Senior Center Participants Speak Up

Results of the 2005 Senior Center Participant Survey

A Partnership Between the Florida Department of Elder Affairs and the Florida Association of Senior Centers
Acknowledgements

This study attempts to define the impact of senior center participation on older adults. Because there is no central data collection process for senior center data, and no agency maintains client information for individuals receiving senior center services, it was necessary to develop a method that provided senior center participants an opportunity to volunteer to participate in this survey. The Florida Department of Elder Affairs would like to thank the Florida Association of Senior Centers for helping identify an appropriate method for recruiting senior center participants for the survey.

Florida Department of Elder Affairs

The Florida Department of Elder Affairs advocates for Florida’s older adults, working to create an environment that enables older Floridians to live independently in their own homes and communities. Through partnerships with 11 area agencies on aging, the department provides community-based care to help seniors age with dignity, purpose and security.

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Florida Association of Senior Centers

The Florida Association of Senior Centers (FASC) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of quality senior center services and programs. FASC offers training workshops for senior center professionals, maintains awards programs, promotes advocacy for senior center services and offers mentoring assistance to centers seeking national accreditation from the National Institute of Senior Centers.

Contact the association’s survey coordinator at:

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Executive Summary

What benefits do older adults gain from participation at senior centers? Gerontologists, senior center directors and policy makers alike have frequently touted the benefits of senior center participation. While all have much anecdotal evidence supporting these claims, little quantitative research has been conducted. As quoted from the Journal of Gerontological Social Work: "There has been “less clarity about what participants actually gain from senior center participation.” ¹

Learning How Senior Center Participation Impacts Health and Wellness

For several years, the U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA) has sponsored efforts to develop and field-test a core set of performance measures for state and community programs on aging operating under the Older Americans Act. The 2005 Senior Center Participant Survey is one part of the U.S. Administration on Aging’s study known as Performance Outcome Measurement Project (POMP).

Methodology

Department staff worked with staff from five other states participating in the POMP senior center project to develop the survey instruments. Department staff then worked with the Florida Association of Senior Centers to develop a suitable method for inviting individuals at the identified centers to participate in the survey. Because there is no central data collection process for all senior centers, and no agency maintains client information for individuals receiving senior center services, it was necessary to develop a method that provided senior center participants an opportunity to volunteer to be interviewed.

Senior center staff and activity leaders distributed a one-page survey card to senior center participants. Through this survey card, senior center participants were invited to voluntarily provide answers to four questions along with demographic information. The card also invited respondents to participate in the more thorough telephone interview by providing their name, telephone number and best time of day to be reached. Using the survey card as a means to invite senior center participants to voluntarily take the telephone survey provided an opportunity to gather data on four questions from a much

larger audience. The four questions on the survey card asked participants to indicate the frequency of their agreement (most of the time, sometimes, almost never or not applicable) with four statements:

Because I go to the senior center, I …
1. Take better care of my health.
2. Feel happier or more satisfied with my life.
3. Feel more able to stay independent.
4. Would recommend the senior center to a friend or family member.

The survey results from these four questions are considered especially significant because the number of respondents is approximately five times the number of respondents for the longer survey, providing a more clear indication of their validity. Throughout the survey results included in this report, the results from these four questions are reported as “Super-sized Results.”

Within two to three weeks of completing the survey card, trained surveyors interviewed randomly selected respondents. A total of 2,446 participants completed the one-page survey cards, and 1,095 participants volunteered to be included in the telephone survey. A randomized sample of 773 potential interviewees was selected for the telephone interviews, and 530 individuals provided complete interviews.

**How Senior Centers Were Selected to Participate in the Survey**

It was determined that the best results could be achieved by selecting approximately 20 centers that represented characteristics of centers statewide learned through the 2004 Senior Center Profile Survey, which was conducted through a partnership between the Florida Department of Elder Affairs and the Florida Association of Senior Centers. (A summary of the 2004 Senior Center Profile Survey is included in the appendix.) About 177 of Florida’s 240 senior centers responded to the 2004 survey.

For the 2005 Senior Center Participant Survey, 20 centers were selected, based on the following criteria:

- **Rural and urban centers** – In selecting senior centers to participate in the participant survey, rural centers were identified using the definition provided in section 288.0656(2)(b), Florida Statutes. (The definition according to Florida Statutes is included in the appendix.)
- **Small (average daily attendance of 100 or less) and large centers** – Based on the results of the 2004 Senior Center Profile Survey conducted by the Department of Elder Affairs and the Florida Association of Senior Centers, 99 of 142 responding centers (70 percent) reported an average daily attendance of 100 or fewer. Of the 22 selected centers for the 2005 participant survey, 73 percent were in this size category.
- **Centers receiving federal Older Americans Act funds as well as centers that do not** – The Administration on Aging indicated that the survey could also involve centers that do not received Older Americans Act funds.
Centers using a recreational model and centers using an aging-services model –
As the department and the Florida Association of Senior Centers conducted the
2004 Senior Center Profile Survey, evidence of two senior center models emerged – ones that have a more recreational focus and others that have a stronger connection to aging services provided through the traditional aging services network. While there are no authoritative criteria or definitions for these two models, it seems that the staffs of some senior centers seem to be more knowledgeable than others about typical aging services and the referral information that is available through the aging services network.

A total of 20 centers were selected; however, one center director also distributed the surveys to participants at two other centers associated with the same sponsoring organization, making the total number of participating centers 22.

Profile of Participating Senior Centers

Centers selected to participate in the 2005 Senior Center Participant Survey have the following characteristics:

Funding Sources

- The 22 centers have annual operating budgets ranging from $22,589 to $1.8 million. The center with the largest budget is part of a county-wide agency that provides home and community-based services operated via federal Older Americans Act and state funds.
- The most frequently reported funding source among the participating centers was local government, with 10 centers – or 45 percent of the participating centers – naming city or county government as their primary funding source.
- Fourteen of the 22 centers (64 percent) receive Older Americans Act funding, but only about a third (32 percent) named Older Americans Act as their primary funding source.

Sponsoring Organizations

- More than three-quarters (77 percent) of participating senior centers operate as part of a larger organization.
- Almost three-quarters of the centers (64 percent) were described as a division of city or county government.

Locations and Geography

- Almost three-quarters (73 percent) of participating centers operate satellite sites.
• Most centers (82 percent) report drawing participants from a large town or city (more than 10,000 residents) or from the entire county, 36 percent and 46 percent, respectively.

Attendance

• Sixteen centers (73 percent) have daily attendance of 100 or fewer participants. This percentage is representative of centers statewide, according to information previously gathered through the 2004 Senior Center Profile Survey.

Transportation

• Half of the participating centers are located on a regular public transportation route.
• More than half (59 percent) of participating centers have public transportation available through a source other than regular public transportation, providing their own transportation or through a contract with an area agency on aging. Eleven of the specified other transportation sources were paratransit programs funded by a federal grant to the State of Florida’s Transportation Disadvantaged Commission.

Programs and Activities

• All participating centers provide participants the opportunity to be involved in playing games such as pool, bingo, cards, bridge, dominos, bocce ball and mah jong. More than half (59 percent) of the centers provide these activities five or more times each week.
• Other activities offered in most of the participating centers (55 percent or more) are exercise classes, health seminars, crafts, travel groups and field trips, visual arts, dancing, computers, and “pot luck” meals.
• Half of the participating centers provide opportunities for participants to further their education, including college courses and lectures.

