

MOVE TO BE STRONG!



VON SMART NEWSLETTER



AUGUST 2024

SUMMER SUNSHINE

Welcome to August! With so much anticipation and excitement leading up to it, summer has an uncanny way of flying by us. We hope you have been enjoying the warm weather and sunshine and spending time outside, by the pool, at the beach, walking in nature, tending the garden, or enjoying outdoor patios.

Summers are always full of so much possibility and adventures as the nice weather often helps to give that extra boost of energy to get out and move. While we tend to explore our communities more in the nicer weather, it is important to remember to navigate your surroundings with purpose and intention. Be mindful of your space, terrain and spot possible hazards as you go. Remember, most falls are preventable as the known risks are treatable! If we continue to practice identifying common hazards in our surroundings, we can minimize the risks and enjoy our communities and summer weather to the fullest!

It takes a community to prevent falls!



The VON SMART Program

Helping to keep our community dwelling older adults active, engaged and free from falls!

For more information about SMART exercise classes and fall prevention workshops please contact:

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-or-

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HORTICULTURAL THERAPY: ARE THERE BENEFITS TO GUIDED GARDENING?

August 3, 2022 – McMaster University

Gardening is a popular leisure time activity amongst older adults. Be it planting colourful flowers to ring in the summer, nurturing the seeds of soon-to-be delicious fruits and vegetables, or re-potting and arranging plants to enhance the look of an outdoor or indoor space, there is no denying the unique feeling of getting your hands dirty and bringing your vision to life. The beauty of gardening is that it can be done in various settings, such as at home, in the community, or in an aged care facility. This means that even if you do not have a front yard or backyard, there are different ways to access garden environments.

When it comes to gardening, we often talk about it as a self-guided practice. But did you know that garden-related activities—such as growing flowers, vegetables, and fruits—can be guided by trained therapists? This type of practice is called horticultural therapy (1-3). It is “rooted,” no pun intended, in achieving specific goals associated with a person’s treatment plan. For example, if someone is working towards reducing the symptoms of a particular disease or disorder, their horticultural therapy would aim to attain these results (1;4). Patients, trained horticultural therapists, and health care providers all have a role to play within the horticultural therapy team. So, communication between these parties is essential.

What the Research Tells Us

Horticultural therapy is often promoted as a practice that anyone can engage in (5). The studies within the review align with this messaging, as they were comprised of various populations. For instance, some studies included all types of people. In contrast, others focused on specific populations, such as healthy people, cancer survivors, folks who had experienced a stroke, those with depression, or people living with dementia and mild Alzheimer’s disease. The review found that horticultural therapy has the potential to produce positive effects on a few physical and emotional health outcomes. Overall, some older adults may see improvements in physical function, mood, and quality of life, as well as reductions in body mass index (BMI). In particular, enhancements in mood were specific to the feeling of happiness in healthy people, while boosts in quality of life were specific to those with mild Alzheimer’s disease. Overall, the evidence was of moderate quality meaning the findings could change as more research emerges. More rigorous studies are needed to solidify and build on these promising results (1).



Source

<https://www.mcmasteroptimalaging.org/blog/detail/blog/2022/08/03/horticultural-therapy-are-there-benefits-to-guided-gardening?sid=a40dcffa-d13f-4d99-8bd8-2cb4c0baa740&hl=green+space>

