alongside any [white materials](#) you may have lying around such as sheets, cloth napkins or even towels.

[Tie-Dye Instructions](#)

89 bad to the minton

What would summer camp be without a little friendly competition? Get your residents together for a badminton tournament! For each round, play a different variation of badminton in the seven ways below. Have each team choose their name and team colors to keep spirits high!

[7 Easy Ways to Play Badminton](#)

90 a walk in nature

Get to know the great outdoors in your neighborhood! Take residents on a tour around the park, or local green spaces after a lesson on the most common plants in your area. Create a presentation with the different types of plants that residents can expect to find using the site below.

[Find Plants in My Zip Code](#)

Pumpkin Decorating Contest
Retreat at Sunny Vista



91

you've got talent

Your community has talent, now it is time to share it! Hosting a talent show is an excellent opportunity for your residents to share their special skills. Skip the auditions and ask residents to sign-up with their talent and promote the show to family, friends, staff and other residents. If family and friends are unable to attend, film the show and send it to them after!

92

puzzles & pajamas

Just like a camp sleepover, have residents wear their favorite pajamas in this pajama and puzzle picnic! Set-up makeshift tents around a common space with puzzles and other games at the center. Have residents split off into groups. This is also a great activity to use Eversound with using either campside sounds or their favorite playlists.

[Puzzles and Pajamas Instructions](#)

93

follow the yellow brick road

The Wizard of Oz premiered on August 25, 1939. Turn this anniversary into a day of themed activities including trivia, matching games, bingo and even relay races! End the day with a movie night, playing your community's favorite version of the Wizard of Oz!

[Wizard of Oz Activity Ideas](#)

94

pom-pom cactus

This low maintenance "plant" brings the outdoors to your community. These cute pom-pom cactus are a fun activity that livens up any space, and the best part? It is everlasting! This easy craft uses few materials and can be made with different colored pom-poms. Another great idea? Use your upcycled plastic containers from the "Recycled & Upcycled" activity.

[Pom-Pom Cactus Instructions](#)

95

staycation vacations

Pack your bags! Take a summer vacation to these five destinations, all chosen by National Geographic as the top places to visit this summer. These vacations are week long activities that allow you and your residents to explore all aspects of an area, finishing with a virtual tour of the destination.

[5 Virtual Vacation Activity Plans](#)

96

painted rock garden

With countless [health benefits](#), painting is a great therapeutic option for residents. Decorate your community garden with painted rocks, a popular way to jazz up your garden or mark plants. If you do not have rocks around your community, you can take residents to your local park to collect rocks to paint.

[Painted Rock Garden Ideas](#)

97

state fair

Fair season is around the corner, with carnivals popping up all over town. Most state fairs happen in late summer and early fall, as temperatures begin to cool. Even if your area's state fair is a trek, you can go to your local fair or bring in hot dogs and funnel cakes for residents.

98

pumpkin spice and everything nice

Autumn can mean a lot of things, but one staple is pumpkin spice. From scents to lattes, the coming of fall also means the coming of pumpkin spice. Have residents create pumpkin spice or even cinnamon scented candles in this easy, 2-ingredient candle making activity. For an added bonus, serve fall flavored drinks such as apple cider alongside the class.

[Instructions: DIY 2-Ingredient Candle Making](#)

99

listening to the day

The theme for this year's World Listening Day (July 18) was "the collective field" and it inspired this activity. We are highlighting it in September for our "Celebrating Heritage" month!

This program idea comes from Sue Brewer of Inspira Arrowhead, Cadence Senior Living.

[Download the printable program](#)

100

in flying colors

Start fall off with a glimpse of the nation's most spectacular fall foliage. Host video sessions that take residents across the country to see the best fall foliage from a birds-eye view. Encourage residents to share their own leaf peeping experiences or suggest where to go next!

[Aerial View of Utah's Fall Foliage](#)

101

community documentary

Video is steadily becoming more and more popular and a favorite pastime for families and residents. Create a "seasonal" documentary of your community and ask residents to partake in various skits mixed with candid video. Make sure to receive consent from your residents before filming. At the end of the season, compile all the videos together and share with residents and their families!

102

Norman Rockwell stories

Build your own story around these classic Norman Rockwell pictures. There's no right or wrong answer!

This program idea comes from Joseph Hannaford of Bedford Falls, Benchmark Senior Living.

[Download the printable program](#)

103

physically distanced parade 104

Celebrate a special event like a 100th birthday or anniversary in a unique but physically distant way to keep everyone safe!

This program idea comes from Stephanie Watts of Woodland Terrace, Kisco Senior Living.

[Download the printable program](#)

106

snuggles project

Have a fierce knitting club in your community? If so, encourage this group to knit (or crochet) blankets or toys for animals in shelters. Shelters can be stressful for pets. The Snuggles Project helps soothe animals with a touch of love from these handmade items and gives a touch of home to a shelter. Learn more about how your community can participate below.

Information: [The Snuggles Project](#)

107

card games you haven't heard of

This activity could be a fun variation for your resident poker or bridge clubs, and a fun men's group program. With 6 variations of card games, you could easily host this over several weeks and if successful, add to your monthly calendar. Some of the games include Knockout Whist and Palace.

Instructions: [6 Fun Card Games](#)

105

wheel of fortune

On this day in 1975 Wheel of Fortune debuted on NBC. Play some wheel of fortune at your own community! You could play this hangman style without the money wheel or [try this board game version](#) with all that you may need. Include fun facts about Wheel of Fortune to kick-off a post-game discussion.

108

origami & mindfulness

Recent research shows origami may support mindfulness. This program examines Japanese history, mindfulness and has instructions for origami projects. It is said that mindfulness can help to relieve stress, lower blood pressure, treat heart disease, reduce chronic pain, alleviate gastrointestinal difficulties and improve sleep.

Instructions: [Origami & Mindfulness](#)

109

mancala board game and history

This ancient count-and-capture board game has hundreds of variations. Mancala is an easy game to learn, but not so easy to master! This program gives you the rules and strategy for how to play Mancala. The game is ideal for ages eight and above, so intergenerational play is encouraged.

Instructions: [Mancala Board Game & History](#)

110

left, right, center

This game is fun and easy to pick up, all you need are some die and poker chips! The game relies on luck and depend on what the die have to say. Using the results of die, residents pass chips accordingly. For an added bonus (and calendar filler) expand this game into a community-wide tournament.

Instructions: [Left, Right, Center](#)

111

do you want to build an igloo?

Using items around your community such as marshmallows and plates, this igloo craft idea is simple and fun. While setting-up the craft, teach residents about the [origins of igloos](#) and those who live in them, the Inuits aka Eskimos. While it may seem counterintuitive to create a house of ice to protect from the cold, [this article](#) explains why these homes worked and continue to do so today.

Instructions: [Build An Igloo](#)

112

new age journaling

One way to increase happiness is to keep a gratitude journal. Journaling has been reported to have many health benefits and a favorite pastime of many famous people, including Ronald Reagan. Encourage residents to create "new age" journals where instead of traditional writing they can clip together fun phrases, inspirational quotes or even include photos of significant events. For tech savvy residents, have them start a Vlog!

113

three things in common

This short activity combines movement and conversation, ideal for getting your residents to connect and get to know each other. This activity is perfect for introducing new residents. Prepare the room with snacks and chairs that face one another. Then encourage residents to find three things they share in common in under 2 minutes. Switch pairings until everyone has had a chance to chat!

Instructions: [Three Things in Common](#)

114

door decor

Dress up residents' apartment doors with a wreath! This easy to make [crepe paper](#) wreath will not only look great for fall but can be brought back out for spring!

Instructions for wreath

115

i do haiku

In this workshop, teach residents about haikus and share a few examples before asking residents to create their own. Showcase different types of nature images for residents to gain inspiration from while writing their haikus. At the end, host a reading.

Instructions: [How to write a Haiku](#)

116

cards for soldiers

One of the most important things in life is to feel a connection to community. In this activity, have each resident make 2 cards for a soldier either in your community or who is currently serving overseas. For each mailing, include a handwritten card from residents and a blank one so that soldiers can send one home to their family!

Instructions: [Cards for Soldiers](#)

117

crossword/word search race

Print out the same large print crossword or Word Search for each table of residents and have them race to complete them! If you want to do multiple rounds, have the puzzles get harder and harder. Have a small prize for each round or space out the contest over a few weeks.

Resource: [Free Crossword Puzzles](#)

118

adventures of Huckleberry Finn

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn was published on this day by Mark Twain in 1885. This classic novel can be a great addition to your community's book clubs. As an activity, have residents watch this quick synopsis and discuss the novel's major theme. If you have the time or space on your calendar, space this activity out and read or listen on audiobook to this American Classic.

119

zen coloring

Coloring has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety. As part of your wellness program, incorporate a coloring workshop where residents can drop-in. Play calming music, using Eversound for those that need it, while having residents color mandalas, a popular motif for relaxation.

Resource: [Free Printable Mandala Coloring Sheets](#)

120

be a cubist: create your own art

The photographs taken from multiple perspectives combine to become Cubist art. Residents engage with art history by becoming Cubist artists. In this Eversound Program, residents combine the images they created in the previous section of the series. A simple craft activity for some, perhaps. But others will see through to the art history lesson behind the cut and paste activity.

121

planet naming game

In this program, use a memory trick to learn the names of the planets, and keep them in order. Using mnemonic devices as a memory tool helps for specific knowledge, but it also helps the brain make connections. After learning the planets this way, residents often find their confidence increases as they approach learning new things. Then, once the names and the order of the planets are memorized, various household items represent the planets to illustrate the relative sizes.

Instructions: [Planet Naming Game](#)

122

name that love song

Love songs are just like relationships, some good some bad and just some you can't live without. Play Name That Song using iconic love songs from your residents' generation. To make this game less formal, open up a discussion to residents and whether they have any memories they would like to share when they hear the tune. Distribute prizes to the winners. This program can be hosted by genre, such as Love Songs of the 50s, Heartbreak Ballads and more!

Resource: [Love Songs of The 50s/60s](#)

123

the language of love

Do you know your love language? Made famous by Gary Chapman in his famous book from 1992, the 5 love languages are the ways people express and feel love. Encourage your residents to learn there with this printable quiz. Hold a discussion with residents around the results, and what it means.

Resource: [Printable Love Language Test](#)

124

DIY spa day

Scrub off the dry winter season in this fun workshop that allows residents to make their own hand or foot scrub using supplies in your community. This activity is extremely cost-effective and allows residents to use what they make immediately. Offer residents a variety of scents or essential oils, or use common extracts like vanilla or lemon. At the end of the workshop, have residents use their scrubs and wrap their hands in warm towels.

Instructions: [Homeable DIY Hand Scrubs](#)

125

inspirational older adults

As perceptions around older adults continue to evolve, this activity can shed a new light onto the misconception that certain accomplishments must be done at a certain age. This list highlights major accomplishments including running a marathon, climbing Everest or learning to read. Use this list to begin a discussion around bucket list items residents may have and share these real life stories to inspire goals of their own.

Resource: [Inspirational Older Adults](#)

126

carrots in a jar

Spring is the perfect time for growing carrots in a jar! This gardening project is a great way to kick off spring no matter the season. These easy to care for plants can easily grow in a sunny window if it is still too cold to keep them outside. After growing, [make carrot cupcakes](#) to enjoy the "vegetables of your labor".

Instructions: [Grow Carrots in Jars](#)

127

mix up the middle

Middle names are unique to each of us and make up who we are but often are never referenced. Have residents submit their middle names into a bowl, then once all names are submitted have residents draw a middle name from the bowl and guess who it belongs to.

128

bottoms up

Get to know Ireland through its many beers in this men's group beer tasting. Suggested beers to sample include: Harp, Guinness, Kilkeny, and Murphy's Irish Stout. For an added twist, consider hosting a blind tasting and have residents try to guess what they're drinking and rate them.

129

friday the 13th

Whether you believe in superstition or not, Friday the 13th is a day everyone is familiar with. In this activity, share some of the most common superstitions from black cats, walking under a ladder, opening an umbrella indoors, and more. See whether residents have some less common superstitions to share with the group.

Resource: [Superstitions From Around the World](#)

130

pi(e) day

Enjoying math is a unique trait but everyone loves pie! Quiz residents on "Pi" from the number of digits to the most common denominations. After having residents either enjoy different types of pies or host a cooking class making one of these easy pies.

131

colored rice sensory activity

This activity is perfect for memory care residents and is aesthetically pleasing! This activity uses two simple ingredients, rice, vinegar and food coloring. You can add fun items to the bins of colored rice or encourage residents to mix them together and make "rice art".

Instructions: [DIY Rice Sensory Bins](#)

132

unsolved mystery: art heist

On March 18, 1990 the largest US art heist was pulled off in Boston at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum—13 pieces worth \$500 million went missing! Two decades later and the mystery is still unsolved. Learn more about the heist by listening to the podcast from Last Seen.

Resource: Last Seen: [Art Heist at Isabella Stewart Garner Museum](#)

127

roses are paper

Bring spring into the community with these beautiful rose centerpieces made from paper. These paper roses are easy to create and have simple instructions for residents. For residents with dexterity issues, precut the petals to help with the activity. After the roses have been created, decorate your common spaces or dining areas. These flowers can be reused in plenty of spring activities also!

Instructions: [DIY Paper Roses](#)

128

come out of your cocoon

Caring for and observing one of life's miracles is a wonderful feeling! Direct your resident's focus toward nurturing life by hatching butterflies. [This kit](#) will take caterpillars to butterflies with ease! This activity engages your residents with the miracle of life and teaches them about the metamorphosis process.

Instructions: [Raising Butterflies](#)

129

world water trivia

Water is arguably one of Earth's most precious resources yet sadly much of the world still lacks access to clean water. Start this activity by projecting [this quiz](#) on a screen and have residents answer as a group. After sharing the answers, have residents take a break and sample different fruit infused flavored waters such as lemon mint or orange basil. After the break, have residents participate in a trivia game using questions from the quiz (or add some of your own!) and give the winning team reusable water bottles!

130

roll of the dice

Get risky with your workouts, use this dice to incorporate your moves in a different pattern. Roll a regular numbered dice or pull from a deck of cards to determine the number of reps for each move to do. Give each resident a chance to participate.

131

light as air

[Grow an air plant garden](#) with your residents. Air plants are used in several types of terrarium arrangements or just make great single decorative pieces. These plants are incredibly easy to care for making them ideal for residents who may have more difficulty participating in hands-on activities. Air plants are commonly hung and can double as decor in your residents' room or common areas.

132

three things in common

Play this classic game to welcome new residents or to have residents get to know each other a bit better. This easy to play game mirrors speed dating where residents sit facing each other in two lines. The objective is for residents to find at least three things they have in common within the designated time. Then switch partners until everyone has had a chance to talk to one and other.

