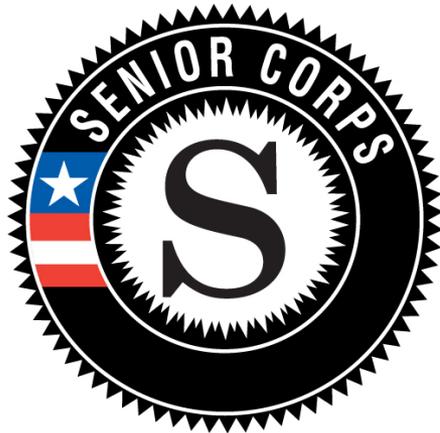


*Providing Independent
Living Support:
Benefits of Service to
Volunteers*



Trainer: _____

Date: _____

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the session participants will further their understanding of:

- *Why many people choose to volunteer*
- *The mental, social and physical health benefits of volunteering*
- *Tips and strategies for maintaining their physical and mental health*

TRENDS IN VOLUNTEERING

- American volunteer rates are growing.
- States with the highest volunteer rates are: Minnesota, Utah, Nebraska, Kansas, and Alaska!



WHY DO YOU VOLUNTEER?

***Why did you choose
independent living services?***



HOURS OF SERVICE AND HEALTH BENEFITS

- Volunteers should serve at least 1-2 hours per week, or about 100 hours a year, to show health benefits.



EXERCISE: BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

1. Divide into three relatively even groups.
2. Your group will visit each poster. Discuss and record your thoughts about the benefits for that category.
 - ✓ Review the answers already written.
 - ✓ Put a star next to ones your group agrees with.
 - ✓ Add additional benefits.
3. When time is called, move to the next poster until your group has visited all three.

HEALTH BENEFITS: RECAP

- **Mental Health:** purpose, sense of accomplishment, life satisfaction
- **Social Health (social support):** camaraderie, social network, connection to community
- **Physical Health:** perceived health, higher functional ability, greater longevity

RESEARCH RESULTS: OLDER ADULT VOLUNTEERS

- Volunteers age 60+ show improved physical and mental health and greater life satisfaction.
- Volunteers age 65 and up tend to have greater longevity, lower likelihood of depression and heart disease, and higher functional ability.



TIPS FOR MAINTAINING YOUR HEALTH AND ENTHUSIASM

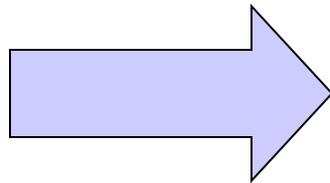
- Know yourself.
- Share with others.
- Acknowledge your limitations and ask for help.
- Take care of yourself!

SELF CARE WORKSHEET

1. Individually, take a minute and review the current status of your support system. For each item, check (✓) “yes”, “sometimes” or “not really”.
2. Choose **one** that you would like to improve and identify what you will do.
3. Share with a partner what you plan to do and who will help you.

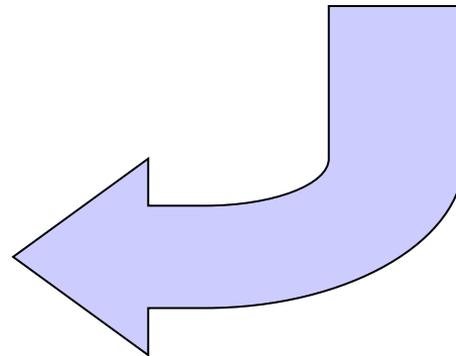
STUDIES FIND HEALTH BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

1) Volunteering
100 hrs/yr



2) Positive effect of social-
psychological factors (e.g.
sense of purpose)

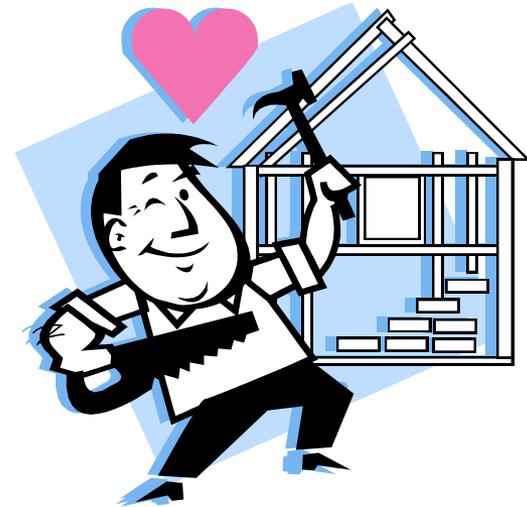
3) Lower risks of poor
physical health



OLDER ADULT VOLUNTEERS

93% of volunteers reported that life was better since they began volunteering.

(2001 study of Senior Corps volunteers)



LAST BUT NOT LEAST...

“Findings regarding the health benefits of volunteering indicate...the very act of volunteering may allow individuals to maintain their independence as they grow older and will likely face increased health challenges.”

The Health Benefits of Volunteering: A Review of Recent Research.
CNCS. April 2007.