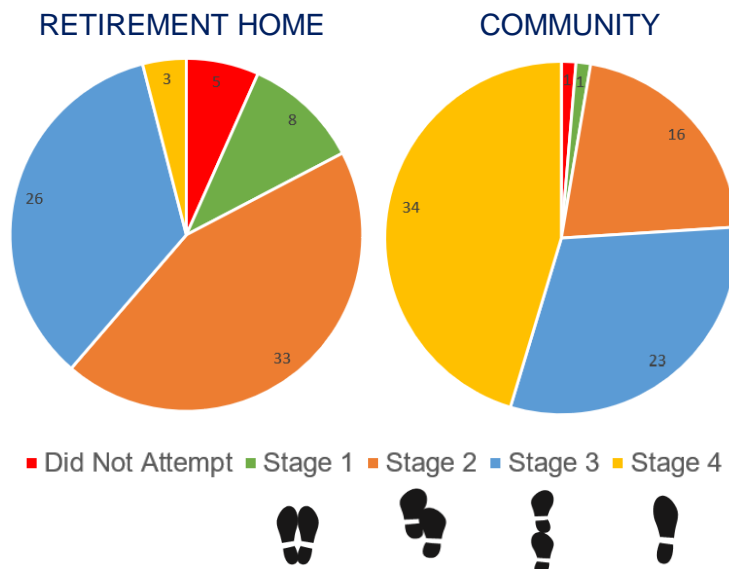
MOBILITY MATTERS HIGHLIGHTS

In June and July, the VON SMART Team travelled across Erie St. Clair performing Mobility Matters Checkups for individuals in the community as well as retirement home locations. The checkups were very well received, many individuals surprised themselves and goals were set leading up to the next checkups in October for retirement homes and December for community locations. A total of 150 checkups have been completed to date.

Some notable takeaways from the checkups are below:

- 150 participants were tested; ranging from 58 to 101 years of age
- 62 community participants completed the floor transfer test successfully; only 7 used a chair for extra support to get up from the floor
- Data shows a need for mobility and balance improvements in retirement home locations
- Floor Transfer Test sparked great conversations, (e.g. when is the last time you practiced getting up & down from the floor?) We encourage people to practice so if they are in a situation where they need to get up from the floor, they will be calm and confident in their abilities
- Only 16% and 27% of participants were male in the community and retirement home locations, respectively

Four Stage Balance Test – Highest Stage Achieved



TO THE FRIENDS I HOPE TO MEET

By: Carol Reed

“You can’t judge a book by its cover,” the saying goes.
Surely, that’s where our prejudice shows.
And inside the “book” that’s the story of me?
Perhaps not as worn as the “cover” you see.

Perhaps not too old to get more than a glance,
to give conversation and friendship a chance.
I hope we can meet, share from each other’s pages.
Let’s try not to focus on difference in ages.

“I was.” “I did.” “I wish I had.”
Too much past tense can be tiresome, or sad.
There’s more on my pages. That’s really not all.
There’s more to discuss than past days I recall.

I want to converse with you, folks of all ages.
To add fresh ideas to the rest of my pages.
To grow, to discover, to write them well.
To fill some more chapters, new stories to tell!

Your acceptance of me, now please understand,
helps me like my age now, and see ways to expand.
I hope you’ll be willing to talk and engage.
My book will be finer with friends on each page.

Source

<https://changingthenarrativeco.org/every-age-counts-poetry/>

DID YOU KNOW?

VON SMART is hosting a summer walking group in Windsor-Essex!

When: Mondays in July and August

Where: Malden Park (meet at the pavilion)
• 4200 Malden Rd, Windsor, ON N9C 2G2

Time: 10:00am

Notes

- **No** walks on holiday Mondays
- Heat warning in effect = **no** walking group
- Light rain is okay, but heavy rain or a thunderstorm = **no** walking group



Interested in joining?
Call 519-254-4866 ext. 6236

PARTICIPANT HIGHLIGHT

DOROTHY C.

105 YEARS OLD!



Dorothy (front) & her longtime friend Yvonne (back) enjoy celebrating Dorothy’s milestone birthday together

Meet Dorothy, our star participant for the month of August. Dorothy celebrated her 105th birthday in July and shares her insights on aging below:

- 1. What is your perspective on the aging process?**
It is an everyday thing. It is inevitable, you just have to hope you are fit enough to deal with it.
- 2. When did you start exercising?**
I have exercised my whole life. My father was a fitness instructor, he tested his exercise on us kids.
- 3. What advice do you have for other older adults?**
Good food, good rest, drink lots of water, and exercise. Take aging as it comes.
- 4. What can you attribute to living to 105?**
Good example set by parents, no drugs or alcohol, and always active. My dad would take all of us kids to the back door every morning, for three big breaths of fresh air.
- 5. What is your favourite type of exercise?**
Warm-up. Getting every single part of your body moving and warmed up before exercise.
- 6. What is your favourite food?**
Carrots, grapefruit, and oranges.