Instructions: [Three Things in Common](#)

2023 holiday calendar & dates

january

- 1 new year's day
- 4 national trivia day
- 11 national milk day
- 16 Martin Luther King Jr. day
- 20 Inauguration day
- 23 national pie day
- 29 national puzzle day

february

- 2 groundhog day
- 3 national carrot cake day
- 3 national wear red day
- 9 national pizza day
- 12 Lincoln's birthday
- 14 Valentine's day
- 19 national caregivers day
- 20 presidents day
- 21 mardi gras
- 22 national margarita day
- 23 national chili day

march

- 2 national read across America day
- 3 world hearing day
- 3 national anthem day
- 8 international women's day
- 12 daylight savings (begin)
- 14 national pi day
- 17 St. Patrick's day

april

- 1 April fool's day
- 7 good friday
- 9 easter
- 10 easter monday
- 14 national gardening day
- 19 national banana day
- 22 international earth day

may

- 5 cinco de Mayo
- 6 national nurses day
- 14 Mother's day
- 16 national barbecue day
- 20 national armed forces day
- 24 scavenger hunt day
- 28 Pentecost
- 28 national hamburger day
- 29 national biscuit day
- 29 memorial day

june

- 1 national pen pal day
- 2 national donut day
- 11 national making life beautiful day
- 14 flag day
- 17 national apple strudel day
- 18 Father's day
- 21 national selfie day

july

- 4 independence day
- 12 National Pecan Pie Day
- 14 National Mac & Cheese
- 16 National Icecream Day
- 23 parents day
- 25 Wine & Cheese Day
- 30 national cheesecake day
- 30 national friendship day

august

- 7 purple heart day
- 14 national spirit of '45 day
- 21 senior citizen's day
- 26 national dog day

september

- 4 labor day
- 10 Grandparent's day
- 11 Patriot's day or Sept 11
- 15 cheeseburger day
- 17 citizenship day

october

- 1 national coffee day
- 6 world smile day
- 9 indigenous people's day
- 14 national dessert day
- 16 boss's day
- 26 national pumpkin day
- 29 national cat day
- 31 Halloween

november

- 3 national sandwich day
- 5 daylight savings (end)
- 11 veteran's day
- 13 world kindness day
- 23 thanksgiving
- 24 black friday
- 27 cyber monday

december

- 4 national cookie day
- 4 national dice day
- 7 Pearl Harbor remembrance day
- 25 Christmas
- 28 national card playing day
- 31 new year's eve

physical distancing activities

Hallway Activities, Activity Carts, and In-Room Ideas

1

library cart

This one is pretty self-explanatory. Hit each room with a variety of books to choose from! You might also include adult coloring books in the mix for those who aren't as into reading.

2

technology carts

A technology cart can have a variety of fun tech to play with. From a tablet to a kindle to headphones to listen to music! Here, Eversound community, Thorne Crest Senior Living uses Eversound in conjunction with a tablet to provide virtual music therapy to residents by going from room to room. Communities can also use this as a way to conduct virtual visits with family members using [Eversound's wireless headphone system](#) for immersive and meaningful visits.

3

puzzle cart

Load up your cart with puzzles of all kinds... Actual puzzles of animals and landscapes as well as puzzle books full of crosswords and word searches. Seniors will have fun and benefit from the positive effects of seniors doing puzzles.

4

dessert cart

You can base your cart around any food, so why not dessert? Decorate your cart like an ice cream truck and serve sundaes, or opt for cookies and brownies. Check out these fantastic and fun carts from Rachel Essmyer from [The Boulevard Senior Living!](#)



5

craft cart

Crafts are a part of activities many seniors enjoy and would love to continue to do even when social distancing. There are endless options for crafts that can be brought to each room. Explain the craft to each resident or write out instructions to leave with the resident.

6

happy hour

Social Distancing doesn't have to mean prohibition! A [happy hour cart](#) can bring the fun with a speaker playing music as you take each senior's order. There can be wine carts with wine tasting and a side of cheese, or carts of beer to take their choice.

7 snack cart

You can never go wrong with snacks! Drop by each room with a variety of snack choices, or go with a theme like a trail mix. A trail mix theme like the one pictures offers seniors the ability to choose what they want to be included.

8 holiday carts

There is always a holiday to celebrate. Whether it be a recognized holiday like Halloween or the national day of (insert food or activity) you can find online. You can always find something to celebrate even if it's silly. Consider holidays like Cinco de Mayo, like Activity Professional, Nolly Brandon of Greenwood Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, or even national holidays like National Donut Day!



9 coffee cart

You've seen a coffee cart before... Recreate it! With coffee choices, tea, cups, and all the fixings.

10 bingo

Seniors just love their bingo; Don't let them go without by adapting bingo to social distancing. There are a variety of ways to do bingo and having a cart can allow you to switch it weekly. Bingo can be done day by day with one number called per day or can be done in the hallway, or through eversound technology where seniors can hear numbers called in their rooms through their headphones.

11 games

Have some competitive seniors? Help them scratch the itch with room to room games! Through horse races like below, residents can play together while staying distanced.

12 flowers

A simple flower cart can be a nice way to brighten a room. Similarly, a gardening cart can be a therapeutic activity that can be done independently.

☆ small-groups during COVID-19

Small groups can be just as effective as big groups. Find ways to bring a bit of normalcy with [these tips](#).

13 Hawaiian cart

There are endless themes to choose from, one being Hawaiian! A Hawaiian theme can include grass skirts, lei's, and Hawaiian punch for drinking. Check out more carts from Activity Professional, Nolly Brandon of Greenwood Nursing and Rehabilitation Center!



14 manicure cart

Social distancing means putting pampering on hold in most cases. Bring seniors this basic luxury with a cart of hot towels, lotions, and a variety of nail polish options.

15 photo props

Getting photos of seniors having fun can be beneficial for the resident as well as their family, who can view these photos and see the smile on their faces. Fill your cart with a backdrop, props and a whiteboard to write a message.

16 the art of origami

Origami is the art of paper folding and is often associated with Japanese culture. This is a great activity to get residents to use their hands and can be incorporated into a day of learning about asian cultures. Simple origami folds include fans, hats, foxes, frogs and even alphabet letters. Have residents create their own origami and then collect them all to create a wonderful piece of art that can be seen throughout the community. Print the instructions for each origami piece and include in a pack with the appropriate paper.

[Origami Instructions + Materials](#)

17 where in the world

Get to know your fellow communities in this fun game that lets your residents interact with residents across the nation, or even the globe! Set-up and show residents how to use Skype or other video-servicing apps on their tablets or iN2L devices. Next, connect with a community in a different part of the country. The aim of the game is to guess the location of the other community by asking each other questions. This is also a great opportunity for residents to learn about other parts of the country and connect with others from the comfort of their room and tablets.

18 going to the dogs

Invoke community ties by having residents create dog toys for pets in shelters. With three different types of toys to create using household items, residents can pick and choose their favorite dog toys. Bundle the toys into "packs" and donate them to your local animal shelter. Pre-portion out materials into bags and distribute to residents. Once donated, ask the shelter for a packet that can be shared with residents about the pets they have helped.

19 letters to soldiers

We can always express gratitude to those who serve. Have residents write heartfelt gestures and sentiment to those serving across the world. To expand this activity you could ask residents to create cards or start a collection drive for care packages. To make this activity feel more connected, ask residents to write cards to those who have served in your community.

20 mindful coloring & design

Coloring has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety. As part of your wellness program, incorporate a coloring workshop where residents can drop-in. Play calming music while having residents color mandalas, a popular motif for relaxation. To change this up, ask residents to draw their own vision of relaxation on a blank canvas. Discuss the drawings and why it helps them relax!

21 art therapy – lost at sea

Do you have residents that could use a relaxing escape? For those residents who feel lost, overwhelmed, or isolated, expressing those feelings and visualizing hope can be a therapeutic way to invite positive emotions into their life. This activity involves imagining being lost at sea and visualizing the ideal lighthouse that would provide the right kind of guidance. Here are the instructions: Visualize being lost at sea on a stormy night and seeing a glimmer of light leading to land. Draw, color, or paint a lighthouse as a source of guidance. Depict yourself in relation to the lighthouse somewhere in the image. Add words to represent sources of guidance in your life. Provide the necessary materials in prepackaged bags and distribute. Consider adding some aromatherapy to the mix.

Instructions: [Art therapy lighthouse](#)

22 mail your problems away

This therapeutic activity is a great way to say goodbye to old resentments or grudges. Sometimes it is easier to express or recognize hurts and regrets when there's distance between yourself and the issue. This postcard activity can be a good self-discovery exercise that helps answer the question, "what would I say to someone if I didn't have to do it face-to-face?" Have residents write a message to someone they're frustrated with or to someone with whom they have something to share. On the blank side, have the client express their feelings with art. Use this as a way to start a conversation about what's being expressed with the postcard.

[Postcard template](#)

23 radio talk with Eversound

This activity is intended to be used throughout the year and invites residents to host their own show! Gather interested residents and assign roles ranging from researcher to broadcaster. You can record each show using the microphone on your computer or smartphone. Share with your residents, community and families monthly. Eversound's headphones can reach residents up to 300 feet away. Each week, pass out headphones to residents and the microphone to the host.

safe ideas for small groups

[Find a handful of ideas and services](#) that can help in the hunt for ways to keep people connected.

24 dance parties

Start a dance party like everyone is watching! Inspired by Molly Donlan with the Woods at Canco, keep the mood lifted by [kicking off a dance party](#) by positioning yourself where residents can see you. Bonus if you can add a fun costume! If you don't have a courtyard, try a hallway dance party like [Mountain Ridge Health and Rehabilitation](#) or a silent disco similar to Commonwealth Senior Living's [Dancing Through the Decades party](#).

From The Woods at Canco, Mountain Ridge Health and Rehabilitation, Commonwealth Senior Living

25 window family visits

Have a window where residents and their families can see one another? Perfect, that is all you need to keep residents and their loved ones connected. Try interactive games like [Tic Tac Toe](#), or make it fun with a "visitation window", see [Majorie House Memory Care Community](#) for inspiration. For residents whose families are further away, use video chat instead.

From Winfield Senior Living Community, Majorie House Memory Care Community

26 pet adoption

Inspired by Tammy Hall, this unique activity cart brings joy to residents by allowing them to adopt an animal. Fill a cart with various stuffed animals and allow residents to "adopt" their new friend. Each animal comes with adoption papers, giving residents a fun background story to read and leaving them with a lifelong friend.

From Tammy Hall

27 spirit weeks

Reminiscent of high school, spirit weeks are a creative way the whole community can get involved. This popular idea recommends pajama days to color days, and truly can be tailored to fit the preferences of your residents and team. For inspiration, [check out this list of spirit weeks from other communities](#).

28 radio talk with Eversound

Using Google's 3D Animals and a smartphone, residents can get up close and personal with animals from across the globe. Inspired by [Westbury Retirement Community's zoo tour](#), consider creating your own tour with animals in a particular region or select animals residents have always wanted to see!

From Westbury Retirement Community

29 hallway games

Whether it is friendly competition playing [foam hockey](#), or lifting voices with a sing-a-long, hallway activities are a great way to safely engage residents. For some inspiration, check out [this list of 10 hallway games that go beyond bingo](#).

From Accolade Healthcare Pontiac, IL

technologies for physical distancing

Provide engagement and socialization for residents with some 21st century help [from these technologies](#).

30 window art

Not only does this activity brighten up your communities, it lightens the mood for both residents and staff. There are plenty of ways you can do this on a budget (see some resources here). Order window friendly paint or markers, or use shaped construction paper and tape to the windows. Find inspiration from activity professionals in this [Facebook Group, **Activity Directors**](#)

31 parade

This creative idea involves the whole community! Depending on the logistics of your community, have residents line up appropriately for the parade and give them fun flags to wave. Contact resident families in the area, or figures in your community, to drive by and engage with residents from afar. Some parades have included flashy cars with paint, to drivers dressed in fun costumes. Here are a few inspiring parades from the Village at Belmar and Garden View Assisted Living of Lafayette

*From Village at Belmar,
Garden View Assisted Living of Lafayette*

32 fashion show

Strut your stuff with a fun take on [fashion inspired by Accolade Healthcare in Pontiac, IL](#)! Pick a theme and recruit a few members from your team to help get the show started. A few fun themes include Hollywood Glam, Summer Vacation or even dressing up in fun costumes you already have (think Animals Gone Wild). Play music residents can sing or clap along to from their doorways and have them vote on their favorite outfit, you may even ask a resident to be the announcer. Another fun variation? Wear the same outfit and see who wore it best!

From Accolade Healthcare Pontiac, IL

33 photo shoots

This is a great way to get residents out of their room and have a keepsake to share with families who cannot visit. Create an easily sanitized backdrop (for example, have the chair residents pose at least 6 feet from the backdrops and make sure props are laminated for quick cleaning) and have them write fun notes on a draw-erase board. For out of this world inspiration, check this rocket ship photoshoot from Somerford House Frederick.

From Somerford House Frederick

34 virtual beauty parlor

Not feeling overly confident with a pair of shears? Not a problem! Play stylist with this fun app, [Hairstyle Makeover](#), which allows residents to change their hair instantly. Inspired by [Ozark Health Nursing](#), residents can try out hairstyles they may never have before. If you have a tablet or smartphone readily available, this is a laughter-filled activity that is best done during 1:1 resident visits!

From Ozark Health Nursing

35 concerts & performances

Depending on the layout of your community, you may be able to host entertainment in your courtyards, like this [performer did with the bagpipes](#). Check with your regular performers to see if they are willing to perform in this capacity. Other ideas include recruiting performers to give readings, monologues, or share a fun talent like magic. If you have a large space and can appropriately distance, try live programming where residents can interact with presenters and performers in real time.

From University Village Retirement Community

memory care COVID-19 best practices

[We can offer a some guidance](#) on how to keep residents calm and comfortable in these uncertain times.

36 hallway olympics

While the Olympics may be postponed, that doesn't mean you can't safely host a competition of your own. Courtesy of the folks at Yorktown Manor, set-up various yard games that can be played from residents' rooms. A few ideas include bag toss, putt-putt, or a ring toss.

[See how many golds they took home!](#)

Courtesy of Yorktown Manor

37 hallway meditation

Restricting contact can cause anxiety and stress for residents. Meditation is a proven strategy to help cope with anxiety and stress, and doesn't have to be limited because of physical distancing. Consider creating an ambiance in your hallway by using an essential oil diffuser or electric/battery operated candle lights.

[See how Compass on the Bay stays calm.](#)

Courtesy of Compass on the Bay

38 hallway trivia

Get those minds working with a friendly competition of trivia! You can assign residents to teams or have residents play individually. Pass out slips for residents to write their responses on and, at the end of each round, have them share their answers out loud. For an ongoing event, turn this into a weekly tournament and keep the scoreboard in the hallway for residents to see. Here are some [free trivia questions](#) to get you started.

Courtesy of Acoya Mesa

39 hallway never have i ever

This is always a fun one and can sometimes have a lot of shock value. It is a good way for residents to get to know each other and is very entertaining to see how residents respond! This activity is also a great way to tie into reminiscence activities. Residents can sit in their doorways and you can give them three items to use as their "fingers". Some items that are good for all to see include paint sticks, straws, or flags.

Courtesy of The Heights on Huebner

40 hallway bowling

Strike them out! Residents can participate in hallway bowling no matter their circumstances. For residents with less mobility, create a ramp (a folding table slanted downward will work) that is positioned in front of the pins. To keep residents safe, use a plastic ball or a soccer ball as the bowling ball. Set pins up in front of a board to make resetting easy! Play a few rounds and see who wins!

