



Sandoval County Senior Program Administration

CENTER LOCATION

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INSIDE
THIS
ISSUE:

Health and Wellness	2
Nutrition	4
Staying Active	5
Volunteer Services	7
Activities	8
Menu	9

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Hours of Operation:
Monday—Friday 8-5pm

Sponsorship

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All Sites individualize their newsletters to their local area information, activities calendars and games.

Health & Wellness

Are You Ever Too Old to Make a New Year's Resolution?

New Year's resolutions are often a way to take stock of our lives and aspire to make them better. Sometimes, those resolutions are a little too aspirational. But after many trips around the sun, does it ever make sense to just...stop making them?

Mark Nathanson, MD, is a geriatric psychiatrist who teaches medical students, healthcare professionals, and residents how best to work with older adults. We reached out to him for his perspective on aging and New Year's resolutions.

His verdict? There is no wrong age to make a New Year's resolution. In fact, looking forward to the future is a hallmark of good mental health.

What age is "older" when we're talking about adults?

Geriatrics is broad. The older we get, the more varied we get. You can have an 80-year-old who's running a marathon, and you can have an 80-year-old who doesn't know one minute from the next because they're suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

Should older adults make New Year's resolutions?

Yes. A resolution is important because the implication is you're looking toward the future.

It's one of the things I do as a psychiatrist: Encourage people to look forward. It's a critical element of my evaluation: Are people looking forward to the future, are looking forward to tomorrow, or are they feeling hopeless and helpless? When people look forward, when they are future oriented, it's a good thing. (a sign of mental health)

This said, there are many seniors who can't make a resolution because they don't have the wherewithal. I hope their family members, caregivers, or home attendants can help them make resolutions, such as getting involved in something where they increase their social networks. And improve the quality of their lives.

What are the health benefits of making New Year's resolutions?

That you're looking towards the future. Promising to make an improvement is something you can look forward to for yourself. The core of an evaluation of someone's mental health is the idea that they're looking forward to tomorrow. Someone who is depressed might say, "I don't care if I don't wake up in the morning'." Having something to look forward to is vital for mental health at any age.

Do you have advice for older adults to help make their resolution a reality?

Health and Wellness continued

Just get up and do something. Go to a Senior Center, learn a new skill, go to an art group or museum or gym. You can do these things virtually, too, in an online live class or event. These are wonderful things. If I have a patient who tells me that they're going to church or watching a religious service on TV, it's fantastic. This is what I want people to do. There's no set amount of time or days or commitment. Do what you can. Just do it.

We often need to help seniors focus on the positive aspects of life. We need to bolster their self-esteem and sense of self: Who am I? Do I feel good about what I'm doing with my life? Do I feel like I'm helping others? Do I feel like things are under my control?

As you get older, your sense of self can get really worn down, particularly when people are isolated and increasingly feeling that they don't matter. It's a huge issue when people don't plan for after retirement, and they don't recognize how important their work was to their well-being.

It's important to consider, and help seniors consider, what they have accomplished and what makes them feel appreciated, and knowing they matter in this world. Someone might feel this way because they get phone calls from their children or grandchildren. But there are many people who are so lonely and isolated.

Helping seniors appreciate what they have on a very small level, which is in their control, is so beneficial because there's so much out of our control.

What's the one resolution you'd like to see all older adults make?

One of the best things I could write a prescription for would be to have some companionship. Human contact is really important. This is why things were so devastating during COVID—many seniors could not even see their home attendants. That's why we started the outreach project Friendly Calls to Seniors. There's so much new literature now on the significant health problems related to social isolation and loneliness. It's a huge problem.

If someone cannot do it on their own, family members or caregivers can get help them involved in something where they increase their social networks. Any community activity anywhere. It's called 'social prescribing', and it's vital.

A resolution can be simple. Look around to appreciate what you have and ask yourself: How can I improve the quality of my life? Maybe it's spending more time with family members, or dancing at a Senior Center, or volunteering. Nourishing your soul is really important and a fantastic, achievable resolution.

Nutrition

Nutrition Knowledge

The twelve tips of Christmas

Thanksgiving has passed and Christmas will be here before we know it. Parties and gatherings are filling our calendar and that means many opportunities for eating and drinking. Here is a fun way to remember some healthy tips for the holiday season:

On the first day of Christmas, my dietitian said to me

Bring **One** dish to share (a low-calorie nutritious choice for the meal)

Two alcoholic beverages (sticking to two limits our liquid calories)

Three yummy cookies (have a few cookies but keep track and don't overdo it)

Four fruits for snacking (when hungry, choose a serving of fruit instead of sweets)

Five veggies each day (get all those phytonutrients by meeting this daily minimum)

Six feet from the buffet (prevent mindless eating by moving away to converse)

Seven days of exercise (don't forget to exercise regularly during the holidays)

Eight glasses of water (daily, and especially before and during parties and gatherings)

Nine ounces of protein (three 3-ounce portions of lean, natural protein each day)

Ten pounds we won't gain (by sticking to a healthy eating routine through the season)

Eleven new choices (if we tried 1 new healthy food/month, we now eat more variety)

Twelve counted blessings (count our blessings each and every day)

Following these simple steps helps us remain healthy during the holidays. If you bring a dish to share at a gathering, make it one that is centered around veggies or fruits. This will help keep the calories down and the nutrient content up. The obvious option is a veggie tray or fruit salad, both of which are excellent options. However, how about stuffed mushrooms or cauliflower "risotto" which not only taste excellent but incorporate nutrients and variety to a meal.