Support Services

• Support services offered in most of the participating centers (64 percent or more) are health monitoring; nutrition education; congregate meals; assistance with legal affairs, taxes, accessing transportation options, and health insurance; home-delivered meals; flu shots; counseling and support groups.
• The services least likely to be offered at the participating centers include adult day services and home repair.
Staffing and Volunteer Opportunities

- Almost two-thirds (63 percent) of the 22 participating centers have only one or two full-time staff members, with 42 percent having only one full-time staff person.
- Twenty of the 22 centers reported having volunteers. Numbers of volunteers ranged from one to 240.
- The most frequently reported volunteer opportunity was for teaching classes, available in 86 percent of the participating centers.

Hours of Operation

- Most of the 22 centers are open weekdays only.
- On any weekday evening, anywhere from four to six of the participating centers are open.
- Five centers are open on Saturdays, with only three having regular weekend hours.

Profile of Senior Center Participants

Using the demographic data provided by the survey, a likely profile of senior center participants can be developed. Most often, senior center participants fit the following profile:

- Have been coming to the center between one and five years (46 percent).
- Come to the center between two and four times each week (48 percent) and stay for up to four hours (73 percent).
- Participate in a recreational activity such as bingo, bridge or dancing (43 percent).
- Learned about the center from a friend or neighbor (46 percent).
- Drive to the center (76 percent) and go as often as desired (80 percent).
- Are single,* Caucasian women, age 75 or older, with at least some college education.
- Live with one other person in a city setting.
- Consider their physical health to be very good or excellent (49 percent).

*Either separated, divorced, widowed or never married.
Survey Results: Benefits of Senior Center Participation

Survey respondents credit their senior center participation with the following benefits:

**Physical Health**
- Taking better care of their health (92 percent)
  - Goes to 99 percent when “super-sized”
- Increased physical activity (90 percent)
- Improved nutrition (90 percent)

**Mental Health**
- Feeling happier or more satisfied with life (99 percent)
  - Goes to 99 percent when “super-sized”
- Having something to look forward to (98 percent)
- Having more energy (87 percent)

**Lifelong Learning**
- Learning new things (89 percent)

**Connection to Support Services**
- Learning about support services (99 percent)
- Knowing where to ask if a service such as a ride to the doctor is needed (98 percent)

**Quality of Life**
- Having a positive effect on their lives (98 percent)
- Feeling more able to stay independent (93 percent)
  - Goes to 99 percent when “super-sized”

**Conclusions**

Overwhelmingly, senior center participants indicate that they would recommend the senior center to a friend or family member, indicating a high level of satisfaction with their senior center experiences. Based on survey responses, people who experience the following circumstances can also benefit from senior center participation:

- Those who experience loneliness and isolation.
- Those with health conditions that can be managed through increased physical activity and better nutrition.
- Those who want to learn new things.
- Those who want to learn more about support services and benefits available to older adults.
- Those who are looking for a better quality of life.
- Those who want to continue to be independent.
- Those who feel unhappy or experience a sense of boredom.
- Those who feel “blue” or “down in the dumps.”
• Those who feel they do not have enough energy to do what they want to do.

Locations and Geography

Almost all centers (82 percent) draw participation from a large town or city with more than 10,000 residents. Additionally, more than half of respondents (58 percent) report living in a city.

In contrast, only 13 percent of senior center participants stated that they live in a rural area [as defined by Florida Statutes 288.0656(2)(b)], while almost a quarter (23 percent) of the participating centers are located in a rural area.

Transportation

By far the most common way participants get to a senior center is by driving (76 percent of survey respondents). This high percentage is a strong indicator of the independence and autonomy of senior center participants. However, this independence may be at risk when a senior center participant ceases driving. While this survey did not assess the availability of transportation alternatives for individuals who do not drive, it is possible to conceive that individuals who do not drive might be unable to continue participating at the center, and thus, have limited access to the senior center activities that the individual sees as important to continued health, wellness and independence.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to further the study of senior center participation and its benefits to older adults:

• Develop a “toolkit” that will assist senior centers in conducting their own outcome measures.
• Develop a “toolkit” for community advocates seeking to establish new senior centers, including PowerPoint slides of information from the 2004 Senior Center Profile Survey and 2005 Senior Center Participant Survey.
• Compare the survey results of the 22 participating senior centers to determine if participant results are impacted by senior center characteristics.
• Attempt to identify barriers to senior center participation among non-participants.

Senior center professionals may find the survey results useful in marketing senior center programs and activities. Senior center participants are overwhelmingly pleased with their senior center experience, and most report learning about the center from a friend or neighbor. Therefore, it may be valuable to provide incentives to current senior center participants to invite people to attend center activities.
How Does Senior Center Participation Impact Health and Wellness?

What benefits do older adults gain from participation at senior centers? Gerontologists, senior center directors and policy makers alike have frequently touted the benefits of senior center participation. While all have much anecdotal evidence supporting these claims, little quantitative research has been conducted. As quoted from the *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*: There has been “less clarity about what participants actually gain from senior center participation” (Whisnant Turner, 2004).²

Senior center directors report anecdotes of participants who were frail when they started coming to the center, and after several weeks or months of participation, appear much stronger than when they first arrived and increase their participation in a variety of activities. The *2005 Senior Center Participant Survey* is an attempt to confirm the anecdotes.

Senior center services are designed to assist independent older adults in remaining active and healthy. Unlike adult day services where participants receive supervision and assistance with activities of daily living (such as toileting, eating and mobility), senior center attendees participate in activities and programs without the assistance of staff. It is the focus on independent older adults that elevates senior centers to a unique role in both the community and in the aging process.

Rowe and Kahn, authors of *Successful Aging* (1998),³ have identified three components as being essential to successful aging:

- low risk of disease and disease-related disability;
- a high level of mental and physical functioning; and
- active engagement with life.

Because senior centers provide opportunities for learning to manage one’s health and chronic conditions, maintaining cognitive and physical abilities and interacting socially, they appear to be ideal environments for incorporating Rowe and Kahn’s three components into daily living.

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One study of senior center participants has been done by Ron Aday. His 2003 study, conducted with 734 senior center participants in seven states, including Florida, found that the majority of senior center participants credit senior center programming with improved mental and physical health. Aday also found that the majority of respondents lived alone, so the center provided the opportunity for friendship as well as learning new things and improving their overall quality of life.⁴

With little previous research about the benefits of senior center participation, the 2005 Senior Center Participant Survey represents some of the first research of its kind to answer the question, “What benefits do older adults gain from participation at senior centers?” For this survey, a total of 530 senior center participants from 20 Florida senior centers were interviewed for this survey. In addition, four questions were answered by 2,446 senior center participants, providing further insight into the participants’ responses.

Senior Center Performance Outcome Measures Project

For several years, the U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA) has sponsored efforts to develop and field-test a core set of performance measures for state and community programs operating under the federal Older Americans Act. Some of the programs evaluated include home-delivered and congregate meals and in-home services. AoA’s studies have been known as the Performance Outcome Measurement Project (POMP) and in 2004-05, included senior center services, but were not limited only to centers receiving federal Older Americans Act funds. In Florida, the senior center POMP study is called the 2005 Senior Center Participant Survey. For more information about POMP, visit http://www.gpra.net/.

In 2004, the Florida Department of Elder Affairs participated with five other states (Arizona, Ohio, Illinois, North Carolina and Indiana) to develop valid survey questions for senior center participants and directors. The purpose of the participant survey was to more accurately determine the role that senior centers play in assisting older Americans achieve greater independence, health and wellness. AoA expressed interest in evaluating this role regardless of funding sources of the participating centers. In addition to the information collected from participants, center directors provided additional details about center activities and programs through the Senior Center Descriptor Survey.