Courtesy of Keenan Grosdidier

41 hallway horse racing

It's off to the races! This activity can be done in two ways. The first using a tabletop horse racing game that residents can make their bets on the lucky horse. Set the horses up on a table in the hallway, making it visible to all residents. Pass out disposable money for residents to bet with and give the winner a prize!

Courtesy of Five Star Quality Care

guides & resources

[Download these free resources](#) designed to support senior living professionals.

42 hallway car racing

Use remote control cars to allow residents to compete with one another. Residents that are not racing, can be spectators and wave checkered flags. Ask staff to dress up and announce the race. See how [Yorktown Manor hits the tracks!](#)

Courtesy of Yorktown Manor

43 hallway Mario Kart

This hallway activity brings Mario Kart to life! Tie balloons to a remote control car (or a few depending on the size of your hallway) and select a resident(s) to control the car. Then, pass out Nerf guns to the remaining residents whose goal is to shoot the balloons. The way to win? Shoot each balloon at least once! It is recommended to use different color balloons to help identify this or put a non-toxic washable substance on the nerf gun tips to see where they hit.

*Courtesy of The Commons,
United Methodist Communities*

44 hallway sing-a-long

This evergreen activity is one of the easiest hallway activities to execute. The best part of this activity is that it lends itself to so many variations, ranging from spiritual hymns to hosting an American Idol-like competition. Other creative variations include show tunes, Broadway songs, or even nursery rhymes. And if you've got the talent in house, hold a [hallway performance like Greenwood Nursing & Rehabilitation](#)

Courtesy of Greenwood Nursing & Rehabilitation

45 hallway drumline

When life gives you lemons, make music! This activity idea is not only therapeutic by relieving stress but allows residents to work on their musical talents. If your community already uses drums for mindfulness, great! If not, you can use plastic bins, or [create your own](#) using packing tape or large balloons on tin coffee or paint cans. You can also add other musical instruments to your hallway band such as tambourines, harmonicas and symbols.

Courtesy of JEA Sycamore Place

memory care activities

1

barn babies petting zoo

Bring the petting zoo to you! Check out an organization like [Barn Babies](#) that allows you to have baby animals come to visit your community for the day. This program provides your residents with the chance to hold, play with, and admire the animals for a few hours. It is a great way to brighten their day! The comfort an animal provides can reduce stress, relieve social isolation, and can even calm anxieties. Your residents will love the visit from the furry babies.

2

relaxation station

Did you know mindfulness and meditation training can actually support healthy aging? Meditation has a wide range of physical and emotional benefits that your residents will love. Take a deep breath and spend a day focused on mindfulness and meditation. Use Eversound to block out distractions and allow residents to focus and fully enjoy the program.

View the [full program](#)

3

music bingo

Create bingo cards with a variety of residents favorite songs that fill the boxes ([this Bingo Card Generator](#) makes it easy!). Choose music from a particular genre or generation to start. Print out the bingo cards and pass out to each resident. Connect your smartphone or iPod to Eversound or a speaker and play the first 15-20 seconds of the song through the headphones. Play bingo as normal: first resident to get 5 songs in a row marked on their card wins!

Need music playlists?

Check out our [Eversound Spotify Channel!](#)

4

all the colors of the wind

Music therapy is a wonderful way to engage the mind. Combine music therapy with a free form, upper body exercise for your residents. Play music for your resident through you Eversound headphones. Pass out ribbon streamers and encourage residents to wave them around to the music to create a colorful exercise class!

Jam out to this [playlist](#) with these [ribbons](#).

5

virtual road trip

Did you know on this day in 1908, Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Murdock became the 1st people to travel across the US by car? They left LA in a Packard automobile and arrived in NYC in 32 days, 5 hours, and 25 minutes. Read more about their story [here!](#)

What are your residents favorite road trips or travel stories? Have residents present or share their favorite road trip stories or go on a "Virtual Road Trip" to a destination of their choice. Think of adding sensory objects like " new car smell" tree air fresheners or leather cleaner.

6

kite's up!

Reminisce on simple childhood afternoons for flying a kite in the park or on the beach! As a child, there was something so mesmerizing that watching your kite flyer higher and higher in the wind. Help your residents bring out their inner child with a good, old-fashion kite flying!

Bonus idea:

Turn this into an intergenerational activity by inviting local school children in, pairing them up with a resident and have them decorate and fly the kites together!

7 this tea or that tea

Put those taste buds to the test!

There are countless flavors of tea, each with different health benefits. Let's see if your residents can identify some of the most common ones in a taste test!

[Check out this activity for step by step instructions on Eversound Engage!](#)

8 my main squeeze

When life gives you lemons, make lemonade...in all different flavors! Have residents make their own variations of lemonade by using syrups, fruits and even fresh herbs (perfect way to use herbs from "Hatch Your Own Herbs" Activity). After each resident has created their concoction, have each person participate in a blind tasting and rate their favorites on a simple score card. The lemonade with the highest score, takes home the crown!

[Here are some unique recipes to get you started!](#)

9 hatch your own herbs

Reap what you sow in this easy and budget friendly activity, perfect for the summer weather. Herbs are among some of the easiest plants to grow which makes this activity great for gardeners of all levels. With only a few materials needed, including egg cartons, seeds, soil and a water bottle, residents can dig right in. Once the herbs have grown, have residents create food and drink recipes using fresh herbs. [View the full activity instructions here.](#)

For affordable seed packets, [visit this site for 20 seed packets for \\$20](#) or head to your local Dollar Tree for packets as low as \$0.25.

10 a trip to the Smithsonian

Take a trip to the Smithsonian and explore consumerism from the 1920s to 1970s in these detailed lesson plans. Residents can learn about the items they are most familiar with activity plans for days of learning. Lessons include artifact analysis, discussion questions, and detailed briefs about artifacts from this era in the Smithsonian. Depending on your residents' ability, skip the lessons and see how many items they recognize!

[Consumerism at the Smithsonian Lessons](#)

11 sensory board

Sensory boards are a great way to invoke memory through touch and is ideal for residents with mild to moderate cognitive impairment. By creating sensory boards with textures and familiar objects, such as knobs, residents can connect with past memories and help with dexterity. Sensory boards can be built with family and friend input, using materials they love such as fleece or silk.

[Sensory Board Instructions](#)

12 egg carton herbs

Spend time outside and enjoy nature in this sensory program. Organize a program to make Egg Carton Herbs for residents to enjoy gardening in a comfortable environment (and get some delicious herbs and spices!). This program requires minimal set up but is a ton of fun and can be used to stimulate the senses during the activity (think bare hands in the dirt) as well as the scents of the herbs once in bloom.

dementia care guide for senior living

Sign up to receive a [guide with the latest research](#) and guidance from the Alzheimer's Association.

13 headlines in history

Go back in history to share residents' favorite columns or newspapers, what style of columns they like best (i.e. humor or satire). You can also host a discussion around the history of the newspaper, if your residents feel up to it. See whether you can initiate some reminiscent discussions using monumental headlines from their generation.

14 pack up picnic

Enjoy those April flowers with a picnic in the park! A picnic might bring back some nostalgia of days spent with loved ones, children and friends. Pack a lunch of sandwiches, snacks like pretzels, chips, or fruit. Invite family members to join on this outing with loved ones and enjoy fresh air and reminiscing or see if they can send food recommendations in advance so that you can prepare residents' preferred treat!

15 road trip America!

Story: <http://www.car-addicts.com/feature/car-stories-crossing-america-car>

Did you know on this day in 1908, Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Murdock became the 1st people to travel across the US by car? They left LA in a Packard automobile and arrived in NYC in 32 days, 5 hours, and 25 minutes. Read more about their story here! What are your residents favorite road trips or travel stories? Have residents present or share their favorite road trip stories or go on a "Virtual Road Trip" to a destination of their choice. Think of adding sensory objects like "new car smell" tree air fresheners or leather cleaner.

16 share the love

Have residents share their love stories in a reminiscing group. They could share: - How they met their love - Their favorite memory - Their anniversary date - The first dance song at their wedding Learning more about each other's love story can make your residents feel closer.

Resource: [Free Mandala coloring sheets](#)

17 iconic holiday advertising

Best implemented during the holiday season, see if residents recognize some of the most iconic holiday campaigns of all time! In this activity, create a slideshow of advertisements from leading brands throughout the generations and show how they have evolved with each year. This activity is great for discussions and for sharing interesting facts around these iconic pieces (like the Coca-Cola Christmas cans)

Resource: [30 Famous Holiday Advertisements](#)

18 indoor snow

This activity is a wonderful sensory activity, ideal for memory care and assisted living residents. We recommend asking your assisted living crew to make the snow in larger batches so that everyone can feel the snow. Put the snow in a large box and have residents make snowmen or just hold a discussion around the science behind it!

[How to make snow](#)

top movies for Alzheimer's residents

Engage residents with Alzheimer's by sparking emotion and enabling them to feel present [with these movies](#).

19

Celtic women meditation

Sit back and relax while listening to the Celtic Women. This all-women Irish musical group has become well known for their soothing angelic voices. Set up a meditation room with dim lighting and possibly a diuser (if you have one). Use your Eversound headphones or speakers to play the Celtic Women music for your residents.

[Celtic Women music Playlist](#)

20

nose goes

How strong is your sniffer? Gather some common scents like, lavender, cinnamon, citrus, basil, eucalyptus... (essential oils can come in handy here). Once collected, have your residents go around and smell each one by one to take a guess at what they are smelling. It may be helpful to use a blindfold so they don't read any labels. Keep in mind, the sense of smell tends to weaken for residents with dementia, so don't be discouraged if there are some challenges!

Pro tip: Between scents, have residents smell a small jar of coffee beans. Coffee beans are like a palette cleanser for your nose!

21

horsin' around

Use this activity during the Kentucky Derby or when your facility is hosting a horse race in the hallway. Have your residents pick which horse they'd like to win. You could even have them place a bet on their pony and have them win a prize. Leading up to the race, ask residents what they would name their horse if they had one running and share the history of the race. This is a great activity to involve both assisted living and memory care residents in a shared activity.

22

fallmark movies

While Hallmark Movies may be characteristic of December, why not host a series of fall movies for your residents to watch? Ranging from classics like the Dead Poets Society to When Harry Met Sally, these movies are reminiscent of autumn days and sure to spread cheer. Use Halloween candy as a movie snack and maybe even offer some pumpkin flavored beverages to complete this themed movie night.

[List of movies](#)

23

it's just stuff(ing)!

This activity is great for both assisted living and memory care by incorporating different scents and assigning roles to each group that aligns with their capabilities. Ask your assisted living residents to tear up bread pieces and bake until crisp, while memory care teams can create the spice mixes to sprinkle over bread mixtures. Provide both groups with a variety of precut ingredients such as celery, onions, apples, sausage, bacon or even cranberries! Enjoy throughout the week or invite everyone to a tasting!

24

labor day

While not the official end to summer, Labor Day is a great time to discuss and learn about the different careers each resident pursued. This is also an ideal activity for those suffering with some degree of cognitive decline as you can host a mock career day where residents pick a "job" for the day, such as folding or washing dishes. Use this long weekend to engage residents with light labor and nostalgia.

memory care activities for any day

[Here are seven simple, cheap activities](#) that can stimulate healthy participation.

resources & resident engagement solutions

free websites & activity ideas

Best For DIY Designs & Marketing Materials: Canva

[Canva](#) is an easy to use design app that allows access to plethora of free printables and digital graphics. Whether you need to jazz up a presentation, create a social media graphic or even just create printable graphics for your social events, Canva is the platform to use. The site also allows you to create and save frequently used templates within its program. While Canva offers a plethora of free graphic elements to use, check these sites for additional resources like royalty-free images and graphics: [Pixabay](#), [Pexels](#), [Unsplash](#).

Best for Activity Inspiration & Printables: Pinterest

One of the largest crowdsourced platforms for ideas and free content, Pinterest is a haven for activity inspiration, free printables and more. Take advantage of these Pinterest boards for access to printable templates: [Free Printables](#), [Free Themed Printables](#), [Free Activity Printables](#), [Cricut Files & Printables](#).

Best for Turn-Key Programs & Calendars:

Activity Program Subscriptions

If your community hasn't subscribed to an activity program membership, be sure to convince your Executive Director to carve out enough in the budget for any of the following providers. Coined as the "ultimate time-savers" by providing creative program ideas, the following memberships provide creative program ideas at affordable prices: [Activity Connection](#), [GoldenCarers](#) and [The Purple Primer](#). Also be sure to check whether any of your current memberships provide additional offerings or program ideas in their marketing emails. When considering new additions to your community, check whether they have a content component to get double the benefit. Eversound offers a robust library of content with monthly activity calendars and ready to-go programs each month.

local neighborhood resources

Best For Local Freebies: Facebook Marketplace, Freecycle & Nextdoor

We've all passed that curb piled high with stuff and a sign marked "Free" and thought, well this is my lucky day. Repeat this serendipitous event every, single, day by joining [Facebook Marketplace](#), [Freecycle](#), and [Nextdoor](#), all hyperlocal platforms that offer free or affordable items for sale from your neighbors. These sites operate as online classified ads with specific tags to find free items near you. We also recommend asking resident family and friends to consider donating gently used items such as crafts, clothes, decor, etc. to your communities and host a giveaway or silent auction to fundraise or use in your activities.

Best for Fundraising : In-Kind Donations

A popular tactic for fundraising, consider asking for in-kind donations from local businesses in exchange for sponsorships or visibility within your community. Many companies are willing to share things like discount coupons or promotional items (or SWAG). If your community is not eligible for in-kind donations, consider asking local business to donate materials they may toss such as flowers at grocery stores.

Best for High-Functioning Resident Programs: Library & Book Club

With perks for every level of care, joining your local library is a must for engaging residents. Whether that is for your community book club or simply for free audiobooks, encourage residents to sign up for a membership if they have access to a smart device. Most libraries have partnered with 3rd party apps such as Kindle to bring the library to you, anytime, anywhere (and the best part, no late fees!). If your local library system does not work for your community, consider [this site for free resources to online books and audiobooks](#), completely free.

budget-friendly prizes & entertainment for seniors

Best for Entertainment Programs: Swap-A-DVD Movie Club

The [Swap-A-DVD Movie Club](#) allows you to swap and exchange DVDs and movies with others. Once enrolled, members have access to nearly 100,000 movie titles to choose from. Members can even request titles that may not be available and often, many VHS classics can be found in the updated DVD form through this club. While membership is free, members are asked to pay the shipping fee of \$.49 and be willing to share DVDs when possible.

Best for Bulk Purchasing & Discount Shopping: Oriental Trading & The Dollar Tree

Both these budget-friendly retailers offer deeply discounted items in bulk that are perfect for prize giveaways, party decors, socials and more. While Oriental Trading and the Dollar Tree (or other dollar stores/discount stores like Dollar General and Five Below) online require bulk buying, always be sure to pop in to your local Dollar Store for last minute finds. Be sure to check with your community to see if you participate in a group purchasing organization or qualify for further discounts due to your community's status. Join this Facebook Group for activity ideas and crafts made solely from items found at the dollar store for calendar inspiration.