Staying Active

6 Best Winter Activities for Seniors

Will cold weather put the kibosh on wintertime fun? There's no reason it should. Older adults need to stay physically and mentally active during the winter months just like any other season. The trick is finding the right indoor and outdoor winter activities and generating a fair amount of enthusiasm to participate. This is where you come in. Your creativity and encouragement in leading your loved ones to include at least one fun wintertime activity each day this season will help you keep busy, healthy, and in high spirits. These 6 fun winter activities for seniors will get you headed in the right direction.

1. Bring a Bit of the Outdoor Garden Inside

Gardening is beneficial for people of all ages. The activity stimulates all the senses and awakens the fundamental connection with nature. For seniors, it's especially rewarding when the activity is done in pairs or groups, so enlist as many family members as you can to join in and offer moral support. Start with something simple. Amaryllis is easy to grow indoors and lasts for weeks. Eventually you can add herbs, low-light plants and flowers to your indoor repertoire by using one or more indoor window boxes. This is also a great way to create starter plants you can look forward to replanting outside during early spring.

2. Cultivate the Habit of Crafting

Art-based therapy is a great way to ward off the winter blues. Depending on physical ability and dexterity, your older loved one may enjoy dabbling in painting, pottery or clay sculpting. Adult coloring books are very popular these days. Craft projects keep hands and minds busy and are among the best cold weather activities for seniors. Crafts can range from beginner to expert level, providing a fun challenge with a delightful payoff. Just use your imagination and the Google search browser to develop a list of fun, easy, senior-friendly projects to enjoy with your loved one throughout the winter months. Where to begin? Try making holiday or seasonal wreaths together.

3. Make the Kitchen Your Hub of Activity

Winter months are perfect for spending quality time making something satisfying and delicious. Simple cooking and baking projects are rewarding for everyone in the household. Spending time together making a meal or baked treat is a social activity that gives seniors a sense of inclusion, purpose and accomplishment. You can schedule these sessions for a time of day when kitchen traffic is low, and you can enjoy one another's company and perhaps a cup of tea afterward.

Staying Active Continued

4. Feed the Mind with Reading and Thought

Why not start a two-member book club with your older loved one? Choose a title you both can relate to, and set aside an hour each day to read and discuss what you've read. You can do this with shorter works of poetry or even daily news items. Reading does wonders for mental well-being and can provide hours of stimulating thought and relaxing pleasure for the seniors in your life. Visiting the public library or bookstore together is a natural next step.

5. You Can't Forget Physical Activity

Exercise is one of the most important ways to maintain overall health, and the cold shouldn't cause a decrease in physical activity. Low-impact exercises that can be done indoors include stretching, tai chi, yoga, and chair exercises. Resistance band exercises are perfect for indoor workouts and can keep seniors strong and flexible throughout the winter months. Just dedicate 30 to 60 minutes a day to "gym time", and you'll soon see impressive results — better appetite, fewer aches and pains, improved sleep patterns, and a better overall attitude.

6. The Great Outdoors is Still Out There

Colder temperatures and snow are no reason to stay away from fresh air and sunshine for an entire season. Hiking and walking along the many local trails are often impossible during the scorching heat of summer. Getting outside a little every month during the winter is good for the constitution and a morale booster we all need.



Volunteer

Build Bridges: Connect with Your Community this Giving Season and Beyond

As we approach the holiday season, it's easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of shopping and gift-giving. This year, consider giving a different kind of gift - the gift of time. By volunteering, you can make a positive impact on someone's life and give back to your community, and as any volunteer with the Sandoval County Senior Volunteer Program can tell you, volunteering is good for you!

The wonderful thing about volunteering is that everyone has something to offer. Whether you have a few hours or a few days to spare, your generosity can make a big impact. After all, the true spirit of the holiday season lies in giving back and helping those in need. So why not make a personal commitment to volunteer this Giving Season and spread a little joy and kindness?

Over the past three decades, AmeriCorps volunteers have shown how service can transform communities and lives. And as we look forward to our next decade, AmeriCorps looks to the future with excitement and hope, knowing that national service and volunteering will continue to evolve and meet the changing needs of our country.

Volunteering is about more than just doing good deeds. It's also a powerful way to connect with others and bridge divides. By working together to address shared challenges and needs, we can help build stronger, more united communities. Whether it's two hours volunteering at a food bank or 20 hours organizing a park clean-up, giving time is an endless gift.

As we enter the giving season, remember that the gift of our time is just as valuable, if not more so, than any material gift we could give. From our AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers to the millions of Americans who serve their community every day, we have a lot to be grateful for. As you reflect on the year with your family and loved ones, thank you for lifting up your community, and remember there's always a way to put your passion and kindness into action. If you are looking for volunteer opportunities, please contact the Sandoval County Senior Volunteer Program at 505-404-5818.

Best wishes for a wonderful Holiday Season!

Happy Birthday December Volunteers

Mike Adams
 Thomas Ball
 Frances V. Chavez
 Susan Chavez
 Rosa Crimarco
 Rosanne S. Eakin
 Charles D. Evens
 Cindi Lewis
 Cynthia Risner
 Randall Sacharczuk
 Viji Sudarsanam



**Sandoval
 County
 Historical
 Society
 & Museum**

160 Edmund Road, Bernalillo, NM 87004

Just West of the Rio Grande River on the North Side of
 US 550 between the Coronado State Historic Site and the
 Santa Ana Star Casino.

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SUNDAY DEC. 8, 2024, 1-4 PM

SCHS&M Annual Holiday Open House Event

***With Music By
 Candy Wiggins Lopez & Friends***