How Were Senior Center Participants Selected for the Survey?

The Florida Department of Elder Affairs, in partnership with the Florida Association of Senior Centers, developed a method for contacting center participants for survey interviews. Center staff distributed to participants in each class and activity a Senior Center Participant Survey Card – a one-page survey with four questions and demographic

information. The survey card invited individuals to participate in a more thorough telephone interview by providing their name, telephone number and best time of day to reach them.

How Were Senior Centers Selected for Participation?

It was determined that the best results could be achieved by selecting approximately 20 centers that represented characteristics of centers statewide. Based on information gathered from 177 of the approximately 240 Florida senior centers during the 2004 Senior Center Profile Survey, this goal was achieved. (A summary of the 2004 Senior Center Profile Survey is included in the appendix.) For example, the percentage of participating centers in rural counties matches the number of centers surveyed in 2004 that are in rural counties. The complete criteria used for selection of participating centers is as follows:

- Rural and urban centers – In selecting senior centers to participate in the participant survey, rural centers were identified using the definition provided in section 288.0656(2)(b), Florida Statutes. (The definition according to Florida Statutes is included in the appendix.)
- Small (average daily attendance of 100 or fewer) and large centers – Based on the results of the 2004 Senior Center Profile Survey conducted by the Department of Elder Affairs and the Florida Association of Senior Centers, 99 of 142 responding centers (70 percent) reported an average daily attendance of 100 or fewer. Of the 22 selected centers for the 2005 participant survey, 73 percent were in this size category.
- Centers receiving federal Older Americans Act funds as well as centers that do not – The Administration on Aging indicated that the survey could also involve centers that do not received Older Americans Act funds.
- Centers using a recreational model and centers using an aging-services model – As the department and the Florida Association of Senior Centers conducted the 2004 Senior Center Profile Survey, evidence of two senior center models emerged – ones that have a more recreational focus and others that have a stronger connection to aging services provided through the traditional aging services network. While there are no authoritative criteria or definitions for these two models, it seems that the staffs of some senior centers seem to be more knowledgeable than others about typical aging services and the referral information that is available through the aging services network.

A total of 20 centers were selected; however, one center director also distributed the surveys to participants at two other centers associated with the same sponsoring organization, making the total number of participating centers 22.

How Was the Survey Conducted?

After the department and the five other states participating in AoA’s Performance Outcome Measures Project developed the survey, department staff worked with the Florida Association of Senior Centers to develop the method for inviting individuals at the identified centers to participate in the survey. Because there is no central data
collection process for all senior centers, and no agency maintains client information for individuals receiving senior center services, it was necessary to develop a method that provided senior center participants an opportunity to volunteer to be interviewed.

Senior center participants were invited to voluntarily complete a survey card that was distributed by senior center instructors and activity leaders to center participants. This one-page survey included four questions and demographic information and also invited individuals to participate in the telephone interview by providing their name, telephone number and best time of day for an interviewer to reach them. Using the survey card as a means to invite senior center participants to voluntarily take the telephone survey provided an opportunity to gather data on four questions from a much larger audience.

The four questions on the survey card asked participants to indicate the frequency of their agreement (most of the time, sometimes, almost never or not applicable) with four statements:

Because I go to the senior center, I …
1. Take better care of my health.
2. Feel happier or more satisfied with my life.
3. Feel more able to stay independent.
4. Would recommend the senior center to a friend or family member.

The survey results from these four questions are considered especially significant because the number of respondents is approximately five times the number of respondents for the longer survey, providing a more clear indication of their validity. Throughout the survey results included in this report, the results from these four questions are reported as “Super-sized Results.”

Within two to three weeks of completing the survey card, trained surveyors interviewed randomly selected respondents. A total of 2,446 participants completed the one-page survey cards, and 1,095 participants volunteered to be included in the telephone survey. A randomized sample of 773 potential interviewees was selected for the telephone interviews, and 530 individuals provided complete interviews.

**Timeline for the Survey**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 2004</td>
<td>Survey instruments were finalized by participating states and were mailed to selected centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 5 – 18, 2005</td>
<td>Senior center staff and instructors distributed scripts and cards to all instructors and activity leaders. Instructors and activity leaders returned completed surveys to center director.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 20 – 25, 2005</td>
<td>Senior center staff returned completed participant surveys and descriptor survey to the department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 5 – 29, 2005</td>
<td>Surveyors contacted respondents and conducted interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 5 – 22, 2005</td>
<td>Data was compiled and preliminary analysis completed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Profile of the Participating Centers

The 22 senior centers that distributed survey cards to participants are located in all 11 planning and service areas, and in 18 of Florida’s 67 counties.

Funding Sources

A common misperception about Florida’s senior centers is that all centers receive funding from the Department of Elder Affairs. However, the 2004 Senior Center Profile Survey revealed that centers actually rely on funding from a wide variety of revenue sources. (A summary of the 2004 Senior Center Profile Survey is included in the appendix.) Centers selected for the participant survey reflect the same wide array of funding.

- The 22 centers have annual operating budgets ranging from $22,589 to $1.8 million. The center with the largest budget is part of a county-wide agency that provides home and community-based services operated via federal Older Americans Act and state funds.
- The most frequently reported funding source among the participating centers was local government, with 10 centers – or 45 percent of the participating centers – naming city or county government as their primary funding source.
- One center’s primary funding source is a local option sales tax added to gas service.
- Fourteen of the 22 centers (64 percent) receive Older Americans Act funding, but only about third (32 percent) named Older Americans Act as their primary funding source.
- More than half (59 percent) of the centers reported receiving funds for the Older Americans Act service of congregate meals and nutrition education.
Sponsoring Organizations

- More than three-quarters (77 percent) of respondents indicated that the center is a senior services program operating within a larger organization.
- Eight centers (36 percent) were described as not-for-profit agencies.
- Almost three-quarters of the centers (64 percent) were described as a division of city or county government.
Locations and Geography

- Almost three-quarters (73 percent) of participating centers operate satellite sites.
- Most centers (82 percent) report drawing participants from a large town or city (more than 10,000 residents) or from the entire county, 36 percent and 46 percent, respectively.
- The other 18 percent of participating centers reported drawing participants from one or more neighborhoods, from a small town or village (less than 10,000 residents) or from more than one county.
- The 22 participating centers reported primarily drawing their participants from the following areas: eight from urban areas (36 percent), nine from suburban areas (41 percent) and five from rural areas (23 percent).

### Primary Areas Participants Drawn From

- Urban area: 36%
- Suburban area: 41%
- Rural area: 23%

Attendance

- Sixteen centers (73 percent) have daily attendance of 100 or fewer participants. This percentage is representative of centers statewide, according to information previously gathered from 142 of Florida’s 240 senior centers. According to the 2004 Senior Center Profile Survey, 70 percent of centers reported daily attendance of 100 or fewer. (A summary of the 2004 Senior Center Profile Survey is included in the appendix.)
Transportation

- Half of the participating centers are located on a regular public transportation route.
- More than a third (41 percent) of participating centers provide their own transportation.
- More than a third (41 percent) of participating centers have contracts with an area agency on aging to provide transportation.
- More than half (59 percent) of participating centers have public transportation available through a source other than regular public transportation, providing their own transportation or through a contract with an area agency on aging. Eleven of the specified other transportation sources were paratransit programs funded by a federal grant to the State of Florida’s Transportation Disadvantaged Commission.