[Check out Affordable Prizes for Seniors here.](#)

Best for Big Item Purchases: Open Box Deals

Did you know that many retailers offer heavily discounted items that have been opened and returned? These items are normally in perfectly good condition but are unable to be resold at full price so often you can snag discounts as high as 50%. A few popular vendors include Amazon Warehouse, Walmart, Target, and Best Buy.

money-saving apps

Best for Online Shopping: Honey Browser Extension

The only thing sweeter than the stuff itself is the money-saving browser extension. Honey automatically searches the web for the best possible deal on anything from craft supplies to pizza and lets you know where you can find the best deal with an average discount of nearly 18% on each item. Best part? The extension is completely free.

[Download Honey Browser Extension](#)

Best for Shopping & Coupon Codes: RetailMeNot

This app is your not-so-secret weapon for retail shopping (both for your community and yourself!). No matter where you are shopping, be sure to check the RetailMeNot app for on-demand coupons. The app also has a site that shares redeemable coupon codes from retailers both on and off the web. Popular activity professional vendors include: Amazon, Party City, Michaels, and Hobby Lobby, to name a few.

[Download RetailMeNot](#)



coupons, newsletters & loyalty programs

Best for Craft Programs: Craft Store Newsletters

It is unlikely you've made it this far in your career without a visit or two to your local craft store. Often coupons for [Hobby Lobby](#), [JoAnn Fabric](#), and [Michaels](#) are easily attainable on their site, but consider joining their mailing list for extra bonuses. While this holds true for these particular retailers, this philosophy applies to most retailers. Consider creating a separate email account dedicated to these newsletters if you want to keep your inbox from becoming overly cluttered.

Best for All-Around Savings: Coupons.com

This money-saving powerhouse is a must have on your smartphone or bookmarked on your desktop (or both!). [Coupons.com](#) is one of the largest providers of manufacturer coupons with the ability to tailor your preferences towards your favorite places to shop including Walmart, Target and Costco. This app is a great place to store all your coupons and lets you use one simple loyalty code to redeem all available coupons. The best part? You can use valid coupons retroactively, just snap a picture of the receipt and reap the rewards.

Other sites to consider: [Coupon Sherpa](#), [The Crazy Coupon Lady](#)

Best for Frequent Shoppers: Loyalty Programs

Don't forget to sign-up for loyalty programs at your most frequented stores. While loyalty programs vary from deeply discounted offers ranging from 5-50% to exclusive access to earning points, each one has something to offer if you're a frequent shopper. Some popular loyalty programs to consider include Target Cartwheel, Michaels, and Amazon Prime.

planning for natural disasters in senior living communities

Each year, we encounter natural disasters. And since there is nothing we can do to avoid them, we have to take specific safety measures in order to prepare for them.

During these times, many adult children have to prepare for the safety of their aging parents as well. For some, it can be stressful and daunting to know that an aging loved one is alone and could face dangerous situations that put their safety at risk. It's no wonder that searches for senior living spike dramatically before and after hurricanes, tornados, and other natural disasters.

With recent storms like Hurricane Harvey and Irma, the media has covered many devastating stories of heartache and tragedy among the storm's victims. However, amidst the negative stories in the news, there were a lot of positive accounts resulting from proper precautionary measures and the goodwill of others.

a helping hand

When residents from Louisville, Kentucky-based Atria Senior Living, were forced to evacuate their facility during Hurricane Irma, they were bussed to and sought refuge at Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin Resort in Orlando.

Twitter came to the rescue for La Vita Bella Nursing Home's owners in Dickinson, TX during Hurricane Harvey. When their nursing home rapidly flooded, the owners tweeted a photo of residents submerged in waist-high waters asking for help ASAP. The photo went viral and local rescue teams acted quickly to save 15 residents. All are safe now.

emergency plans for communities

Family members should find comfort knowing their loved one is in good hands at a senior living facility during a major storm. Each community should have a storm checklist in place with emergency procedures.

Here are some of the steps each staff takes before an impending natural disaster.

1. Evacuation plans approved by the state
2. Alternative options for temporary displacement
3. 72-hour food and water supply
4. Prescriptions filled in advance of the storm
5. Extra medical supplies, first aid, and oxygen
6. A large supply of flashlights and batteries
7. Back up generators and gas in case a refuel is needed

personal measures to be taken

Even if a loved one lives in a senior living community, it's important to connect with them in advance to make sure they have everything they need.

- Make sure they have spoken to the staff to understand emergency procedures
- Put together an emergency kit to have in their room (separate from the facility)
- Make a list of emergency contacts both in and out of state
- Pick a couple local locations to meet outside of the senior living community should it be evacuated



social media in senior living: best practices

Using social media the right way can be very successful for a business – especially in the senior living industry. If you're looking to build awareness or connect with potential new business candidates, than social media can certainly help to support growth.

We've put together a simple guide for Activity Professionals and senior communities on how to utilize and leverage social media. Enjoy!

popular platforms

In recent years, the average Facebook user has gotten older and older. Another social media network that is a little more "grown up" than the rest is LinkedIn. With the amount of seniors 65 years and above using social media to connect with others, it's fairly obvious that social media is a great way to attract senior citizens and loved ones of seniors.

benefit

Brand Awareness – Social Media will expose your company to an audience that may have never heard about you before.

Education – Both parties could benefit here. You can educate consumers on the what your community has to offer. And, by interacting with your audience, you can learn more about their wants and needs.

New Business – Social Media is a great marketing tool for gathering new leads and potential new business prospects.

Relevance – It's always important to remain relevant among the competition. By staying connected with your consumers and continuing to use advanced forms of marketing, you'll certainly land on top.



getting started

Always Answer Back – Engagement is key, even if it means answering difficult questions and responding to negative reviews. It'll give you a chance to defend your community in a positive way. The more you engage, the more eyes you'll attract.

Get Reviews – Always encourage residents and loved ones to write an honest review of their experience on your Facebook page. The more real-life stories and posts that others can relate to, the better.

Create Columns – The only way you'll connect with a broader audience is by putting yourself out there. Find ways to tell different stories and post a few times a week. Examples: "Resident of the Week" and "Community Q&A".

Tell Your Story – Use social media a marketing tool to tell your community's story. By incorporating brand messaging and your community's values, you're given a chance to control the message that your online audience receives.

Promote – Boost awareness by promoting your channels. Add your Facebook address to the staff's business cards, add a link to your website, and cross promote it on LinkedIn or any other platform you use.

the ultimate guide to creating an engaging senior activity calendar

At every senior community, activity teams develop extensive monthly activity calendars tailored to the specific needs and preferences of their residents.

To some, activity planning might sound like an easy task, but it does come with its challenges. Many factors are considered when creating a senior activity calendar, and the many unique physical, emotional, and mental needs of a center's residents need to be met.

Below, we've laid out simple recommendations on how to create an engaging senior activity calendar that will leave your residents engaged, alert, and happy.

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- Tailor To The Needs Of The Residents
- Goals To Accomplish
- Create Programs For All Facets Of Life
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evaluate your space

A lot of activity opportunities and limitations stem from the environment around you, whether it's the climate or what your community offers.

For example, is your community located in sunny Florida where a lot of time is spent outside? Or are you in a suburb of Chicago where winters are long and snow is frequent?

If you are part of a large community, there might be multiple locations to host gatherings, screenings, and activities. But if you work in a smaller community, one activity room might present challenges in creating fresh, new experiences for the residents.

Other factors to consider:

1. The amount of residents might limit intimate gatherings, but provide a chance for large interactions.
2. If you're in a small community, utilize spaces like the meal room or lobby area for new activities and a change of scenery.
3. If there is a lot of outdoor space, maximize your activities outside. There is nothing healthier than time spent in the fresh air.

tailor to the needs of the residents

Some might not realize it but senior living residents participate in many more types of activities than the preconceived Bingo games. Activity directors plan a mix of events that stimulate residents on a mental, intellectual, emotional, and physical level.

So, understanding the needs of your residents is crucial. Do you have residents who need more help enhancing their mental capacity? Are some of your residents limited by physical disabilities? All of this plays into what activities you offer.

Also, it always helps to listen to the residents. Ask them how they enjoy spending their time. If some love to travel, incorporate more travel and global-inspired activities. If you've got history buffs and pop-culture experts at your community, play up your residents' strengths with historical movies screenings and pop-culture trivia games. You can always learn a thing or two from your residents.

goals to accomplish

Once you've researched the type of activities your space allows and begin to understand the needs of your residents, it's time to focus on what you want to accomplish with the activities you offer.

A month-long plan should include a good mix of activities that stimulate residents in all facets of life. We've listed a few goals you could work towards in creating a well-balanced activity calendar.

Activities should:

- Promote self awareness
- Offer a sense of empowerment
- Relieve stress, anxiety and confusion
- Improve motor and cognitive skills
- Facilitate communication
- Encourage social interaction
- create programs for all facets of life

Now for the planning! Plotting out activities for each day of the month will require a lot of effort and brainstorming. A resident's day should be filled with multiple events, resulting in over 100 activities a month to plan.

Remember, there should be a healthy balance of engagement that stimulates each part of the brain. Exercise can invigorate residents in the morning or late afternoon. While entertainment and educational activities can stimulate conversation.

Be sure to include the right amount of repetition in your calendar. For example, you may not want to run certain activities four times a week. Residents might grow tired of it or crave diversity.

See below for a wide variety of activities that have been proven to strengthen the social, physical and mental skills of seniors.

physical

Floor Exercises: Try bowling or balloon volleyball.

Tournaments: Stir up friendly competition with a week-long ring toss or bocce ball tournament.

Special Events: Hold physical activities inspired by cultural moments like the Olympics and Super Bowl.

creative

Art: Creates works of art with watercolors, acrylic paints, or gel pens.

Objects: Make something residents can keep. Knit a scarf, weave a loom, or design unique jewelry.

Gifts: Center some of your "making" around holidays, and have the residents gift the finished products to loved ones.

☆ 10 things only activity directors will understand

Lift your spirits with [these affirmations](#) that you're not alone in this calling.

entertainment

Novels: Have each resident read a passage or page.

Movies: Stick to what the residents like here. Take a survey and allow residents to pick one of two movies.

Special Guests: Invite local musicians, artists, or yoga teachers to run an activity.

spiritual

Sacred Hymns: Music can incite many great memories for residents who have attended mass or practiced faith in their past.

Spiritual Podcasts: Celebrate faith right at the community without having to bring in a special guest.

educational

Learn Something New: Educate in a hands-on way with a themed month. Dedicate a month to learning the language, cuisine, architecture, and history of a country. Start with Spain or Italy, and then pick a new country each month.

Do Something Different: Introduce new ways to do old things, like different ways to play poker.

technology

Social Media: Teach them to set up and manage their very own Facebook account. This is gaining some serious momentum with seniors today.

Enhance Activities: Use technology to make activities more enjoyable. With the use of Eversound headphones, hearing, engagement, and participation during activities is likely to improve.

Stay Connected: Hold Skype sessions with family members, so residents stay in touch with loved ones.

feel activities out

Now that you've mapped out your activities, try them out. Hold a trial month with the activities you've chosen and observe participation and engagement. Not all activities will be perfect for each resident.

So, give them a try. See what works. And adjust your calendar based on their needs and preferences, as well as your resources.

14 great resources every activity director should know

activity ideas

activity connection

If you're an activities professional, odds are you've already heard of [Activity Connection](#). Their online database is filled with tons of great resources which enable senior communities to create more engaging activities for residents. In addition to hosting a plethora of activity guides, monthly event planning tools, and downloadable materials, Activity Connection also maintains a vibrant forum where activities professionals can share ideas and collaborate with others in their field.

Cost: \$174.95 per year

golden carers

[Golden Carers](#) offers 1000 of meaningful activities for residents in a variety of formats. The site also offers resources that help activity professionals do their job more easily including customizable templates and planned calendars. A forum for activity professionals to collaborate is also available.

Cost: \$49.99 per year

the purple primer

[The Purple Primer](#) groups themed activities together for seamless programming that allows for lifelong learning. Each themed program includes different elements including culinary, historical, arts and crafts and more. With regularly updated themes, the Purple Primer also includes a print-and-go for easy planning in each bundle.

Cost: \$165 per year

creative forecasting

As you may know, [Creative Forecasting](#) is a mainstay for activities professionals. They offer a monthly print magazine subscription for \$60/year which includes great resources for activities professionals as well as access to exclusive online content via their website. They also offer a software program called "Activity Planning Simplified" which enables activities professionals to create activity calendars, log participation reports, save and lookup resident interests, and print full size calendars for posting around your community.

Cost: \$60 per year

not just bingo

[Not Just Bingo](#) is an extensive online resource which features activity calendars, activity ideas, and printable materials to help activities professionals create more engaging events. You can either use Not Just Bingo's free "General Activity Calendars" or purchase a monthly subscription to access their "Specialized Activity Calendars." These specialized calendars include resources specifically for dementia residents and male residents, as well as calendars with weekly themes such as "Cinco de Mayo."

Cost: Free or \$19 per month for premium content

facebook groups

activity directors

While this group touts membership for directors, this group is for all activity professionals at all levels. With nearly 8,000 members this Facebook group is a place where professionals can share ideas, support one another and find answers to all their questions. Whether that is looking for the latest resources or how to ask for a budget increase, this group is bubbling with activity.

[Join **Activity Directors** Group](#)

activity directors calendar exchange

This Facebook Group focuses on calendar exchanges with an active base of users. With extensive calendar inspiration, this group is ideal for activity professionals who are looking to spice up their calendars or get the hang of planning. This group relies on members to share calendars, so as a member please be sure to contribute!

[Join Activity Directors Calendar Exchange](#)

activities for seniors

With nearly 10,000 members, this group offers support to Activity professionals in all levels of care. Members are encouraged to seek and give support, advice and share their experiences with one and other. This group is great for peer-to-peer communication.

[Join Activities for Seniors](#)

dollar tree: crafting on a budget

This Facebook group is great for the budget-conscious activity professional who wants to up their arts and crafts. Often you'll not only find inspiration for your programming, but also for yourself! This group is a great resource for filling up your activity calendar with creative and easy projects.

[Join Dollar Tree: Crafting on Budget](#)

blogs

memory care matters

[Memory Care Matters](#) focuses on meaningful ways to engage residents living with dementia or cognitive decline. This blog offers activity ideas, advice and resources for caregivers, as well as a selection of memory care products.

brownie locks

[Brownie Locks](#) is a quirky blog that offers a variety of content, from historical facts to a plethora of trivia. Each category offers a quick overview of a historical or fun day that can easily be adapted into a program. This site also offers printable calendars and fun activities that are not just seasonally based.

nursing home activity ideas

As name implies, [Nursing Home Activity Ideas](#) is a blog for those working in assisted living and skilled nursing. This blog has plenty of activity ideas to keep you inspired. With categories including exercise, dementia-friendly and seasonal, finding last minute activities to fill your calendar couldn't be easier. Also, many activities can be adapted to suit other levels of care.

live programming

live living network

Bring the world to your residents with interactive programming from [Live Living Network \(LLN\)](#). LLN works with hundreds of destinations and moderators around the globe to bring live programming to residents from the most famous museums to musical performances to tours and more.

televēda

Similar to Live Living Network, [Televēda](#) offers live streaming content to senior living communities. Ranging from workout classes to educational programs, Televēda makes learning from anywhere possible.

memberships

Don't forget to check your local community and state for chapters that support your seniors. Furthermore, be sure to check out the [National Association of Activity Professionals \(NAAP\)](#) and [National Certification Council for Activity Professionals \(NCCAP\)](#).



how to successfully set up and grow a volunteer program

Volunteers are invaluable in their help and support. Having a group of caring and positive volunteers is a benefit for both the staff and residents. A successful volunteer program has the potential to improve resident experiences and elevate what communities can do for residents. Volunteers can be used in different ways depending on their abilities, wishes, and training.

