

SOCIAL SUPPORT A Key Ingredient to Good Health

BY CRICKET HESSELBERG

How much time do you spend at home? For many, we find comfort in our home relaxing in a recliner watching a favorite show or news station, reading a book, working on projects, or taking an afternoon nap. Or it may be the familiar sights, sounds, smells, and memories of your home that bring you joy. Although being at home can be comforting, it can also add to a feeling of isolation and loneliness. This is particularly true for older adults who may experience lack of transportation, mobility, or income or have a change in health. Having social support is vital

and can play a significant role in overall health as people age.

By 2030, older adults age 65+ are expected to be 20 percent of the population. As we live longer and age in place, it's important to identify social supports—ones that provide meaning and purpose. These supports come in different forms.

Volunteer Groups

Being a part of the community through volunteering or inviting a volunteer into your home offers a sense of value and belonging. If you're unable to go out into the community, having a volunteer visit will bring the community to you. A volunteer from a local church or social club can provide a consistent visitation for socialization, transportation, resource sharing, and quality time for heartfelt discussion. Frequent visits, phone calls, or a simple card lets an individual know they're connected to others.

In-Home Care

Whether it's to help with laundry, light housekeeping, meal preparations,

Having social support is vital and can play a significant role in overall health as people age.

or errands, having trusted, skilled, and consistent support can offer opportunity to get physical needs met in addition to adding a layer of emotional care and well-being.

Social Environments

Adult day centers, senior centers, and community centers are just a few venues where older adults can be engaged in a social environment. These environments allow individuals to meet new people, develop friendships, and connect to the community. Many provide activities and events to meet interests and preferences, and create opportunities to be physically active and independent.

Social interactions, fulfilling relationships, and believing others care about us are necessary for a healthy, balanced life. Social health is essential and connected to our overall physical and mental health, boosting our quality of life. The key is in finding what type of social

support is meaningful and rewarding. No matter how we choose to socialize, the benefits of nurturing relationships are well worth the effort.

Cricket Hesselberg is the program director of aging services at Catholic Charities, which offers compassionate support for older adults, caregivers, and families through volunteers, in-home care, and day center services to meet needs and promote living safely in their own homes for as long as possible. To learn more, visit ccmadison.org or call (608) 826-8020.



ADULT DAY CENTERS

These are nonresidential facilities providing activities for the elderly and special-needs individuals. Most centers operate 10 to 12 hours a day and provide meals, social/recreational activities, and general supervision. These centers enable caregivers to go to work or to obtain a break from their responsibilities.

ADULT DAY CENTER

5401 Fen Oak Dr., Madison 53718 (608) 826-8106 touradc@ccmadison.org

adultdavcentermadison.org

We provide an affordable alternative to in-home healthcare with support and respite for you while your loved one is in a safe, social, fun environment and receiving care from professional staff. Services for those with Alzheimer's and dementia.

BARABOO AREA SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER (608) 356-8464 Find us on Facebook

COLONIAL CLUB SENIOR ACTIVITY CENTER (608) 837-4611 colonialclub.org

ELITE DAY SERVICES LLC -**JEFFERSON** (920) 988-2524

HOMEWARD BOUND - BARABOO (608) 356-4666 hwbcare.com

MADISON AREA REHABILITATION CENTER (608) 223-9110 marc-inc.org

NATIONAL ADULT DAY SERVICES ASSOCIATION (877) 745-1440 nadsa.org

NORTHWEST DANE SENIOR **SERVICES - CROSS PLAINS** (608) 798-6937 nwdss.org



MARCH-AUGUST 2020 JOURNEY OF AGING JOURNEYOFAGING.COM