
Chair yoga, a bee garden and tai chi: United Way and Active Aging BC keep seniors active

September 26, 2016

Active Aging BC and United Way of the Lower Mainland have partnered to keep older adults active as they age.

Thirty “Seniors Active Aging” grants were distributed across BC in 27 communities. Programs range from connecting First Nations elders to community recreation in Prince George, to intercultural Tai Chi in Surrey, to chair yoga in Mission and an intergenerational bee garden in Duncan.

“The overall goal of these grants is to increase seniors’ level of physical activity in order to improve social connections, increase level of independence, and improve seniors’ well-being and quality of life,” said Michael McKnight, President & CEO, United Way of the Lower Mainland. “In order for a community to be great, it has to be great for everyone, no matter the person’s age.”

“As we age, physical activity to enhance mobility is key to maintaining independence and quality of life,” said Joanie Sims-Gould, Executive Director, Active Aging BC, Centre for Hip Health and Mobility. “A large percentage of older adults’ social connectedness is based on leisure activities. We know that for people over age 60, social isolation and feelings of loneliness are related to physical inactivity.”

All 30 one-year grants are up and running.

Active Aging BC, a program of the Centre for Hip Health and Mobility, contributed \$270,000 to the initiative and United Way of the Lower Mainland contributed \$240,000.

About Active Aging BC

Active Aging BC (ABC) is a suite of evidenced-based initiatives that provide an upstream solution designed to maintain the health, mobility, social connectedness and independence of older adults – and to prevent falls. ABC is an initiative of the Centre for Hip Health and Mobility, a University of British Columbia affiliated, internationally recognized research centre focused on developing novel strategies that promote physically active choices that positively influence mobility. To learn more about ABC, visit <http://www.activeagingbc.ca>.

About United Way of the Lower Mainland

United Way helps families, children and seniors in need. We are leaders in our field developing partnerships, tracking progress, and bringing the right people together to initiate change. UWLM funds 183 local organizations in the Lower Mainland and Sea to Sky corridor, as well as communities across the province through two provincial programs managed by UWLM. To learn more, visit www.uwlm.ca.

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Seniors Active Aging funded programs

Lower Mainland

Belcarra – Sasamat Outdoor Centre

“The Alder’s Club.” Outdoor education: plants, birds, First Nations lore, yoga, meditation.

Burnaby Neighbourhood House Society

“Seniors Connected.” Dance, Tai Chi, walking clubs.

Maple Ridge – Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Community Services

“Let’s Walk and Roll!” Door to door transportation for seniors to a nearby destination, a short walk, lunch or other activity.

North Vancouver – Hollyburn Family Services Society

“Seniors at Risk Outreach.” Locate housing in walkable neighbourhoods for at-risk seniors; connect with recreation services.

North Vancouver – North Shore Keep Well Society

“Exercise and Wellness Program for Seniors.” Weekly drop-in at seven locations on the North Shore that include mild exercise, massage and socializing.

New Westminster – Seniors Services Society of BC

“Fun, Food and Fitness with Friends 55+.” Outings, walking, mild fitness classes.

Richmond – Sharing Farm Society

“Greenhouse Social Club.” Cross culture, intergenerational organic gardening for food bank and community meals.

Squamish – Sea to Sky Community Services Society

“Men’s Shed Mentorship Program.” Equipped workshop and skill sharing to produce personal and community projects.

Surrey – Seniors Come Share Society

“Inter-Cultural Share and Care Seniors Program.” Inter-cultural tai chi, walking, and cultural dance.

Vancouver – Atira Development Society

“Youth for Chinese Seniors.” Intergenerational project that encourage seniors to come out of their homes to events.

Vancouver – Gordon Neighbourhood House

“West End Seniors in Action Project.” Yoga, Qi Gong, dance classes, walking groups and urban farming.

Vancouver – Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House

“Seniors Leadership, Education, Activity and Participation Project L.E.A.P.” Volunteer outreach to socially isolated seniors. Working with Langara nursing program.

Vancouver – Ray-Cam Community Association

“Elders Connect: Action and Cultural Enhancement.” Intergenerational activities including friendship dance, round dances, and walking groups that share indigenous knowledge.

Vancouver – REACH Community Health Centre Association

“Seniors in Action.” Cultural responsive PA dance, exercise, cultural music, and mindful walking.

Vancouver – South Vancouver Neighbourhood House

“SV Seniors Hub: ESL Activity and Conversation Circles.” Activity and social peer support circles, explore community resources, develop transit skills.

Vancouver – Vancouver Second Mile Society

“Neighbourhood Helpers Chinese Outreach Program.” Outreach to low-income housing for social gatherings. Creative movement and dance, balance and muscle strengthening, outings.

Fraser Valley

Mission – Mission Community Services Society

“Active Mobility Program for Seniors.” Low impact fitness classes, chair yoga, Nordic pole walking and aquafit.

Seabird Island – Seabird Island Band/Seabird Island Community School Society, Lalme’lwesawtexw

“Building health and wellness through Tai Chi.” Bi-weekly Tai Chi over 20 weeks.

Interior

Creston – Valley Community Services Society

“Living Well.” Adult day program for seniors with memory changes and caregivers. Includes exercise among other activities.

Invermere – Family Dynamix Association

“Active Aging.” Walking club, gardening club, dance and social. Five locations in the Columbia Valley.

West Kelowna & Peachland – Westside Health Network Society

“Walk N’Talk for Your Life.” Two hours, twice weekly, walk and osteo-fit. Partnership with UBCO medical school.

North

Hixon – Hixon Seniors Activity Centre

“Enhancing & Maintaining Quality of Life for Seniors.” Walking with pedometers, fitness trainer, games and resources.

Prince George – Prince George Native Friendship Centre

“Getting active; getting informed.” Connecting First Nations elders to community recreation – walks, swimming, hiking etc.

Vancouver Island and Gulf Islands

Campbell River – Campbell River & District Adult Care Society

“Seniors Exercise & Lunch Program.” Drop in for exercises then lunch.

Duncan – BC Forest Discovery Centre

“Pollinator Conservation Teaching Garden and Bee Sanctuary.” Working together, senior and intergenerational volunteers build and maintain 2.5 acre bee-garden.

Gabriola Island – People for a Healthy Community on Gabriola Island Society

“Island Stepping Up Stepping Out.” Peer to peer exercise.

Pender Islands – Pender Island Health Care Society

“Pender Islands Health Care Society.” Meal, music, sing along, dance, group walks and carpet bowling.

Quadra Island – Quadra Island Community Connections Society

“Quadra Seniors Get Moving.” Indoor walking club, armchair exercise classes, movement and balance training.

Port Hardy – Hardy Bay Senior Citizens Society

“Promoting Active Aging for Seniors at the Centre.” Enhancing ongoing meal, computer and game program.

Victoria – Oak Bay Volunteer Services Society

“Oak Bay Seniors Active Aging.” One-on-one walks and outings.

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