Some possible uses of volunteers include:

- Performances: Playing an instrument for residents
- Teaching a class: Painting, baking, etc.
- Transportation within the community: Helping staff bring wheelchair-bound residents to and from activities
- Going on appointments: Assisting residents with no family or when family is not available to go to appointments
- Helping to feed
- Sitting with the resident: Providing company to lonely residents
- Support for activities: Helping with activities to run smoother or to also run the activity

Volunteers complement the employed staff by being another set of eyes and ears to make sure residents are cared for and engaged with. The more volunteers around, the better the ratio of staff to residents and the more attention the residents will get. It's not always easy to get the best volunteers and to maintain a sizable group of volunteers over time.

Here are some ways to set up, grow and maintain a volunteer program in your facility.

setting up a volunteer program

know your mission

Starting a volunteer program needs to start at the basics by determining what the mission is. Before asking volunteers to come on board, you need to make sure to have a clear, meaningful purpose that they would like to get behind. This will likely be your community's mission statement and/or values.

It is important that volunteers are aware they are being held to the same standards employees are, and that the same values and mission need to be upheld by them as well.

recruitment

There are many ways to go about spreading the word that your community is looking for volunteers. Below are some ways to notify people who may be interested in getting involved.

create fliers

One simple way to get the word out is a flier. A colorful flier with “volunteers wanted for x, y and z” can get the job done.

Grab attention of the right people by putting up fliers throughout communities and in local libraries and community centers; From the bathrooms to the elevators and above the water fountains. It’s also a great idea to add some pull-off tabs at the bottom with the name and number for a person to contact if they are interested. Use [Canva](#) to create beautiful fliers for free.

schools

Another way to get volunteers is through nearby schools. Students not only need volunteering hours but many are interested in going into nursing or social work and would benefit from experiencing the long term care environment.

Reach out to school counselors to ask if this can be done and set this up. If you do go this route, require a reference or two to ensure there are no behavioral concerns.

social media

Social Media is a great way to get out there quickly, with the potential to reach the most people. If your facility has a Facebook page or another social media platform, share a post that you are looking for volunteers and allow the post to be shared.

online volunteer boards

Find the people who are already looking for you! Add a listing to the various websites that post listings for places in need of volunteers. Examples of websites to post your volunteer needs include: [Volunteer Match](#), [Idealist](#) or [Doing Good Together](#).

referrals

Many volunteers end up being staff members’ family or friends or resident families. Make sure to let staff and residents know that there is a need for volunteers. Consider setting up a referral rewards program to encourage volunteers to recruit on your behalf, which can be something as simple as a \$20 gift card for each recruit.

next steps

Before moving forward with orientation, you may be interested in getting a resume, cover letter, and interview. This can weed out anyone who is not serious about volunteering or does not have the experience you are looking for. Volunteers should also have a background check performed and be given a drug test and potentially a physical if physical exertion is involved. Check with your organization on what is required.

Once you have decided on some promising volunteers, the next step is training. Bringing a volunteer into your facility and around residents means they need to understand and agree to the many regulations and policies of the state and facility.

This means orientation should include the following:

job description

Your volunteer should understand and agree with their duties and responsibilities as a volunteer. They should be provided with a copy in writing of what their scope includes and does not include.

infection control

Education and direction in terms of infection control are very important, especially in a long term care environment. Ensure volunteers know the correct protocol and the necessary shots they will need to get before volunteering.

safety

Safety regulations as determined by the state and facility in terms of fire safety/drills, food safety, resident safety and more.

hipaa

HIPAA is the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, and volunteers should understand the importance of this and confidentiality.

Note: This is not an exhaustive list. Check with your community for particular needs when recruiting volunteers.

There are many more policies, procedures, and regulations that can be taught and discussed in training your volunteers. Make sure to keep up with the annual training and any changes in these regulations to ensure volunteers are up to date. Once volunteers are trained and start working with residents, they are officially representing you. It’s imperative to ensure they fully understand their responsibilities and expectations.

grow & maintain

Now that you have volunteers, it’s not only their responsibility to keep the relationship going, you also need to give them a good experience. Create a positive, dynamic environment for your volunteers so they not only stay on as a volunteer longer, but they refer friends to volunteer as well.

The following are ways to maintain and grow the volunteer program:

allow choice

Allow your volunteers to choose what they are volunteering to do. Sending the same volunteer into the elements of winter on appointments with residents each day might not be the best way to keep them around. Switch volunteers around to different activities and responsibilities and allow them to choose between activities, appointments, exercise classes, and other duties.

thank your volunteers

A thank you goes a long way! Whether it be a verbal thank you, a card or a small gift at the holiday – Show your appreciation every time you can.

hour tracking systems

Volunteering shouldn’t be hard, make the process for tracking hours easy by using a seamless process and system. One popular online system, [Volgistics](#) is used by over 6 million volunteers. It’s a paid service, but offers background screening, recruiting, a portal and much more. See their tutorials [here](#).

Keeping it simple with pen and paper is not only a good back up idea but should be offered alongside an online option. One example of a print out is [here](#).

volunteer newsletters

Newsletter keeps your volunteers informed, involved and excited about the team they are apart of. A monthly newsletter is a way to send out important and fun information as well as gather any information or response you may need as well.

[Grant Rehabilitation & Care Center's Online Newsletter](#) is a great example of the information you can include; A note from the administrator, employee of the month, up and coming activities and other important happenings.

Your newsletter can live online, be hand delivered or sent out via email with a service like mail chimp. Mail chimp packages come with an email address and helps to organize your monthly email campaigns.

surveys

Let their voices be heard through an anonymous survey. Let them tell you how you are doing and what can be done better with the volunteer program. This helps them feel like you care, their voice is heard, and you can make some positive changes.

respect

Respect them as people, and respect their time. It is a great honor to be getting the volunteer's time which they can be spending elsewhere. Try not to keep them later than they can stay or ask for too much, as they are already giving plenty.

volunteers are needed

Volunteers are not only giving their time, they are giving their energy, labor and so much more to us. It's not easy to fill up a volunteer program with caring, committed people, so it will take work to find the right ones, train them and keep them coming back.

The important part is it is worth it. A well rounded and full volunteer program is a huge relief and benefit to staff and residents.

professional associations you should know about

Professional associations exist in every industry. If you're wondering what exactly they are, a professional association is a non-profit body, organization, or society seeking to further a particular profession, and in this case the world of senior care.

There are many of associations that help advance senior care with funding for research, skill certification, and advocacy for our seniors. Here are a few we think are doing great things:

national association of activity professionals

The National Association of Activity Professionals is dedicated to advancing the activities profession and represents all Activity Professionals working in geriatric settings. They're also one of Eversound's partners! NAAP hosts a yearly conference for activities professionals and offers an annual membership which provides access to live webinars, networking, monthly program ideas, and more.

alzheimer's association

Alzheimer's Association advances research to end Alzheimer's and dementia. It is the largest national voluntary health organization that works to eliminate the disease and enhance care for those who are living with it. The national group has local chapters for support within each community, a 24/7 hotline, support groups, and educational sessions nationwide.

american society on aging

American Society on Aging is committed to enhancing the knowledge and skills of those dedicated to improving the quality of life of older adults and their families. With over 5,000 members, made up of practitioners, educators, administrators, researchers, and students, they support all aspects of senior life and aging, including the physical, emotional, social, economic, and spiritual.



national council on aging

The NCOA aids people over 60 years old with aging and partners with nonprofit organizations and other groups to provide innovative community programs that help adults stay healthy, secure, and independent. With goals to improve the health and economic security of aging adults, they improved a staggering 1.47 million lives in 2017, and are dedicated to help even more in the future.

international council on active aging

Maintaining wellness in life isn't some fad that will be forgotten when the next one comes along. The ICAA believes that being fulfilled within the seven dimensions of wellness (emotional, vocational, physical, spiritual, intellectual, social, environmental) can help aging adults preserve their quality of life. They look to dispel society's myths about aging and provide senior care professionals with education, information, resources, and tools so they can achieve optimal success.

american nurses association

While many of the senior industry's associations protect and advocate for seniors, the ANA is looking out for our nurses — and we're thankful for that. The ANA exists to give every nurse the resources and opportunity of success in their efforts to advance the nursing profession.

physical distancing activities

Hallway Activities, Activity Carts, and In-Room Ideas

1

library cart

This one is pretty self-explanatory. Hit each room with a variety of books to choose from! You might also include adult coloring books in the mix for those who aren't as into reading.

2

technology carts

A technology cart can have a variety of fun tech to play with. From a tablet to a kindle to headphones to listen to music! Here, Eversound community, Thorne Crest Senior Living uses Eversound in conjunction with a tablet to provide virtual music therapy to residents by going from room to room. Communities can also use this as a way to conduct virtual visits with family members using [Eversound's wireless headphone system](#) for immersive and meaningful visits.

3

puzzle cart

Load up your cart with puzzles of all kinds... Actual puzzles of animals and landscapes as well as puzzle books full of crosswords and word searches. Seniors will have fun and benefit from the positive effects of seniors doing puzzles.

4

dessert cart

You can base your cart around any food, so why not dessert? Decorate your cart like an ice cream truck and serve sundaes, or opt for cookies and brownies. Check out these fantastic and fun carts from Rachel Essmyer from [The Boulevard Senior Living!](#)



5

craft cart

Crafts are a part of activities many seniors enjoy and would love to continue to do even when social distancing. There are endless options for crafts that can be brought to each room. Explain the craft to each resident or write out instructions to leave with the resident.

6

happy hour

Social Distancing doesn't have to mean prohibition! A [happy hour cart](#) can bring the fun with a speaker playing music as you take each senior's order. There can be wine carts with wine tasting and a side of cheese, or carts of beer to take their choice.

7 snack cart

You can never go wrong with snacks! Drop by each room with a variety of snack choices, or go with a theme like a trail mix. A trail mix theme like the one pictures offers seniors the ability to choose what they want to be included.

8 holiday carts

There is always a holiday to celebrate. Whether it be a recognized holiday like Halloween or the national day of (insert food or activity) you can find online. You can always find something to celebrate even if it's silly. Consider holidays like Cinco de Mayo, like Activity Professional, Nolly Brandon of Greenwood Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, or even national holidays like National Donut Day!



9 coffee cart

You've seen a coffee cart before... Recreate it! With coffee choices, tea, cups, and all the fixings.

10 bingo

Seniors just love their bingo; Don't let them go without by adapting bingo to social distancing. There are a variety of ways to do bingo and having a cart can allow you to switch it weekly. Bingo can be done day by day with one number called per day or can be done in the hallway, or through eversound technology where seniors can hear numbers called in their rooms through their headphones.

11 games

Have some competitive seniors? Help them scratch the itch with room to room games! Through horse races like below, residents can play together while staying distanced.

12 flowers

A simple flower cart can be a nice way to brighten a room. Similarly, a gardening cart can be a therapeutic activity that can be done independently.

☆ small-groups during COVID-19

Small groups can be just as effective as big groups. Find ways to bring a bit of normalcy with [these tips](#).

13 Hawaiian cart

There are endless themes to choose from, one being Hawaiian! A Hawaiian theme can include grass skirts, lei's, and Hawaiian punch for drinking. Check out more carts from Activity Professional, Nolly Brandon of Greenwood Nursing and Rehabilitation Center!



14 manicure cart

Social distancing means putting pampering on hold in most cases. Bring seniors this basic luxury with a cart of hot towels, lotions, and a variety of nail polish options.

15 photo props

Getting photos of seniors having fun can be beneficial for the resident as well as their family, who can view these photos and see the smile on their faces. Fill your cart with a backdrop, props and a whiteboard to write a message.

16 the art of origami

Origami is the art of paper folding and is often associated with Japanese culture. This is a great activity to get residents to use their hands and can be incorporated into a day of learning about asian cultures. Simple origami folds include fans, hats, foxes, frogs and even alphabet letters. Have residents create their own origami and then collect them all to create a wonderful piece of art that can be seen throughout the community. Print the instructions for each origami piece and include in a pack with the appropriate paper.

[Origami Instructions + Materials](#)

17 where in the world

Get to know your fellow communities in this fun game that lets your residents interact with residents across the nation, or even the globe! Set-up and show residents how to use Skype or other video-servicing apps on their tablets or iN2L devices. Next, connect with a community in a different part of the country. The aim of the game is to guess the location of the other community by asking each other questions. This is also a great opportunity for residents to learn about other parts of the country and connect with others from the comfort of their room and tablets.

18 going to the dogs

Invoke community ties by having residents create dog toys for pets in shelters. With three different types of toys to create using household items, residents can pick and choose their favorite dog toys. Bundle the toys into "packs" and donate them to your local animal shelter. Pre-portion out materials into bags and distribute to residents. Once donated, ask the shelter for a packet that can be shared with residents about the pets they have helped.

19 letters to soldiers

We can always express gratitude to those who serve. Have residents write heartfelt gestures and sentiment to those serving across the world. To expand this activity you could ask residents to create cards or start a collection drive for care packages. To make this activity feel more connected, ask residents to write cards to those who have served in your community.

20 mindful coloring & design

Coloring has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety. As part of your wellness program, incorporate a coloring workshop where residents can drop-in. Play calming music while having residents color mandalas, a popular motif for relaxation. To change this up, ask residents to draw their own vision of relaxation on a blank canvas. Discuss the drawings and why it helps them relax!

21 art therapy – lost at sea

Do you have residents that could use a relaxing escape? For those residents who feel lost, overwhelmed, or isolated, expressing those feelings and visualizing hope can be a therapeutic way to invite positive emotions into their life. This activity involves imagining being lost at sea and visualizing the ideal lighthouse that would provide the right kind of guidance. Here are the instructions: Visualize being lost at sea on a stormy night and seeing a glimmer of light leading to land. Draw, color, or paint a lighthouse as a source of guidance. Depict yourself in relation to the lighthouse somewhere in the image. Add words to represent sources of guidance in your life. Provide the necessary materials in prepackaged bags and distribute. Consider adding some aromatherapy to the mix.

Instructions: [Art therapy lighthouse](#)

22 mail your problems away

This therapeutic activity is a great way to say goodbye to old resentments or grudges. Sometimes it is easier to express or recognize hurts and regrets when there's distance between yourself and the issue. This postcard activity can be a good self-discovery exercise that helps answer the question, "what would I say to someone if I didn't have to do it face-to-face?" Have residents write a message to someone they're frustrated with or to someone with whom they have something to share. On the blank side, have the client express their feelings with art. Use this as a way to start a conversation about what's being expressed with the postcard.

[Postcard template](#)

23 radio talk with Eversound

This activity is intended to be used throughout the year and invites residents to host their own show! Gather interested residents and assign roles ranging from researcher to broadcaster. You can record each show using the microphone on your computer or smartphone. Share with your residents, community and families monthly. Eversound's headphones can reach residents up to 300 feet away. Each week, pass out headphones to residents and the microphone to the host.

safe ideas for small groups

[Find a handful of ideas and services](#) that can help in the hunt for ways to keep people connected.