![Public Transportation Options at the 22 Senior Centers](chart)

Programs and Activities

- All participating centers provide participants the opportunity to be involved in playing games such as pool, bingo, cards, bridge, dominos, bocce ball and mahjong. More than half (59 percent) of the centers provide these activities five or more times each week.
- Other activities offered in most of the participating centers (55 percent or more) are exercise classes, health seminars, crafts, travel groups and field trips, visual arts, dancing, computers, and “pot luck” meals.
- Half of the participating centers provide opportunities for participants to further their education, including college courses and lectures.
- The activities least likely to be offered at the participating centers include classes in English as a second language, religious or spiritual pursuits and sports such as golf, softball or tennis.
The following chart provides additional information about the activities offered and the frequency of the activities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior Center Activity</th>
<th>Percent of Centers Offering Activity</th>
<th>If Offered, Frequency of Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 or more times per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games (pool, bingo, cards, bridge, dominos, bocce ball, mah jong, etc.)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise classes (Tai chi, yoga)</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health seminars</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crafts (quilting, needlepoint, basket weaving, etc.)</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trips, travel group, field trips</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual arts (painting, pottery, etc.)</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music (singing, instrument, chorus, etc.)</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing (ballroom, line, square, etc.)</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers*</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Pitch-in” or “pot luck” meals</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education opportunities (college courses, lectures, etc.)</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library/bookmobile</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other creative expression (drama, journaling, writing, etc.)</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness or exercise room</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodworking</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion groups (book/news club)</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardening</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Senior Center Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior Center Activity</th>
<th>Percent of Centers Offering Activity</th>
<th>If Offered, Frequency of Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 or more times per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English as a second language classes*</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious/spiritual pursuits*</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation sports (golf, softball, tennis, etc.)</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Indicates invalid responses, making percentage not total 100 percent.

### Support Services

- Support services offered in most of the participating centers (64 percent or more) are health monitoring; nutrition education; congregate meals; assistance with legal affairs, taxes, accessing transportation options, and health insurance; home-delivered meals; flu shots; counseling and support groups.
- The services least likely to be offered at the participating centers include adult day services and home repair.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior Center Support Service</th>
<th>Percent of Centers Offering Service</th>
<th>If Offered, Frequency of Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 or more times per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health monitoring/screenings (blood pressure screening, osteoporosis screening)</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition education and training</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregate meals</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information &amp; assistance with legal affairs (living wills, power of attorney, etc.)</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Center Support Service</td>
<td>Percent of Centers Offering Service</td>
<td>If Offered, Frequency of Availability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 or more times per week</td>
<td>2 to 4 times per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information &amp; assistance about taxes</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance with accessing other community transportation options (e.g., bus passes, rural transit networking, out of county transportation)</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-delivered meals</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flu shots &amp; other immunizations</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling, support groups*</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information &amp; assistance with Medicare, Medicaid, long-term care insurance, etc.</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy assistance</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information &amp; assistance about housing opportunities</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation provided by the senior center</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caregiver and respite services</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food pantry/food commodities</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medication management</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone reassurance/emergency response</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical equipment and supplies</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home care (personal care, homemaker/housekeeper, home health aide, shopping)</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Staffing and Volunteer Opportunities

- Almost two-thirds (63 percent) of the 22 participating centers have only one or two full-time staff members, with 42 percent having only one full-time staff person.
- Two-thirds (67 percent) have one or two additional part-time staff.
- The most full-time staff reported was 40, and the most part-time staff reported was 23.
- Twenty of the 22 centers reported having volunteers. Numbers of volunteers ranged from one to 240.
- The most frequently reported volunteer opportunity was for teaching classes, available in 86 percent of the participating centers.
- Other volunteer opportunities offered in most of the participating centers (64 percent or more) are as follows:
  - Planning or coordinating special events;
  - Packing/serving congregate meals;
  - Working at the reception or welcome desk;
  - Office work;
  - Fundraising;
  - Setting up/cleaning for classes and events; and
  - Providing health insurance information.

### Volunteer Opportunities in Senior Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volunteer Opportunities in Senior Centers</th>
<th>Percent of Centers Offering Volunteer Opportunity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching classes</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning or coordinating special events</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packing/serving congregate meals</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Volunteer Opportunities in Senior Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volunteer Opportunity</th>
<th>Percent of Centers Offering Volunteer Opportunity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working at the reception or welcome desk</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office work (typing/computer use, filing, keeping records/books, etc.)</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting up/cleaning for classes and events</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information &amp; assistance with Senior Health Insurance Information Program [in Florida, known as SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Elders)]</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information &amp; assistance with tax preparation</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packing/delivering home-delivered meals</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information &amp; assistance with Medicare, Medicaid, long-term care insurance, and prescriptions</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information &amp; assistance with transportation</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking to groups about the center (marketing)</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working on the newsletter</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone reassurance</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly visiting</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information &amp; assistance with legal affairs (living wills, power of attorney, etc.)</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits counseling (e.g., Social Security)</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring children &amp; other intergenerational activities</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing respite/sitter services</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Hours of Operation**

- Most of the 22 centers are open weekdays only. The operating hours for the centers vary greatly:
  - The minimum time centers are open is four hours (two centers) while the maximum time is fifteen hours (one center).
  - Opening times range from 7:00 to 9:00 a.m.
  - Closing times range from 1:00 to 11:00 p.m. One center closes for one hour between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m., and closes for the day at 9:30 p.m.
- On any weekday evening, anywhere from four to six of the participating centers are open.
- Five centers are open on Saturdays, with only three having regular weekend hours.
Profile of Senior Center Participants

Attendance Patterns

Number of Years as a Senior Center Participant

- Almost half (46 percent) of the 542 participants had been visiting the senior center for one to five years.
- The percentage of participants attending less than one year (21 percent) was almost the same as those participants who had been attending for more than 10 years (18 percent).
- About 15 percent of respondents had been participating for five to 10 years.

![Pie chart showing the distribution of years as a senior center participant](chart.png)
Frequency of Participation

- Almost all of the 538 respondents indicated that they go to the senior center as often as they want.
- Almost half (48 percent of 542 respondents) visit the senior center two to four times each week.
- About a quarter (27 percent) visit once each week.
- Less than one-fifth (17 percent) visit the center daily, or five or more times each week.
- Five percent visit the center one to three times each month.
- Three percent visit the center less than once a month.
Length of an Individual’s Visit to the Senior Center

- Almost three-quarters of respondents (73 percent) spend up to four hours at the senior center:
  - 36 percent spend two hours or less;
  - 37 percent spend two to four hours.
- Of the 533 respondents, only a little more than one-quarter (27 percent) of the respondents attend the center more than four hours each visit.

![Length of Visit to the Senior Center](chart.png)
Favorite Activities

- The 511 respondents who named a favorite senior center activity indicated a preference for the following categories of activities:
  - Recreation, 43 percent, including games such as bingo and bridge, and dancing.
  - Art classes, 19 percent, including all media, music and crafts.
  - Health and wellness activities, 16 percent, including exercise, fitness and screenings.
  - Educational classes, 9 percent, including computer, languages and writing.
  - Volunteering, five percent, including leading classes and activities.
  - Socializing, four percent.
  - Senior services, three percent, specifically the lunch.
  - Special events and projects, two percent, including trips.

