



Villages — Creating A Way For Older Adults To Help Stay In Their Home

The Village Concept

To paraphrase Hilary Clinton, it looks like it also might take a village to help people age-in-place. Aging in place is the ability to continue living a quality life in one's own home as a person grows older. The *Village* concept is simple: members of a community with the common desire to stay in their neighborhood work together, making it possible age in place. "[It is] a great example of people using their collective energies to create something of tremendous value," according to AARP spokesperson Elinor Ginzler. In a formal *Village*, members of a community organize as a nonprofit agency supported by volunteers and pay yearly dues to a self-governing board. In return, the members receive access to many support services and resources. This is a grassroots effort, from beginning to end, guided by community members.

Village Beginnings

It all began in Boston almost 10 years ago when residents of the Beacon Hill neighborhood found they did not have the resources they needed to stay in their homes and out of retirement or assisted living facilities as they aged. Instead of moving away from their community and friends, these residents came up with an idea of helping one other. This enabled older adults to stay in their homes. This *Village* concept has since expanded, reaching more than 45 communities in 20 states.

Village Services

The integral component is that neighbors are helping neighbors with day-to-day activities creating a more dynamic community. Services will vary from *Village to Village* depending on the residents' needs and available resources. Services may include:

- Security checks for individuals who live alone
- Dog walking and pet sitting
- Delivery of meals or groceries
- Help with household tasks, such as gardening or changing light bulbs
- House cleaning
- Finding a professional, like a computer specialist, plumber, or doctor
- Advice about Medicare or taxes
- Transportation for errands
- Other activities such as exercise classes or lectures.

If you would like to develop a Village, contact Marcy: mresnick@jfsdelaware.org or (302) 478-9411 ext. 129.

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A Note From The Editor

As our population ages at an incredible pace, we are beginning a cultural shift toward a more inclusive and respectful approach toward aging. This issue of our newsletter focuses on a concept that is catching on all over the country, creating aging-friendly communities.

Special thanks to Michelle Chonofsky and Joyce Koria Hayes, Esq. for their work on this edition of the SILVER newsletter.

If you've missed an issue of our newsletter and would like a copy of a back issue of the SILVER newsletter go to: www.jfsdelaware.org.

If you don't have computer access, contact JFS (302) 478-9411 ext. 129 for a copy.

SILVER Resources

Local Resources Available To Help

Jewish Family Services of Delaware (302-478-9411) provides counseling, information, and referrals useful to older adults of all faiths, who are aging in place. JFS is the lead agency for New Castle County for the Delaware Aging Network (DAN), a consortium of over 50 Senior Centers and service providers. As a result, JFS care managers are knowledgeable about Medicare and Medicaid issues, resources for transportation, meals, rehabilitation, respite care, care-giver support and much, much more enabling an elder to remain in his or her home safely and securely.

Other services offered through JFS include: housekeeping services and GEM (Growth, Education and Mental Fitness) a program offering adults age 50+ opportunities for exercise, education and socialization – reducing the isolation that often accompanies growing older. Elders participating in JFS' volunteer network enjoy opportunities to contribute to their community—while gaining friends and using their skills and experience.

The Wilmington Senior Center (302-651-3400) makes available services, opportunities and partnerships that have a positive impact on older adults' physical, mental and social well-being. The center provides lunch either in-center or through homebound delivery, as well as part-time employment, job training, referral and placement. The center takes day trips and overnight trips. It offers classes, counseling, and housing support, as well as the company of others. There is Grandparent Resource Center for grandparents who are raising their grandchildren and a Caregiver Resource Center for individuals who are caring for aging relatives and loved ones.

The Brandywine Senior Center (302-792-2757), located in the Claymont Community Center, provides a variety of activities and trips for adults 50 and over. The center offers activities like card games, exercise, and BINGO, as well as structured classes in many disciplines including computer instruction as well as arts and crafts. Lunch may be purchased each day and transportation to and from the center is provided daily in the Claymont area. The center takes day and overnight trips to local and not-so-local attractions.

Fox Rehabilitation (1-877-407-3422) offers in-home physical and occupational therapy for the geriatric population. Through their rehab program, adults aging in-home can learn to move around easier within their homes, play with their grandchildren with less pain, and maintain their quality of life. Fox Rehab also does driving ability assessments and defensive driving instruction. By offering in-home consultations, Fox Rehab allows adults to stay at home while aging.

Christiana Care provides specialized care for senior citizens, the Family Medicine Center (302-421-2700) at the Wilmington Senior Center has an office in a place where seniors already gather to share hot meals, socialize and exercise. Available medical services range from routine checkups to chronic disease management. House calls are made for patients who are homebound. Christiana Care also performs Outpatient Geriatric Assessments at Christiana Care's Foulk Road Family Medicine Center (302-477-3300).

Article compiled from:
Elinor Ginzler, "It Takes a Village." http://www.aarp.org/family/housing/articles/ginzler_it_takes_a_village.html
Susan Hindman, "'Villages' Allow Older Adults to Age in Place."
<http://www.silverplanet.com/silver-planet-aging/villages-allow-older-adults-age-place/55579>



SILVER Mission

To enable older adults to stay in their homes and community for as long as they can, with the support they need to remain healthy, safe, engaged citizens.

SILVER Vision

To create an environment that nurtures healthy aging for community residents and inspires residents of all ages to work toward this goal.