24 dance parties

Start a dance party like everyone is watching! Inspired by Molly Donlan with the Woods at Canco, keep the mood lifted by [kicking off a dance party](#) by positioning yourself where residents can see you. Bonus if you can add a fun costume! If you don't have a courtyard, try a hallway dance party like [Mountain Ridge Health and Rehabilitation](#) or a silent disco similar to Commonwealth Senior Living's [Dancing Through the Decades party](#).

From The Woods at Canco, Mountain Ridge Health and Rehabilitation, Commonwealth Senior Living

25 window family visits

Have a window where residents and their families can see one another? Perfect, that is all you need to keep residents and their loved ones connected. Try interactive games like [Tic Tac Toe](#), or make it fun with a "visitation window", see [Majorie House Memory Care Community](#) for inspiration. For residents whose families are further away, use video chat instead.

From Winfield Senior Living Community, Majorie House Memory Care Community

26 pet adoption

Inspired by Tammy Hall, this unique activity cart brings joy to residents by allowing them to adopt an animal. Fill a cart with various stuffed animals and allow residents to "adopt" their new friend. Each animal comes with adoption papers, giving residents a fun background story to read and leaving them with a lifelong friend.

From Tammy Hall

27 spirit weeks

Reminiscent of high school, spirit weeks are a creative way the whole community can get involved. This popular idea recommends pajama days to color days, and truly can be tailored to fit the preferences of your residents and team. For inspiration, [check out this list of spirit weeks from other communities](#).

28 radio talk with Eversound

Using Google's 3D Animals and a smartphone, residents can get up close and personal with animals from across the globe. Inspired by [Westbury Retirement Community's zoo tour](#), consider creating your own tour with animals in a particular region or select animals residents have always wanted to see!

From Westbury Retirement Community

29 hallway games

Whether it is friendly competition playing [foam hockey](#), or lifting voices with a sing-a-long, hallway activities are a great way to safely engage residents. For some inspiration, check out [this list of 10 hallway games that go beyond bingo](#).

From Accolade Healthcare Pontiac, IL

technologies for physical distancing

Provide engagement and socialization for residents with some 21st century help [from these technologies](#).

30 window art

Not only does this activity brighten up your communities, it lightens the mood for both residents and staff. There are plenty of ways you can do this on a budget (see some resources here). Order window friendly paint or markers, or use shaped construction paper and tape to the windows. Find inspiration from activity professionals in this [Facebook Group, **Activity Directors**](#)

31 parade

This creative idea involves the whole community! Depending on the logistics of your community, have residents line up appropriately for the parade and give them fun flags to wave. Contact resident families in the area, or figures in your community, to drive by and engage with residents from afar. Some parades have included flashy cars with paint, to drivers dressed in fun costumes. Here are a few inspiring parades from the Village at Belmar and Garden View Assisted Living of Lafayette

*From Village at Belmar,
Garden View Assisted Living of Lafayette*

32 fashion show

Strut your stuff with a fun take on [fashion inspired by Accolade Healthcare in Pontiac, IL](#)! Pick a theme and recruit a few members from your team to help get the show started. A few fun themes include Hollywood Glam, Summer Vacation or even dressing up in fun costumes you already have (think Animals Gone Wild). Play music residents can sing or clap along to from their doorways and have them vote on their favorite outfit, you may even ask a resident to be the announcer. Another fun variation? Wear the same outfit and see who wore it best!

From Accolade Healthcare Pontiac, IL

33 photo shoots

This is a great way to get residents out of their room and have a keepsake to share with families who cannot visit. Create an easily sanitized backdrop (for example, have the chair residents pose at least 6 feet from the backdrops and make sure props are laminated for quick cleaning) and have them write fun notes on a draw-erase board. For out of this world inspiration, check this rocket ship photoshoot from Somerford House Frederick.

From Somerford House Frederick

34 virtual beauty parlor

Not feeling overly confident with a pair of shears? Not a problem! Play stylist with this fun app, [Hairstyle Makeover](#), which allows residents to change their hair instantly. Inspired by [Ozark Health Nursing](#), residents can try out hairstyles they may never have before. If you have a tablet or smartphone readily available, this is a laughter-filled activity that is best done during 1:1 resident visits!

From Ozark Health Nursing

35 concerts & performances

Depending on the layout of your community, you may be able to host entertainment in your courtyards, like this [performer did with the bagpipes](#). Check with your regular performers to see if they are willing to perform in this capacity. Other ideas include recruiting performers to give readings, monologues, or share a fun talent like magic. If you have a large space and can appropriately distance, try live programming where residents can interact with presenters and performers in real time.

From University Village Retirement Community

memory care COVID-19 best practices

[We can offer a some guidance](#) on how to keep residents calm and comfortable in these uncertain times.

36 hallway olympics

While the Olympics may be postponed, that doesn't mean you can't safely host a competition of your own. Courtesy of the folks at Yorktown Manor, set-up various yard games that can be played from residents' rooms. A few ideas include bag toss, putt-putt, or a ring toss.

[See how many golds they took home!](#)

Courtesy of Yorktown Manor

37 hallway meditation

Restricting contact can cause anxiety and stress for residents. Meditation is a proven strategy to help cope with anxiety and stress, and doesn't have to be limited because of physical distancing. Consider creating an ambiance in your hallway by using an essential oil diffuser or electric/battery operated candle lights.

[See how Compass on the Bay stays calm.](#)

Courtesy of Compass on the Bay

38 hallway trivia

Get those minds working with a friendly competition of trivia! You can assign residents to teams or have residents play individually. Pass out slips for residents to write their responses on and, at the end of each round, have them share their answers out loud. For an ongoing event, turn this into a weekly tournament and keep the scoreboard in the hallway for residents to see. Here are some [free trivia questions](#) to get you started.

Courtesy of Acoya Mesa

39 hallway never have i ever

This is always a fun one and can sometimes have a lot of shock value. It is a good way for residents to get to know each other and is very entertaining to see how residents respond! This activity is also a great way to tie into reminiscence activities. Residents can sit in their doorways and you can give them three items to use as their "fingers". Some items that are good for all to see include paint sticks, straws, or flags.

Courtesy of The Heights on Huebner

40 hallway bowling

Strike them out! Residents can participate in hallway bowling no matter their circumstances. For residents with less mobility, create a ramp (a folding table slanted downward will work) that is positioned in front of the pins. To keep residents safe, use a plastic ball or a soccer ball as the bowling ball. Set pins up in front of a board to make resetting easy! Play a few rounds and see who wins!

Courtesy of Keenan Grosdidier

41 hallway horse racing

It's off to the races! This activity can be done in two ways. The first using a tabletop horse racing game that residents can make their bets on the lucky horse. Set the horses up on a table in the hallway, making it visible to all residents. Pass out disposable money for residents to bet with and give the winner a prize!

Courtesy of Five Star Quality Care

guides & resources

[Download these free resources](#) designed to support senior living professionals.

42 hallway car racing

Use remote control cars to allow residents to compete with one another. Residents that are not racing, can be spectators and wave checkered flags. Ask staff to dress up and announce the race. See how [Yorktown Manor hits the tracks!](#)

Courtesy of Yorktown Manor

43 hallway Mario Kart

This hallway activity brings Mario Kart to life! Tie balloons to a remote control car (or a few depending on the size of your hallway) and select a resident(s) to control the car. Then, pass out Nerf guns to the remaining residents whose goal is to shoot the balloons. The way to win? Shoot each balloon at least once! It is recommended to use different color balloons to help identify this or put a non-toxic washable substance on the nerf gun tips to see where they hit.

*Courtesy of The Commons,
United Methodist Communities*

44 hallway sing-a-long

This evergreen activity is one of the easiest hallway activities to execute. The best part of this activity is that it lends itself to so many variations, ranging from spiritual hymns to hosting an American Idol-like competition. Other creative variations include show tunes, Broadway songs, or even nursery rhymes. And if you've got the talent in house, hold [a hallway performance like Greenwood Nursing & Rehabilitation](#)

Courtesy of Greenwood Nursing & Rehabilitation

45 hallway drumline

When life gives you lemons, make music! This activity idea is not only therapeutic by relieving stress but allows residents to work on their musical talents. If your community already uses drums for mindfulness, great! If not, you can use plastic bins, or [create your own](#) using packing tape or large balloons on tin coffee or paint cans. You can also add other musical instruments to your hallway band such as tambourines, harmonicas and symbols.

Courtesy of JEA Sycamore Place

memory care activities

1

barn babies petting zoo

Bring the petting zoo to you! Check out an organization like [Barn Babies](#) that allows you to have baby animals come to visit your community for the day. This program provides your residents with the chance to hold, play with, and admire the animals for a few hours. It is a great way to brighten their day! The comfort an animal provides can reduce stress, relieve social isolation, and can even calm anxieties. Your residents will love the visit from the furry babies.

2

relaxation station

Did you know mindfulness and meditation training can actually support healthy aging? Meditation has a wide range of physical and emotional benefits that your residents will love. Take a deep breath and spend a day focused on mindfulness and meditation. Use Eversound to block out distractions and allow residents to focus and fully enjoy the program.

View the [full program](#)

3

music bingo

Create bingo cards with a variety of residents favorite songs that fill the boxes ([this Bingo Card Generator](#) makes it easy!). Choose music from a particular genre or generation to start. Print out the bingo cards and pass out to each resident. Connect your smartphone or iPod to Eversound or a speaker and play the first 15-20 seconds of the song through the headphones. Play bingo as normal: first resident to get 5 songs in a row marked on their card wins!

Need music playlists?

Check out our [Eversound Spotify Channel!](#)

4

all the colors of the wind

Music therapy is a wonderful way to engage the mind. Combine music therapy with a free form, upper body exercise for your residents. Play music for your resident through you Eversound headphones. Pass out ribbon streamers and encourage residents to wave them around to the music to create a colorful exercise class!

Jam out to this [playlist](#) with these [ribbons](#).

5

virtual road trip

Did you know on this day in 1908, Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Murdock became the 1st people to travel across the US by car? They left LA in a Packard automobile and arrived in NYC in 32 days, 5 hours, and 25 minutes. Read more about their story [here!](#)

What are your residents favorite road trips or travel stories? Have residents present or share their favorite road trip stories or go on a "Virtual Road Trip" to a destination of their choice. Think of adding sensory objects like "new car smell" tree air fresheners or leather cleaner.

6

kite's up!

Reminisce on simple childhood afternoons for flying a kite in the park or on the beach! As a child, there was something so mesmerizing that watching your kite flyer higher and higher in the wind. Help your residents bring out their inner child with a good, old-fashion kite flying!

Bonus idea:

Turn this into an intergenerational activity by inviting local school children in, pairing them up with a resident and have them decorate and fly the kites together!

7 this tea or that tea

Put those taste buds to the test!

There are countless flavors of tea, each with different health benefits. Let's see if your residents can identify some of the most common ones in a taste test!

[Check out this activity for step by step instructions on Eversound Engage!](#)

8 my main squeeze

When life gives you lemons, make lemonade...in all different flavors! Have residents make their own variations of lemonade by using syrups, fruits and even fresh herbs (perfect way to use herbs from "Hatch Your Own Herbs" Activity). After each resident has created their concoction, have each person participate in a blind tasting and rate their favorites on a simple score card. The lemonade with the highest score, takes home the crown!

[Here are some unique recipes to get you started!](#)

9 hatch your own herbs

Reap what you sow in this easy and budget friendly activity, perfect for the summer weather. Herbs are among some of the easiest plants to grow which makes this activity great for gardeners of all levels. With only a few materials needed, including egg cartons, seeds, soil and a water bottle, residents can dig right in. Once the herbs have grown, have residents create food and drink recipes using fresh herbs. [View the full activity instructions here.](#)

For affordable seed packets, [visit this site for 20 seed packets for \\$20](#) or head to your local Dollar Tree for packets as low as \$0.25.

10 a trip to the Smithsonian

Take a trip to the Smithsonian and explore consumerism from the 1920s to 1970s in these detailed lesson plans. Residents can learn about the items they are most familiar with activity plans for days of learning. Lessons include artifact analysis, discussion questions, and detailed briefs about artifacts from this era in the Smithsonian. Depending on your residents' ability, skip the lessons and see how many items they recognize!

[Consumerism at the Smithsonian Lessons](#)

11 sensory board

Sensory boards are a great way to invoke memory through touch and is ideal for residents with mild to moderate cognitive impairment. By creating sensory boards with textures and familiar objects, such as knobs, residents can connect with past memories and help with dexterity. Sensory boards can be built with family and friend input, using materials they love such as fleece or silk.

[Sensory Board Instructions](#)

12 egg carton herbs

Spend time outside and enjoy nature in this sensory program. Organize a program to make Egg Carton Herbs for residents to enjoy gardening in a comfortable environment (and get some delicious herbs and spices!). This program requires minimal set up but is a ton of fun and can be used to stimulate the senses during the activity (think bare hands in the dirt) as well as the scents of the herbs once in bloom.

dementia care guide for senior living

Sign up to receive a [guide with the latest research](#) and guidance from the Alzheimer's Association.

13 headlines in history

Go back in history to share residents' favorite columns or newspapers, what style of columns they like best (i.e. humor or satire). You can also host a discussion around the history of the newspaper, if your residents feel up to it. See whether you can initiate some reminiscent discussions using monumental headlines from their generation.

14 pack up picnic

Enjoy those April flowers with a picnic in the park! A picnic might bring back some nostalgia of days spent with loved ones, children and friends. Pack a lunch of sandwiches, snacks like pretzels, chips, or fruit. Invite family members to join on this outing with loved ones and enjoy fresh air and reminiscing or see if they can send food recommendations in advance so that you can prepare residents' preferred treat!

15 road trip America!

Story: <http://www.car-addicts.com/feature/car-stories-crossing-america-car>

Did you know on this day in 1908, Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Murdock became the 1st people to travel across the US by car? They left LA in a Packard automobile and arrived in NYC in 32 days, 5 hours, and 25 minutes. Read more about their story here! What are your residents favorite road trips or travel stories? Have residents present or share their favorite road trip stories or go on a "Virtual Road Trip" to a destination of their choice. Think of adding sensory objects like "new car smell" tree air fresheners or leather cleaner.

16 share the love

Have residents share their love stories in a reminiscing group. They could share: - How they met their love - Their favorite memory - Their anniversary date - The first dance song at their wedding Learning more about each other's love story can make your residents feel closer.

Resource: [Free Mandala coloring sheets](#)

17 iconic holiday advertising

Best implemented during the holiday season, see if residents recognize some of the most iconic holiday campaigns of all time! In this activity, create a slideshow of advertisements from leading brands throughout the generations and show how they have evolved with each year. This activity is great for discussions and for sharing interesting facts around these iconic pieces (like the Coca-Cola Christmas cans)

Resource: [30 Famous Holiday Advertisements](#)

18 indoor snow

This activity is a wonderful sensory activity, ideal for memory care and assisted living residents. We recommend asking your assisted living crew to make the snow in larger batches so that everyone can feel the snow. Put the snow in a large box and have residents make snowmen or just hold a discussion around the science behind it!