![Bar chart showing favorite senior center activities]

- Recreation: 43%
- Art classes: 19%
- Health and wellness: 16%
- Educational classes: 9%
- Volunteering: 5%
- Socializing: 4%
- Senior services: 3%
- Special events and projects: 2%
Getting to the Senior Center

How Participants Learned about the Center

- The number one way that respondents indicated they had learned about the senior center was from a friend or a neighbor. Almost half (46 percent) of the 485 respondents indicated that someone told them about the services and activities available at the senior center. However, it is unknown how the friends or neighbors learned about the center.
- Of the 29 percent respondents indicating they learned about the center in some “other” way, the following categories of explanations were provided for how they learned about the center:
  - Attend an activity there or lead an activity there.
  - Have a personal connection to the center through an activity or person.
  - Were referred to the center through a community organization.
  - Had a good experience with another senior center so sought out their current center.
  - Learned about the center from its visibility and reputation in the community.
How Participants Learned about the Center, continued

- Additional ways that responding participants learned about the senior center are as follows*:
  - From local media (TV, radio, newspaper, Internet), 24 percent
  - From center brochure, 18 percent
  - From children, 7 percent
  - From other relatives, 5 percent
  - From spouse, 4 percent
  - From doctor or nurse, 2 percent

*Respondents were not limited to a single response.
Transportation Participants Use to Get to the Senior Center

- More than three-quarters (76 percent) of the respondents usually get to the senior center by driving.
- Seventeen percent get to the center by using transportation provided by the senior center, a social service agency or a community organization.
- About 11 percent get a ride with a family member, friend or neighbor.
- About five percent take public transportation such as a bus, metro, taxi or van.
- Another five percent walk or use a wheelchair or bike to the center.

![Bar chart showing how participants get to the senior center]
Barriers to Senior Center Participation

Almost all (80 percent) of the 538 respondents indicated that they go to the senior center as often as they want. Among the 20 percent who did not attend the senior center as frequently as they wanted, more than half (54 percent) indicated that it is other activities that prevent them from attending the senior center.

Other reasons given for not attending the senior center as frequently as desired were as follows:

- Forty percent indicated other reasons for not visiting the center that include the following:
  - It is too far to the center.
  - There are too few activities of interest.
  - Either gasoline or the classes are too expensive.
- About one-quarter (23 percent) stated that volunteer activities prevent them from having more senior center participation.

*Respondents were not limited to one response.*
Demographics of Participants

Age

- More than half (54 percent) of the 524 respondents were age 75 and older.
- The percentage of the responding participants age 60 to 74 (40 percent) was almost the same as the percentage of participants age 75 to 84 (41 percent).
- Six percent of respondents were age 59 and younger, with five percent being age 50 to 59, and one percent being under age 50.
Gender

- Most responding participants are women – 76 percent.* This percentage is comparable to the 72 percent of female participants reported by the 177 centers that responded to the 2004 Senior Center Profile Survey.

*Percentage exceeds 100 percent due to rounding error.
Education

Responding senior center participants represent a wide variety of education levels.

- The percentage of participants with only a high school diploma (28 percent) is about the same as the percentage of participants who have some college education (31 percent).
- Interestingly, the percentage of participants with a bachelor’s degree (17 percent) is about the same as the percentage of participants who do not have a high school diploma (14 percent).
- An additional 10 percent of respondents have some post-graduate level work or an advanced degree.

![Highest Level of Education](image)

- Some college, including associate's degree: 31%
- Bachelor's degree: 17%
- Some post-graduate work or advanced degree: 10%
- High school diploma or GED: 28%
- Less than high school diploma: 14%
Race and Ethnicity

- The race and ethnicity of survey respondents are as follows:
  - White or Caucasian 85%
  - Black or African American 10%
  - Hispanic 6%
  - Other 5%
  - American Indian or Alaska Native 4%
  - Asian/Pacific Islander 4%

- The race and ethnicity of the responding 525 senior center participants are somewhat different from the race and ethnicity of the participants of the centers that participated in the *2004 Senior Center Profile Survey*.
- A higher percentage of respondents in 2005 (85 percent) identified themselves as white or Caucasian, compared with 64 percent in 2004.
- The two surveys posed the question in slightly different ways: The 2004 survey included “Hispanic” as a race/ethnic category. The 2005 survey included a separate question, asking, “Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino?”

*The 2004 survey included “Hispanic” as a race/ethnic category. The 2005 survey included a separate question, asking, “Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino?”

**Percentages total 120 percent because of multiethnic categories.**
Living Situation

- Most (57 percent) responding participants live in a city. Thirty percent live in a suburban area, and 13 percent live in a rural area.

- Most (54 percent) of the 528 respondents live with someone else. Less than half (46 percent) live alone.
Living Situation, continued

- Of the 54 percent who responded that someone lives with them, 24 percent stated that they live with a spouse. The other living situations are as follows:
  - 9 percent live with their children
  - 6 percent live with other relatives
  - 3 percent live with non-relatives

- Of the 278 respondents providing information about the number of people living in their household, about three-quarters (77 percent) live in households with two people.
  - About 13 percent lived in households with three people;
  - Five percent live with four people;
  - Four percent live in single-person households;* and
  - One percent in households with five people.
  - One respondent reported living in a household with nine people.

*Note that 46 percent of the 528 respondents indicated that they live alone, while only four percent of the 278 providing information about the number of people living in their household indicated that they live alone.
Marital Status

The marital status most frequently reported by 43 percent of the 519 respondents was “widowed.” The second largest group was respondents currently married (36 percent). The percentages of respondents who were divorced or never married were about the same – 10 percent and nine percent, respectively. Two percent of respondents reported that they were separated.
Household Income

The household incomes of the 402 responding participants are almost equally divided between those who earned below $20,000 in 2004 and those who earned above $20,000. A little more than half (52 percent) of respondents earned more than $20,000 and a little less (48 percent) than half earned less than $20,000.
Household Income, continued

Of the 174 respondents whose household incomes are less than $20,000, about a third (29 percent) of participants earned less than $10,000, another third (36 percent) earned between $10,001 and $15,000, and another third (36 percent) earned between $15,001 to $20,000.
Household Income, continued

Of the 165 respondents whose household incomes are more than $20,000, most of them (40 percent) earned more than $40,000 in 2004. Almost a quarter (22 percent) of participants earned between $20,001 and $25,000. About 15 percent earned between $25,001 and $30,000, and 14 percent earned between $30,001 and $35,000. Another nine percent earned between $35,001 and $40,000.
Perceived Health

- When asked, “In general, would you say that your health is…?” almost one-third of the 523 respondents stated that their health was very good, and another one-third stated that their health was good.
- About the same percentage of respondents described their health as fair (16 percent) as those who described their health as excellent (17 percent).
- Only three percent of respondents described their health as poor.
Survey Results: Benefits of Senior Center Participation

According to the 2005 Senior Center Participant Survey, senior center participants credit their involvement in center activities for improved health. Improvements were noted in social connections, physical health, mental health, cognitive functioning, connection to support services and overall improved quality of life.

“Super-Sized” Results
Throughout the survey results, the results from the four questions included on the Senior Center Participant Survey Card – the initial one-page survey with four questions and demographic information – are reported as “Super-sized Results.” The survey results from these four questions are considered especially significant because the number of respondents is approximately five times the number of respondents for the longer survey, providing a more clear indication of their validity.

