

Rethinking Senior Centers to Attract Baby Boomers



By Mary McAleer, Regional Sales Director

Like all forms of activity, socialization becomes increasingly more important as we age. From stress levels and self-esteem to fitness and overall health, an active social life directly affects an older adults' mental, physical, and emotional state, making it key to a longer life. But what's more, are the cognitive benefits. Consistent social interactions and positive relationships don't just keep seniors stimulated, they keep them mentally sharp and intellectually engaged, helping to prevent declines in memory loss, Alzheimer's disease and various forms of dementia.

Why does all of this matter? Because when it comes to a healthy social life, there is an unfortunate number of obstacles facing seniors today, including physical ailments, a loss of family members, isolation or immobility and a significant lack of support, resulting in seniors feeling confused and even alone.

The good news though, is that as loved ones, friends and caregivers to seniors, there are plenty of ways to actively intervene and help.

Promote Positive Relationships

Meaningful relationships are what keep seniors feeling loved, supported, and engaged. From older siblings and younger grandchildren to new friends and acquaintances, supporting seniors' efforts to maintain connections and foster relationships with the ones that matter most will help add years to their life and more life to their years.

Encourage Purpose

Having purpose is vital for all ages, but older adults can significantly benefit from the pursuit of new hobbies and interests. So whether it's volunteering after retirement or getting a new pet, encouraging seniors to

seek opportunities that spark new passions will help them to find - and uphold - a more positive outlook.

Help to Leverage Resources

Charity organizations. Community events. Local church activities. Whatever is in your surrounding community, helping seniors to discover, get to and take advantage of the free resources around them, will keep them active, healthy and happy.

Think Differently About Senior Centers

Touting programs and services that include nutrition plans, fitness groups, art classes, job placement programs and volunteer opportunities (just to name a few), senior centers across the country are replacing bingo and blood pressure screenings for biking clubs and beer tasting events, giving seniors something to actually look forward to – and caregivers and loved ones something to look further into.

No matter what social outlets seniors choose, one thing is certain: These trends and changes keep getting better. With Baby Boomers constituting more than two-thirds of the 50+ population and over a million expected to live to at least 100 years of age, this vibrant and curious generation is in some ways, paving the way in active aging and redefining what it means to be a senior. Which is why we'll continue to find industry leaders that are working to reverse the stigma of aging and places like senior centers working to offer new kinds of action-packed amenities that leave our loved ones with more fun, friends and lasting memories – and us with more peace of mind.



BABY BOOMERS

28%

of the **population**
are baby boomers

10K

boomers reach
retirement age daily



1 out of 3 boomers over 65
relies on Social
Security benefits **alone**



42% of baby boomers have
nothing saved for retirement



4 out of 5 boomers plan to
live in their **current home**
during retirement