[How to make snow](#)

top movies for Alzheimer's residents

Engage residents with Alzheimer's by sparking emotion and enabling them to feel present [with these movies](#).

19 Celtic women meditation

Sit back and relax while listening to the Celtic Women. This all-women Irish musical group has become well known for their soothing angelic voices. Set up a meditation room with dim lighting and possibly a diuser (if you have one). Use your Eversound headphones or speakers to play the Celtic Women music for your residents.

[Celtic Women music Playlist](#)

20 nose goes

How strong is your sniffer? Gather some common scents like, lavender, cinnamon, citrus, basil, eucalyptus... (essential oils can come in handy here). Once collected, have your residents go around and smell each one by one to take a guess at what they are smelling. It may be helpful to use a blindfold so they don't read any labels. Keep in mind, the sense of smell tends to weaken for residents with dementia, so don't be discouraged if there are some challenges!

Pro tip: Between scents, have residents smell a small jar of coffee beans. Coffee beans are like a palette cleanser for your nose!

21 horsin' around

Use this activity during the Kentucky Derby or when your facility is hosting a horse race in the hallway. Have your residents pick which horse they'd like to win. You could even have them place a bet on their pony and have them win a prize. Leading up to the race, ask residents what they would name their horse if they had one running and share the history of the race. This is a great activity to involve both assisted living and memory care residents in a shared activity.

22 fallmark movies

While Hallmark Movies may be characteristic of December, why not host a series of fall movies for your residents to watch? Ranging from classics like the Dead Poets Society to When Harry Met Sally, these movies are reminiscent of autumn days and sure to spread cheer. Use Halloween candy as a movie snack and maybe even offer some pumpkin flavored beverages to complete this themed movie night.

[List of movies](#)

23 it's just stuff(ing)!

This activity is great for both assisted living and memory care by incorporating different scents and assigning roles to each group that aligns with their capabilities. Ask your assisted living residents to tear up bread pieces and bake until crisp, while memory care teams can create the spice mixes to sprinkle over bread mixtures. Provide both groups with a variety of precut ingredients such as celery, onions, apples, sausage, bacon or even cranberries! Enjoy throughout the week or invite everyone to a tasting!

24 labor day

While not the official end to summer, Labor Day is a great time to discuss and learn about the different careers each resident pursued. This is also an ideal activity for those suffering with some degree of cognitive decline as you can host a mock career day where residents pick a "job" for the day, such as folding or washing dishes. Use this long weekend to engage residents with light labor and nostalgia.

memory care activities for any day

[Here are seven simple, cheap activities](#) that can stimulate healthy participation.

resources & resident engagement solutions

free websites & activity ideas

Best For DIY Designs & Marketing Materials: Canva

[Canva](#) is an easy to use design app that allows access to plethora of free printables and digital graphics. Whether you need to jazz up a presentation, create a social media graphic or even just create printable graphics for your social events, Canva is the platform to use. The site also allows you to create and save frequently used templates within its program. While Canva offers a plethora of free graphic elements to use, check these sites for additional resources like royalty-free images and graphics: [Pixabay](#), [Pexels](#), [Unsplash](#).

Best for Activity Inspiration & Printables: Pinterest

One of the largest crowdsourced platforms for ideas and free content, Pinterest is a haven for activity inspiration, free printables and more. Take advantage of these Pinterest boards for access to printable templates: [Free Printables](#), [Free Themed Printables](#), [Free Activity Printables](#), [Cricut Files & Printables](#).

Best for Turn-Key Programs & Calendars:

Activity Program Subscriptions

If your community hasn't subscribed to an activity program membership, be sure to convince your Executive Director to carve out enough in the budget for any of the following providers. Coined as the "ultimate time-savers" by providing creative program ideas, the following memberships provide creative program ideas at affordable prices: [Activity Connection](#), [GoldenCarers](#) and [The Purple Primer](#). Also be sure to check whether any of your current memberships provide additional offerings or program ideas in their marketing emails. When considering new additions to your community, check whether they have a content component to get double the benefit. Eversound offers a robust library of content with monthly activity calendars and ready to-go programs each month.

local neighborhood resources

Best For Local Freebies: Facebook Marketplace, Freecycle & Nextdoor

We've all passed that curb piled high with stuff and a sign marked "Free" and thought, well this is my lucky day. Repeat this serendipitous event every, single, day by joining [Facebook Marketplace](#), [Freecycle](#), and [Nextdoor](#), all hyperlocal platforms that offer free or affordable items for sale from your neighbors. These sites operate as online classified ads with specific tags to find free items near you. We also recommend asking resident family and friends to consider donating gently used items such as crafts, clothes, decor, etc. to your communities and host a giveaway or silent auction to fundraise or use in your activities.

Best for Fundraising : In-Kind Donations

A popular tactic for fundraising, consider asking for in-kind donations from local businesses in exchange for sponsorships or visibility within your community. Many companies are willing to share things like discount coupons or promotional items (or SWAG). If your community is not eligible for in-kind donations, consider asking local business to donate materials they may toss such as flowers at grocery stores.

Best for High-Functioning Resident Programs: Library & Book Club

With perks for every level of care, joining your local library is a must for engaging residents. Whether that is for your community book club or simply for free audiobooks, encourage residents to sign up for a membership if they have access to a smart device. Most libraries have partnered with 3rd party apps such as Kindle to bring the library to you, anytime, anywhere (and the best part, no late fees!). If your local library system does not work for your community, consider [this site for free resources to online books and audiobooks](#), completely free.

budget-friendly prizes & entertainment for seniors

Best for Entertainment Programs: Swap-A-DVD Movie Club

The [Swap-A-DVD Movie Club](#) allows you to swap and exchange DVDs and movies with others. Once enrolled, members have access to nearly 100,000 movie titles to choose from. Members can even request titles that may not be available and often, many VHS classics can be found in the updated DVD form through this club. While membership is free, members are asked to pay the shipping fee of \$.49 and be willing to share DVDs when possible.

Best for Bulk Purchasing & Discount Shopping: Oriental Trading & The Dollar Tree

Both these budget-friendly retailers offer deeply discounted items in bulk that are perfect for prize giveaways, party decors, socials and more. While Oriental Trading and the Dollar Tree (or other dollar stores/discount stores like Dollar General and Five Below) online require bulk buying, always be sure to pop in to your local Dollar Store for last minute finds. Be sure to check with your community to see if you participate in a group purchasing organization or qualify for further discounts due to your community's status. Join this Facebook Group for activity ideas and crafts made solely from items found at the dollar store for calendar inspiration.

[Check out Affordable Prizes for Seniors here.](#)

Best for Big Item Purchases: Open Box Deals

Did you know that many retailers offer heavily discounted items that have been opened and returned? These items are normally in perfectly good condition but are unable to be resold at full price so often you can snag discounts as high as 50%. A few popular vendors include Amazon Warehouse, Walmart, Target, and Best Buy.

money-saving apps

Best for Online Shopping: Honey Browser Extension

The only thing sweeter than the stuff itself is the money-saving browser extension. Honey automatically searches the web for the best possible deal on anything from craft supplies to pizza and lets you know where you can find the best deal with an average discount of nearly 18% on each item. Best part? The extension is completely free.

[Download Honey Browser Extension](#)

Best for Shopping & Coupon Codes: RetailMeNot

This app is your not-so-secret weapon for retail shopping (both for your community and yourself!). No matter where you are shopping, be sure to check the RetailMeNot app for on-demand coupons. The app also has a site that shares redeemable coupon codes from retailers both on and off the web. Popular activity professional vendors include: Amazon, Party City, Michaels, and Hobby Lobby, to name a few.

[Download RetailMeNot](#)



coupons, newsletters & loyalty programs

Best for Craft Programs: Craft Store Newsletters

It is unlikely you've made it this far in your career without a visit or two to your local craft store. Often coupons for [Hobby Lobby](#), [JoAnn Fabric](#), and [Michaels](#) are easily attainable on their site, but consider joining their mailing list for extra bonuses. While this holds true for these particular retailers, this philosophy applies to most retailers. Consider creating a separate email account dedicated to these newsletters if you want to keep your inbox from becoming overly cluttered.

Best for All-Around Savings: Coupons.com

This money-saving powerhouse is a must have on your smartphone or bookmarked on your desktop (or both!). [Coupons.com](#) is one of the largest providers of manufacturer coupons with the ability to tailor your preferences towards your favorite places to shop including Walmart, Target and Costco. This app is a great place to store all your coupons and lets you use one simple loyalty code to redeem all available coupons. The best part? You can use valid coupons retroactively, just snap a picture of the receipt and reap the rewards.

Other sites to consider: [Coupon Sherpa](#), [The Crazy Coupon Lady](#)

Best for Frequent Shoppers: Loyalty Programs

Don't forget to sign-up for loyalty programs at your most frequented stores. While loyalty programs vary from deeply discounted offers ranging from 5-50% to exclusive access to earning points, each one has something to offer if you're a frequent shopper. Some popular loyalty programs to consider include Target Cartwheel, Michaels, and Amazon Prime.

planning for natural disasters in senior living communities

Each year, we encounter natural disasters. And since there is nothing we can do to avoid them, we have to take specific safety measures in order to prepare for them.

During these times, many adult children have to prepare for the safety of their aging parents as well. For some, it can be stressful and daunting to know that an aging loved one is alone and could face dangerous situations that put their safety at risk. It's no wonder that searches for senior living spike dramatically before and after hurricanes, tornados, and other natural disasters.

With recent storms like Hurricane Harvey and Irma, the media has covered many devastating stories of heartache and tragedy among the storm's victims. However, amidst the negative stories in the news, there were a lot of positive accounts resulting from proper precautionary measures and the goodwill of others.

a helping hand

When residents from Louisville, Kentucky-based Atria Senior Living, were forced to evacuate their facility during Hurricane Irma, they were bussed to and sought refuge at Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin Resort in Orlando.

Twitter came to the rescue for La Vita Bella Nursing Home's owners in Dickinson, TX during Hurricane Harvey. When their nursing home rapidly flooded, the owners tweeted a photo of residents submerged in waist-high waters asking for help ASAP. The photo went viral and local rescue teams acted quickly to save 15 residents. All are safe now.

emergency plans for communities

Family members should find comfort knowing their loved one is in good hands at a senior living facility during a major storm. Each community should have a storm checklist in place with emergency procedures.

Here are some of the steps each staff takes before an impending natural disaster.

1. Evacuation plans approved by the state
2. Alternative options for temporary displacement
3. 72-hour food and water supply
4. Prescriptions filled in advance of the storm
5. Extra medical supplies, first aid, and oxygen
6. A large supply of flashlights and batteries
7. Back up generators and gas in case a refuel is needed

personal measures to be taken

Even if a loved one lives in a senior living community, it's important to connect with them in advance to make sure they have everything they need.

- Make sure they have spoken to the staff to understand emergency procedures
- Put together an emergency kit to have in their room (separate from the facility)
- Make a list of emergency contacts both in and out of state
- Pick a couple local locations to meet outside of the senior living community should it be evacuated



social media in senior living: best practices

Using social media the right way can be very successful for a business – especially in the senior living industry. If you're looking to build awareness or connect with potential new business candidates, than social media can certainly help to support growth.

We've put together a simple guide for Activity Professionals and senior communities on how to utilize and leverage social media. Enjoy!

popular platforms

In recent years, the average Facebook user has gotten older and older. Another social media network that is a little more "grown up" than the rest is LinkedIn. With the amount of seniors 65 years and above using social media to connect with others, it's fairly obvious that social media is a great way to attract senior citizens and loved ones of seniors.

benefit

Brand Awareness – Social Media will expose your company to an audience that may have never heard about you before.

Education – Both parties could benefit here. You can educate consumers on the what your community has to offer. And, by interacting with your audience, you can learn more about their wants and needs.

New Business – Social Media is a great marketing tool for gathering new leads and potential new business prospects.

Relevance – It's always important to remain relevant among the competition. By staying connected with your consumers and continuing to use advanced forms of marketing, you'll certainly land on top.



getting started

Always Answer Back – Engagement is key, even if it means answering difficult questions and responding to negative reviews. It'll give you a chance to defend your community in a positive way. The more you engage, the more eyes you'll attract.

Get Reviews – Always encourage residents and loved ones to write an honest review of their experience on your Facebook page. The more real-life stories and posts that others can relate to, the better.

Create Columns – The only way you'll connect with a broader audience is by putting yourself out there. Find ways to tell different stories and post a few times a week. Examples: "Resident of the Week" and "Community Q&A".

Tell Your Story – Use social media a marketing tool to tell your community's story. By incorporating brand messaging and your community's values, you're given a chance to control the message that your online audience receives.

Promote – Boost awareness by promoting your channels. Add your Facebook address to the staff's business cards, add a link to your website, and cross promote it on LinkedIn or any other platform you use.

the ultimate guide to creating an engaging senior activity calendar

At every senior community, activity teams develop extensive monthly activity calendars tailored to the specific needs and preferences of their residents.

To some, activity planning might sound like an easy task, but it does come with its challenges. Many factors are considered when creating a senior activity calendar, and the many unique physical, emotional, and mental needs of a center's residents need to be met.

Below, we've laid out simple recommendations on how to create an engaging senior activity calendar that will leave your residents engaged, alert, and happy.

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- Evaluate Your Space
- Tailor To The Needs Of The Residents
- Goals To Accomplish
- Create Programs For All Facets Of Life
- Feel Activities Out

evaluate your space

A lot of activity opportunities and limitations stem from the environment around you, whether it's the climate or what your community offers.

For example, is your community located in sunny Florida where a lot of time is spent outside? Or are you in a suburb of Chicago where winters are long and snow is frequent?

If you are part of a large community, there might be multiple locations to host gatherings, screenings, and activities. But if you work in a smaller community, one activity room might present challenges in creating fresh, new experiences for the residents.

Other factors to consider:

1. The amount of residents might limit intimate gatherings, but provide a chance for large interactions.
2. If you're in a small community, utilize spaces like the meal room or lobby area for new activities and a change of scenery.
3. If there is a lot of outdoor space, maximize your activities outside. There is nothing healthier than time spent in the fresh air.

tailor to the needs of the residents

Some might not realize it but senior living residents participate in many more types of activities than the preconceived Bingo games. Activity directors plan a mix of events that stimulate residents on a mental, intellectual, emotional, and physical level.

So, understanding the needs of your residents is crucial. Do you have residents who need more help enhancing their mental capacity? Are some of your residents limited by physical disabilities? All of this plays into what activities you offer.

Also, it always helps to listen to the residents. Ask them how they enjoy spending their time. If some love to travel, incorporate more travel and global-inspired activities. If you've got history buffs and pop-culture experts at your community, play up your residents' strengths with historical movies screenings and pop-culture trivia games. You can always learn a thing or two from your residents.

goals to accomplish

Once you've researched the type of activities your space allows and begin to understand the needs of your residents, it's time to focus on what you want to accomplish with the activities you offer.

A month-long plan should include a good mix of activities that stimulate residents in all facets of life. We've listed a few goals you could work towards in creating a well-balanced activity calendar.