More Social Interaction

- About one in five of the responding 498 senior center participants said that most of the time they see friends more often or make new friends because of going to the senior center.
- Another 19 percent responded that they make social connections some of the time because they attend the senior center.
- A total of 96 percent of senior center participants experienced an increase in social connections because of attending the senior center.
**Increased Volunteerism**

- About 35 percent of the 333 responding senior center participants stated that they do more volunteer work *most* of the time because of their senior center participation.
  - Another 31 percent stated that *some* of the time they do more volunteer work because of attending the senior center.
  - Almost two-thirds of all responding senior center participants said that they volunteer more because of their senior center attendance.
“Super-Sized” Results
Of 1,974 surveyed senior center participants, 98.7 percent credited their senior center participation with influencing them to take better care of their health.
- 84 percent responded “most of the time.”
- 14 percent responded “sometimes.”

Taking Better Care of Health
- Of the responding 426 senior center participants, about three-quarters said that they take better care of their health most of the time because of going to the senior center.
- Another 17 percent responded that they take better care of their health some of the time because they attend the senior center.
- A total of 92 percent of responding participants credit their participation at the senior center for their taking better care of their health.

Increased Physical Activity
- Of the responding 446 senior center participants, about three-quarters said that they are more physically active most of the time because of going to the senior center.
- Another 16 percent responded that they are more physically active some of the time because they attend the senior center.
- A total of 90 percent of responding participants credit their participation at the senior center for their increased physical activity.
**Better Nutrition**

- Of the responding 316 senior center participants, about 65 percent said that they eat more healthy meals because of going to the senior center.
  - Another 19 percent responded that they eat more healthy meals *some* of the time because they attend the senior center.
  - A total of 90 percent of responding participants credit their participation at the senior center for their improved nutrition.

**Mental Health**

**More Satisfied with Life**

- About 88 percent of the responding 502 senior center participants said that *most* of the time they feel happier or more satisfied with life because of going to the senior center.
  - Another 11 percent responded that they feel happier *some* of the time because they attend the senior center.
  - A total of 99 percent of senior center participants indicated they felt happier because of attending the senior center.

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**“Super-Sized” Results**

Of 2,214 surveyed senior center participants, 99 percent credited their senior center participation with feeling happier or more satisfied with life.

- 87 percent responded “most of the time.”
- 12 percent responded “sometimes.”
**Have an Attitude of Expectation**

- About 88 percent of the responding 509 senior center participants said that *most* of the time they feel they have something to look forward to each day because of going to the senior center.
  - Another 10 percent responded that they have something to look forward to *some* of the time because they attend the senior center.
  - A total of 98 percent of senior center participants indicated they have something to look forward to because of attending the senior center.

**Have More Energy**

- About 64 percent of the responding 438 senior center participants said that *most* of the time they have more energy because of going to the senior center.
  - Another 23 percent responded that they have more energy *some* of the time because they attend the senior center.
  - A total of 87 percent of senior center participants indicated they have more energy because of attending the senior center.

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**Mental Health Survey Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Most of the time</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feel happier or more satisfied with my life</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have something to look forward to each day</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have more energy</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 99%  98%  87%
Lifelong Learning

Learn More New Things

- About 70 percent of the responding 477 senior center participants said that most of the time they learn new things because of going to the senior center.
  - Another 19 percent responded that they learn something new some of the time because of attending the senior center.
  - A total of 89 percent of senior center participants indicated they learn new things because of attending the senior center.

Connection to Support Services

Learn About Support Services

- About 69 percent of the responding 475 senior center participants said that most of the time they have learned about services and benefits because of going to the senior center.
  - Another 17 percent responded that they have learned about services and benefits some of the time because of attending the senior center.
  - A total of 85 percent of senior center participants indicated they have learned about services and benefits because of attending the senior center.
Know How to Access Services

- About 71 percent of the responding 391 senior center participants said that because of going to the senior center they know most of the time where to ask if a service such as a ride to the doctor or an aide is needed.
  - Another 12 percent responded that because of attending the senior center they know some of the time where to ask if a service such as a ride to the doctor or an aide is needed.
  - A total of 83 percent of senior center participants indicated because of attending the senior center they know where to ask if a service such as a ride to the doctor or an aide is needed.

Quality of Life

Have Positive Effect on Life

- About 92 percent of the responding 509 senior center participants said that most of the time they feel that the senior center has had a positive effect on their lives.
  - Another 6 percent responded that the senior center has had a positive effect on their lives some of the time.
  - A total of 98 percent of senior center participants indicated that the senior center has had a positive effect on their lives.
Feel More Able to Stay Independent

- About 82 percent of the responding 430 senior center participants said that most of the time they feel more able to stay independent because of going to the senior center.
  - Another 11 percent responded that they feel more able to stay independent some of the time because of attending the senior center.
  - A total of 93 percent of senior center participants indicated they feel more able to stay independent because of attending the senior center.

“Super-Sized” Results

Of 2,039 surveyed senior center participants, 99 percent credited their senior center participation with feeling more able to stay independent.

- 88 percent responded “most of the time.”
- 11 percent responded “sometimes.”
“Super-Sized” Results

Of 2,263 surveyed senior center participants, 97 percent said that they would recommend the senior center to a friend or family member.

- 94 percent responded “most of the time.”
- 5 percent responded “sometimes.”

About 99 percent of the responding 521 senior center participants said that they would recommend the senior center to a friend or family member most of the time.

- Another 2 percent responded that they would recommend the senior center to a friend or family member some of the time.

A total of 100* percent of senior center participants indicated they would recommend the senior center to a friend or family member.

*Total exceeds 100 percent due to rounding error.
Conclusions

Profile of Senior Center Participants

Using the demographic data provided by the survey, a likely profile of senior center participants can be developed. Most often, senior center participants fit the following profile:

- Have been coming to the center between one and five years (46 percent).
- Come to the center between two and four times each week (48 percent) and stay for up to four hours (73 percent).
- Participate in a recreational activity such as bingo, bridge or dancing (43 percent).
- Learned about the center from a friend or neighbor (46 percent).
- Drive to the center (76 percent) and go as often as desired (80 percent).
- Are single,* Caucasian women, age 75 or older, with at least some college education.
- Live with one other person in a city setting.
- Consider their physical health to be very good or excellent (49 percent).

*Either separated, divorced, widowed or never married.

Who Can Benefit from Senior Center Participation?

Overwhelmingly, senior center participants indicate that they would recommend the senior center to a friend or family member, indicating a high level of satisfaction with their senior center experiences. Based on survey responses, people who experience the following circumstances can also benefit from senior center participation:

- Those who experience loneliness and isolation.
- Those with health conditions that can be managed through increased physical activity and better nutrition.
- Those who want to learn new things.
- Those who want to learn more about support services and benefits available to older adults.
- Those who are looking for a better quality of life.
- Those who want to continue to be independent.
- Those who feel unhappy or experience a sense of boredom.
- Those who feel “blue” or “down in the dumps.”
- Those who feel they do not have enough energy to do the things that they want to do.
Implications

Locations and Geography

Almost all centers (82 percent) draw participation from a large town or city with more than 10,000 residents. Additionally, more than half of respondents (58 percent) report living in a city.

In contrast, only 13 percent of senior center participants stated that they live in a rural area, while almost a quarter (23 percent) of the participating centers are located in a rural area.

While this survey indicates that most senior centers and their participants are in either urban or suburban areas, senior centers do exist in rural areas. For this survey, the term “rural” is defined according to Florida Statutes 288.0656(2)(b); however, the term was not defined for survey respondents, allowing a variety of interpretations of the term. (The definition according to Florida Statutes is included in the appendix.)