Activities should:

- Promote self awareness
- Offer a sense of empowerment
- Relieve stress, anxiety and confusion
- Improve motor and cognitive skills
- Facilitate communication
- Encourage social interaction
- create programs for all facets of life

Now for the planning! Plotting out activities for each day of the month will require a lot of effort and brainstorming. A resident's day should be filled with multiple events, resulting in over 100 activities a month to plan.

Remember, there should be a healthy balance of engagement that stimulates each part of the brain. Exercise can invigorate residents in the morning or late afternoon. While entertainment and educational activities can stimulate conversation.

Be sure to include the right amount of repetition in your calendar. For example, you may not want to run certain activities four times a week. Residents might grow tired of it or crave diversity.

See below for a wide variety of activities that have been proven to strengthen the social, physical and mental skills of seniors.

physical

Floor Exercises: Try bowling or balloon volleyball.

Tournaments: Stir up friendly competition with a week-long ring toss or bocce ball tournament.

Special Events: Hold physical activities inspired by cultural moments like the Olympics and Super Bowl.

creative

Art: Creates works of art with watercolors, acrylic paints, or gel pens.

Objects: Make something residents can keep. Knit a scarf, weave a loom, or design unique jewelry.

Gifts: Center some of your "making" around holidays, and have the residents gift the finished products to loved ones.

☆ 10 things only activity directors will understand

Lift your spirits with [these affirmations](#) that you're not alone in this calling.

entertainment

Novels: Have each resident read a passage or page.

Movies: Stick to what the residents like here. Take a survey and allow residents to pick one of two movies.

Special Guests: Invite local musicians, artists, or yoga teachers to run an activity.

spiritual

Sacred Hymns: Music can incite many great memories for residents who have attended mass or practiced faith in their past.

Spiritual Podcasts: Celebrate faith right at the community without having to bring in a special guest.

educational

Learn Something New: Educate in a hands-on way with a themed month. Dedicate a month to learning the language, cuisine, architecture, and history of a country. Start with Spain or Italy, and then pick a new country each month.

Do Something Different: Introduce new ways to do old things, like different ways to play poker.

technology

Social Media: Teach them to set up and manage their very own Facebook account. This is gaining some serious momentum with seniors today.

Enhance Activities: Use technology to make activities more enjoyable. With the use of Eversound headphones, hearing, engagement, and participation during activities is likely to improve.

Stay Connected: Hold Skype sessions with family members, so residents stay in touch with loved ones.

feel activities out

Now that you've mapped out your activities, try them out. Hold a trial month with the activities you've chosen and observe participation and engagement. Not all activities will be perfect for each resident.

So, give them a try. See what works. And adjust your calendar based on their needs and preferences, as well as your resources.

14 great resources every activity director should know

activity ideas

activity connection

If you're an activities professional, odds are you've already heard of [Activity Connection](#). Their online database is filled with tons of great resources which enable senior communities to create more engaging activities for residents. In addition to hosting a plethora of activity guides, monthly event planning tools, and downloadable materials, Activity Connection also maintains a vibrant forum where activities professionals can share ideas and collaborate with others in their field.

Cost: \$174.95 per year

golden carers

[Golden Carers](#) offers 1000 of meaningful activities for residents in a variety of formats. The site also offers resources that help activity professionals do their job more easily including customizable templates and planned calendars. A forum for activity professionals to collaborate is also available.

Cost: \$49.99 per year

the purple primer

[The Purple Primer](#) groups themed activities together for seamless programming that allows for lifelong learning. Each themed program includes different elements including culinary, historical, arts and crafts and more. With regularly updated themes, the Purple Primer also includes a print-and-go for easy planning in each bundle.

Cost: \$165 per year

creative forecasting

As you may know, [Creative Forecasting](#) is a mainstay for activities professionals. They offer a monthly print magazine subscription for \$60/year which includes great resources for activities professionals as well as access to exclusive online content via their website. They also offer a software program called "Activity Planning Simplified" which enables activities professionals to create activity calendars, log participation reports, save and lookup resident interests, and print full size calendars for posting around your community.

Cost: \$60 per year

not just bingo

[Not Just Bingo](#) is an extensive online resource which features activity calendars, activity ideas, and printable materials to help activities professionals create more engaging events. You can either use Not Just Bingo's free "General Activity Calendars" or purchase a monthly subscription to access their "Specialized Activity Calendars." These specialized calendars include resources specifically for dementia residents and male residents, as well as calendars with weekly themes such as "Cinco de Mayo."

Cost: Free or \$19 per month for premium content

facebook groups

activity directors

While this group touts membership for directors, this group is for all activity professionals at all levels. With nearly 8,000 members this Facebook group is a place where professionals can share ideas, support one another and find answers to all their questions. Whether that is looking for the latest resources or how to ask for a budget increase, this group is bubbling with activity.

[Join **Activity Directors** Group](#)

activity directors calendar exchange

This Facebook Group focuses on calendar exchanges with an active base of users. With extensive calendar inspiration, this group is ideal for activity professionals who are looking to spice up their calendars or get the hang of planning. This group relies on members to share calendars, so as a member please be sure to contribute!

[Join Activity Directors Calendar Exchange](#)

activities for seniors

With nearly 10,000 members, this group offers support to Activity professionals in all levels of care. Members are encouraged to seek and give support, advice and share their experiences with one and other. This group is great for peer-to-peer communication.

[Join Activities for Seniors](#)

dollar tree: crafting on a budget

This Facebook group is great for the budget-conscious activity professional who wants to up their arts and crafts. Often you'll not only find inspiration for your programming, but also for yourself! This group is a great resource for filling up your activity calendar with creative and easy projects.

[Join Dollar Tree: Crafting on Budget](#)

blogs

memory care matters

[Memory Care Matters](#) focuses on meaningful ways to engage residents living with dementia or cognitive decline. This blog offers activity ideas, advice and resources for caregivers, as well as a selection of memory care products.

brownie locks

[Brownie Locks](#) is a quirky blog that offers a variety of content, from historical facts to a plethora of trivia. Each category offers a quick overview of a historical or fun day that can easily be adapted into a program. This site also offers printable calendars and fun activities that are not just seasonally based.

nursing home activity ideas

As name implies, [Nursing Home Activity Ideas](#) is a blog for those working in assisted living and skilled nursing. This blog has plenty of activity ideas to keep you inspired. With categories including exercise, dementia-friendly and seasonal, finding last minute activities to fill your calendar couldn't be easier. Also, many activities can be adapted to suit other levels of care.

live programming

live living network

Bring the world to your residents with interactive programming from [Live Living Network \(LLN\)](#). LLN works with hundreds of destinations and moderators around the globe to bring live programming to residents from the most famous museums to musical performances to tours and more.

televēda

Similar to Live Living Network, [Televēda](#) offers live streaming content to senior living communities. Ranging from workout classes to educational programs, Televēda makes learning from anywhere possible.

memberships

Don't forget to check your local community and state for chapters that support your seniors. Furthermore, be sure to check out the National Association of Activity Professionals (NAAP) and [National Certification Council for Activity Professionals \(NCCAP\)](#).



how to successfully set up and grow a volunteer program

Volunteers are invaluable in their help and support. Having a group of caring and positive volunteers is a benefit for both the staff and residents. A successful volunteer program has the potential to improve resident experiences and elevate what communities can do for residents. Volunteers can be used in different ways depending on their abilities, wishes, and training.

Some possible uses of volunteers include:

- Performances: Playing an instrument for residents
- Teaching a class: Painting, baking, etc.
- Transportation within the community: Helping staff bring wheelchair-bound residents to and from activities
- Going on appointments: Assisting residents with no family or when family is not available to go to appointments
- Helping to feed
- Sitting with the resident: Providing company to lonely residents
- Support for activities: Helping with activities to run smoother or to also run the activity

Volunteers complement the employed staff by being another set of eyes and ears to make sure residents are cared for and engaged with. The more volunteers around, the better the ratio of staff to residents and the more attention the residents will get. It's not always easy to get the best volunteers and to maintain a sizable group of volunteers over time.

Here are some ways to set up, grow and maintain a volunteer program in your facility.

setting up a volunteer program

know your mission

Starting a volunteer program needs to start at the basics by determining what the mission is. Before asking volunteers to come on board, you need to make sure to have a clear, meaningful purpose that they would like to get behind. This will likely be your community's mission statement and/or values.

It is important that volunteers are aware they are being held to the same standards employees are, and that the same values and mission need to be upheld by them as well.

recruitment

There are many ways to go about spreading the word that your community is looking for volunteers. Below are some ways to notify people who may be interested in getting involved.

create fliers

One simple way to get the word out is a flier. A colorful flier with “volunteers wanted for x, y and z” can get the job done.

Grab attention of the right people by putting up fliers throughout communities and in local libraries and community centers; From the bathrooms to the elevators and above the water fountains. It’s also a great idea to add some pull-off tabs at the bottom with the name and number for a person to contact if they are interested. Use [Canva](#) to create beautiful fliers for free.

schools

Another way to get volunteers is through nearby schools. Students not only need volunteering hours but many are interested in going into nursing or social work and would benefit from experiencing the long term care environment.

Reach out to school counselors to ask if this can be done and set this up. If you do go this route, require a reference or two to ensure there are no behavioral concerns.

social media

Social Media is a great way to get out there quickly, with the potential to reach the most people. If your facility has a Facebook page or another social media platform, share a post that you are looking for volunteers and allow the post to be shared.

online volunteer boards

Find the people who are already looking for you! Add a listing to the various websites that post listings for places in need of volunteers. Examples of websites to post your volunteer needs include: [Volunteer Match](#), [Idealist](#) or [Doing Good Together](#).

referrals

Many volunteers end up being staff members’ family or friends or resident families. Make sure to let staff and residents know that there is a need for volunteers. Consider setting up a referral rewards program to encourage volunteers to recruit on your behalf, which can be something as simple as a \$20 gift card for each recruit.

next steps

Before moving forward with orientation, you may be interested in getting a resume, cover letter, and interview. This can weed out anyone who is not serious about volunteering or does not have the experience you are looking for. Volunteers should also have a background check performed and be given a drug test and potentially a physical if physical exertion is involved. Check with your organization on what is required.

Once you have decided on some promising volunteers, the next step is training. Bringing a volunteer into your facility and around residents means they need to understand and agree to the many regulations and policies of the state and facility.

This means orientation should include the following:

job description

Your volunteer should understand and agree with their duties and responsibilities as a volunteer. They should be provided with a copy in writing of what their scope includes and does not include.

infection control

Education and direction in terms of infection control are very important, especially in a long term care environment. Ensure volunteers know the correct protocol and the necessary shots they will need to get before volunteering.

safety

Safety regulations as determined by the state and facility in terms of fire safety/drills, food safety, resident safety and more.

hipaa

HIPAA is the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, and volunteers should understand the importance of this and confidentiality.

Note: This is not an exhaustive list. Check with your community for particular needs when recruiting volunteers.

There are many more policies, procedures, and regulations that can be taught and discussed in training your volunteers. Make sure to keep up with the annual training and any changes in these regulations to ensure volunteers are up to date. Once volunteers are trained and start working with residents, they are officially representing you. It’s imperative to ensure they fully understand their responsibilities and expectations.

grow & maintain

Now that you have volunteers, it’s not only their responsibility to keep the relationship going, you also need to give them a good experience. Create a positive, dynamic environment for your volunteers so they not only stay on as a volunteer longer, but they refer friends to volunteer as well.

The following are ways to maintain and grow the volunteer program:

allow choice

Allow your volunteers to choose what they are volunteering to do. Sending the same volunteer into the elements of winter on appointments with residents each day might not be the best way to keep them around. Switch volunteers around to different activities and responsibilities and allow them to choose between activities, appointments, exercise classes, and other duties.

thank your volunteers

A thank you goes a long way! Whether it be a verbal thank you, a card or a small gift at the holiday – Show your appreciation every time you can.

hour tracking systems

Volunteering shouldn’t be hard, make the process for tracking hours easy by using a seamless process and system. One popular online system, [Volgistics](#) is used by over 6 million volunteers. It’s a paid service, but offers background screening, recruiting, a portal and much more. See their tutorials [here](#).

Keeping it simple with pen and paper is not only a good back up idea but should be offered alongside an online option. One example of a print out is [here](#).

volunteer newsletters

Newsletter keeps your volunteers informed, involved and excited about the team they are apart of. A monthly newsletter is a way to send out important and fun information as well as gather any information or response you may need as well.

[Grant Rehabilitation & Care Center's Online Newsletter](#) is a great example of the information you can include; A note from the administrator, employee of the month, up and coming activities and other important happenings.

Your newsletter can live online, be hand delivered or sent out via email with a service like mail chimp. Mail chimp packages come with an email address and helps to organize your monthly email campaigns.

surveys

Let their voices be heard through an anonymous survey. Let them tell you how you are doing and what can be done better with the volunteer program. This helps them feel like you care, their voice is heard, and you can make some positive changes.

respect

Respect them as people, and respect their time. It is a great honor to be getting the volunteer's time which they can be spending elsewhere. Try not to keep them later than they can stay or ask for too much, as they are already giving plenty.

volunteers are needed

Volunteers are not only giving their time, they are giving their energy, labor and so much more to us. It's not easy to fill up a volunteer program with caring, committed people, so it will take work to find the right ones, train them and keep them coming back.

The important part is it is worth it. A well rounded and full volunteer program is a huge relief and benefit to staff and residents.

professional associations you should know about

Professional associations exist in every industry. If you're wondering what exactly they are, a professional association is a non-profit body, organization, or society seeking to further a particular profession, and in this case the world of senior care.

There are many of associations that help advance senior care with funding for research, skill certification, and advocacy for our seniors. Here are a few we think are doing great things:

national association of activity professionals

The National Association of Activity Professionals is dedicated to advancing the activities profession and represents all Activity Professionals working in geriatric settings. They're also one of Eversound's partners! NAAP hosts a yearly conference for activities professionals and offers an annual membership which provides access to live webinars, networking, monthly program ideas, and more.

alzheimer's association

Alzheimer's Association advances research to end Alzheimer's and dementia. It is the largest national voluntary health organization that works to eliminate the disease and enhance care for those who are living with it. The national group has local chapters for support within each community, a 24/7 hotline, support groups, and educational sessions nationwide.

american society on aging

American Society on Aging is committed to enhancing the knowledge and skills of those dedicated to improving the quality of life of older adults and their families. With over 5,000 members, made up of practitioners, educators, administrators, researchers, and students, they support all aspects of senior life and aging, including the physical, emotional, social, economic, and spiritual.



national council on aging

The NCOA aids people over 60 years old with aging and partners with nonprofit organizations and other groups to provide innovative community programs that help adults stay healthy, secure, and independent. With goals to improve the health and economic security of aging adults, they improved a staggering 1.47 million lives in 2017, and are dedicated to help even more in the future.

international council on active aging

Maintaining wellness in life isn't some fad that will be forgotten when the next one comes along. The ICAA believes that being fulfilled within the seven dimensions of wellness (emotional, vocational, physical, spiritual, intellectual, social, environmental) can help aging adults preserve their quality of life. They look to dispel society's myths about aging and provide senior care professionals with education, information, resources, and tools so they can achieve optimal success.

american nurses association

While many of the senior industry's associations protect and advocate for seniors, the ANA is looking out for our nurses — and we're thankful for that. The ANA exists to give every nurse the resources and opportunity of success in their efforts to advance the nursing profession.