Transportation

By far the most common way participants get to a senior center is by driving (76 percent of survey respondents). This high percentage is a strong indicator of the independence and autonomy of senior center participants.

When this high reliance on driving is taken into consideration with the fact that senior center participation combats the negative results of isolation, this high reliance on driving points to the vulnerability to participants’ health and wellness should driving no longer be a feasible mode of transportation. While this survey did not assess the availability of transportation alternatives for individuals who do not drive, it is possible to conceive that once a person ceases driving, he or she might be unable to continue participating at the center, and thus, have limited access to the senior center activities that the individual sees as important to continued good health, wellness and independence.

While only five percent of survey respondents utilize public transportation to get to the center, this survey cannot be considered an indicator of senior center participants’ willingness to utilize transportation alternatives. The survey indicates that almost half of the participating centers are on public transportation routes; however, it is unknown whether the respondents can easily take advantage of this public service because no questions were asked to determine if respondents live on public transportation routes.
Recommendations

For Further Research and Materials

The following recommendations are made to further the study of senior center participation and its benefits to older adults:

- Develop a “toolkit” that will assist senior centers in conducting their own outcome measures.
- Develop a “toolkit” for community advocates seeking to establish new senior centers, including PowerPoint slides of information from the 2004 Senior Center Profile Survey and 2005 Senior Center Participant Survey.
- Compare the survey results of the 22 participating senior centers to determine if participant results are impacted by senior center characteristics.
- Attempt to identify barriers to senior center participation among non-participants.

To Senior Center Professionals

Two responses from survey participants carry implications for how senior center programs and activities can be marketed:

- Virtually all survey respondents indicated that they would recommend the center to a friend or family member.
- Almost half of the survey participants learned about the center from a friend or neighbor.

These results indicate that participants are overwhelmingly pleased with their senior center experience. They also indicate that word of mouth may be one of the most effective tools in recruiting new senior center participants.

Therefore, it may be valuable to provide incentives to current senior center participants to invite people to attend center activities. For example, incentives could include reduced class fees for bringing a friend, or reduced membership renewal for bringing a certain number of new members. Another idea includes bring-a-guest special events where reduced ticket prices are offered to members who bring non-member guests.

Most of these incentives will require tracking membership or current participants. A less complicated method could simply be recognizing individuals who bring new guests or recruit new members. Recognition could be similar to what is done for the center’s volunteers.

It may prove useful for promotional items such as bumper stickers or buttons to encourage conversation about senior center participation, such as, “Ask me why I’m healthier (or happier or smarter),” or “Follow me to the senior center. You’ll be glad you did.”
Thanks to Participating Senior Centers

Thanks to the following the directors, staffs and participants of the following senior centers for their involvement in the 2005 Senior Center Participant Survey:

Bayview Senior Recreation Center
Scott Brown
2000 E. Lloyd Street
Pensacola, Florida 32503

Seniors Center Participants Speak Up: 2005 Senior Center Participant Survey
Florida Department of Elder Affairs • Florida Association of Senior Centers

East Citrus Community Center
Pat Coles
9907 E Gulf to Lake Highway
Inverness, Florida 34450

Enoch Davis Center
Lynette Buchanan
1111 18th Ave. South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33705

Gulfport Senior Center
Susan Frank
5501 27th Avenue South
Gulfport, Florida 33707

Vero Beach Senior Center/Indian River Council on Aging
Kathleen MacGlennon
694 14th St.
Vero Beach, Florida 32960

Inverness Community Center
Pat Coles
1082 N Paul Drive
Inverness, Florida 34450

Life Enrichment Senior Center
Ronna Metcalf
9704 N. Boulevard
Tampa, Florida 33612

Log Cabin Senior Center
Lisa Newman
2369 NE Dixie Hwy
Jensen Beach, Florida 34957

Maitland Senior Center
Ellen Pitter
c/o City Hall 1776 Independent Lane
Maitland, Florida 32751

Senior Friendship Center of DeSoto County
Karen Blanchett
23 N. Polk Ave
Arcadia, Florida 34266

Northwest Focal Point Senior Center
Yolanda Rodriguez
6009 NW 10th Street
Margate, Florida 33063

Nassau County Council on Aging (Eastside)
Mariellen Heron
1367 So. 18th St.
Fernandina Beach, Florida 32034

North County Senior Center
Debbie Blake
5217 Northlake Blvd
Palm Beach Gardens, Florida 33418

Plantation Key Senior Center
Ken Andrews
8880 Overseas Highway
Plantation Key, Florida 33070

Richardson Senior Recreation Center
Gloria Demerite
221 NE Coach Anders Street
Lake City, Florida 32055

Sanford Senior Center
Kimberly Eltonhead
401 E. Seminole Blvd.
Sanford, Florida 32771
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior Center</th>
<th>Contact Person</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Zip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Friendship Center Inc.</td>
<td>Barbara Celnar</td>
<td>1888 Brother Geenen Way</td>
<td>Sarasota</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>34236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunrise Senior Center</td>
<td>Rosemarie Marco</td>
<td>10650 W. Oakland Park Blvd.</td>
<td>Sunrise</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>33351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tallahassee Senior Center</td>
<td>Sheila Salyer</td>
<td>1400 N. Monroe Street</td>
<td>Tallahassee</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>32303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington County Council on Aging</td>
<td>Mary Enfinger</td>
<td>1348 South Boulevard</td>
<td>Chipley</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>32428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Citrus Community Center</td>
<td>Pat Coles</td>
<td>8940 W. Veterans Dr.</td>
<td>Homosassa</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>34448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunshine Senior Center</td>
<td>Kathleen Huisman</td>
<td>160 North Beach Street</td>
<td>Daytona Beach</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>32114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendices

Appendix A: Survey Instruments

Three survey instruments were used for the 2005 Senior Center Participant Survey. The first is the Participant Survey Card that was distributed by senior center instructors and activity leaders to participants. This one-page survey includes four questions and demographic information and invited individuals to participate in the telephone interview by providing their name, telephone number and best time of day to reach them.

The second survey was used for the telephone interviews with randomly selected respondents to the Participant Survey Card.

The third survey was completed by directors of participating centers in order to gain a better understanding of the programs and activities offered at each center.
What is the purpose of the survey?
To better understand how senior center activities affect a person’s quality of life.

How can you participate?
(1) Complete the ten questions on this card.
(2) Participate in a confidential, 10-minute telephone interview. To participate in the telephone survey, please complete the section “Contact Information to Participate in the Phone Interview.”
(Please note that interviews will occur July 5 to 29.)

Survey Questions
Think about your life since you started attending the senior center. Below are some ways that senior centers might make a difference.

(Please CIRCLE the best response.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Because I go to the senior center, I …</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Almost Never</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Take better care of my health.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Feel happier or more satisfied with my life.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Feel more able to stay independent.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Would recommend the senior center to a friend or family member.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. During a calendar year, how many months do you typically reside in Florida? _________

6. Gender: Male Female

7. Age: ___ Under age 50 ___ Age 50 to 59 ___ Age 60 or older

8. Home Zip Code: ____________________

9. Hispanic: Yes No

10. Race: ___ White/Caucasian ___ Black/African American ___ American Indian/Alaska Native ___ Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander ___ Asian ___ Other: ________________________
Contact Information to Participate in the Phone Interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Name:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last Name:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone Number:</td>
<td>(</td>
<td>)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Time to Call:</td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Evening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phone interviews will occur between July 5 and 29.
PART I. Attendance & Participation

(Please CIRCLE the best answer for each of the following questions)

1. How long have you been coming to this senior center?

   Less than 1 year ................................................... 1
   1 year to 5 years .................................................. 2
   More than 5 years, but Less than 10 years .............. 3
   10 years or more ............................................... 4

2. In general, how often, in the past year, have you come to the senior center?

   Less than once per month .................................... 1
   1 to 3 times a month .......................................... 2
   1 time per week ............................................... 3
   2 to 4 times a week .......................................... 4
   5 or more times a week .................................... 5

3. In general, on the days you go to a senior center, how many hours do you spend there?

   2 hours or less .................................................. 1
   More than 2 hours, but less than 4 hours .......... 2
   4 hours or more ............................................... 3
   Don’t know ......................................................-8
4. I come to the senior center as often as I want to.

Yes .......................................................1  
No.........................................................2  → [GO TO 4a]

4a. If No, I do not attend this senior center as frequently as I would like because of . . .

(Please CIRCLE yes or no for each response option)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Caring for children and youth (under 18 yrs)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Caring for spouse or other adult</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Lack of transportation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Health Problems</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 5. Other activities away from center  
(e.g., shopping days) | 1 | 2 |
| 6. Volunteering responsibilities | 1 | 2 |
| 7. Job responsibilities | 1 | 2 |
| 8. Senior Center is not open enough days  
or hours | 1 | 2 |
| 9. Other | 1 | 2 |

(Please specify) _________________________
PART II. Outcomes

Think about your life since you started attending the senior center. Below are some ways that senior centers might make a difference. Please circle a number for each statement to tell us to what extent the statement applies to you. *(Please CIRCLE your answer for each of the following items)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Because I go to the Senior Center, I …</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Almost Never</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do more volunteer work ………………</td>
<td>1 2 3 -1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. See friends more often/make new friends ……………….</td>
<td>1 2 3 -1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Take better care of my health ………………….</td>
<td>1 2 3 -1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Eat meals that are better for me ………………….</td>
<td>1 2 3 -1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Have more energy ………………</td>
<td>1 2 3 -1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Feel happier or more satisfied with my life ……………….</td>
<td>1 2 3 -1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Have something to look forward to each day ……………….</td>
<td>1 2 3 -1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Know where to ask if I need a service such as a ride to the doctor or an aide ……………….</td>
<td>1 2 3 -1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Feel more able to stay independent ……………….</td>
<td>1 2 3 -1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Feel that the senior center has had a positive effect on my life ……………….</td>
<td>1 2 3 -1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Learn new things ………………</td>
<td>1 2 3 -1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Have learned about services and benefits ……………….</td>
<td>1 2 3 -1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Am more physically active…</td>
<td>1 2 3 -1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Would recommend the senior center to a friend or family member ……………….</td>
<td>1 2 3 -1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Other ………………. (Please specify)</td>
<td>1 2 3 -1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
16. In space below, please tell us how participating in the senior center has changed your life.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

17. What is your favorite activity at the senior center?

________________________________________________________________________

18. How did you learn about the services and activities available at the senior center?

(Please CIRCLE yes or no for each response option)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. From spouse</td>
<td>.........................................................1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. From friend or neighbor</td>
<td>.........................................................1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. From children</td>
<td>.........................................................1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. From doctor or nurse</td>
<td>.........................................................1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. From center brochure</td>
<td>.........................................................1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. From local media (TV, radio, newspaper, Internet)</td>
<td>.........................................................1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. From other relatives</td>
<td>.........................................................1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Other</td>
<td>.........................................................1 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please specify) __________________________
19. How do you usually get to the center?  
*(Please CIRCLE yes or no for each response option)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Walk or bike</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Transportation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Take public</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Drive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Get a ride</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please specify) __________________________
PART III. Demographics

(Please CIRCLE the number that corresponds to your answer.)

1. What is your gender?
   Male ........................................................................1
   Female ....................................................................2

2. What is your age?
   (Please write your age in the boxes)

   |__|__|__| (years)

3. What is your highest educational level?
   Less than High School Diploma .........................1
   High School Diploma or GED ................................2
   Some college, including Associate degree ............3
   Bachelor’s Degree ..............................................4
   Some post-graduate work or advanced degree ......5

4. Are you Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino?
   Yes .......................................................................1
   No .......................................................................2
5. What is your race?
(Please CIRCLE yes or no for each response option)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. White or Caucasian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Black or African American</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Asian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please specify) ___________________________

6. Where is your home located?
(Please CIRCLE all that apply)

- In a City ........................................... 1
- In a Suburban Area ................................ 2
- In a Rural Area ..................................... 3

7. What is your home zip code?
(Please write your zip code in the boxes)

|________|

8. We’d like to ask about the persons who live in your household. Does anyone else live with you in this household?

Yes ................................................... 1
No ..................................................... 2  → [Skip to 11]
9. Who do you live with?
(Please CIRCLE yes or no for each response option)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Including yourself, how many people live in your household?
(Please write the number in the boxes)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

11. What is your marital status?
(Please CIRCLE the best answer)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. In general, would you say your health is:
(Please CIRCLE the best answer)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. Thinking about the total combined income from all sources for all persons in this household, was your total household annual income during the year 2003 above or below $20,000?

Below $20,000 ..................................... 1  \(\rightarrow\) [SKIP TO 14]
Above $20,000 ................................. 2  \(\rightarrow\) [SKIP TO 15]

[IF NEEDED: including income from jobs, Social Security, retirement income, public assistance, and all other sources]

14. Which category best describes your total household annual income during the year 2003?
(Please CIRCLE the best answer)

$10,000 or less................................. 1
$10,001 to $15,000 .......................... 2  \(\rightarrow\) [SKIP TO END]
$15,001 to $20,000 ......................... 3

15. Which category best describes your total household annual income during the year 2003?
(Please CIRCLE the best answer)

$20,001 to $25,000............................ 1
$25,001 to $30,000 .......................... 2
$30,001 to $35,000 .......................... 3
$35,001 to $40,000 ......................... 4
Over $40,000 .................................. 5

(Thank you for your cooperation!)
What is the purpose of the survey?
The purpose of this survey is to obtain some basic information about your senior center. This survey is to be used in conjunction with the Senior Center Participant Survey.

Please verify or provide the following contact information:

Name of Senior Center: _________________________________________________
Address of Senior Center: _______________________________________________
City: ___________________________ State: Florida  ZIP: __________
Name of Staff Person Completing Survey: ________________________________
Title and Position: _____________________________________________________

PART I: Description of the Senior Center

Please complete the following questions for your senior center:

1. Number of staff: full-time ______  part-time ______  # of volunteers_______

2. What was your total annual operating budget for the previous fiscal year for senior-center services?

   $___________

3. What is your primary funding source?
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
4. Do you receive Older Americans Act* funds?  
(*Clarification: Older Americans Act programs are 100 percent federally funded, and in Florida, are distributed by the area agencies on aging.)

YES.......................................................... 1
NO ....................................................... 2 → [GO TO 5]

4a. What programs are funded by OAA funds (either directly from the senior center or passed through another agency, e.g. congregate meals and transportation, etc?)

Title III B: Supportive Services:
- [ ] Transportation
- [ ] Outreach
- [ ] Information/Referral
- [ ] Case Management
- [ ] Homemaker
- [ ] Home Health Aide
- [ ] Visiting/Telephone Reassurance
- [ ] Chore/Maintenance
- [ ] Legal
- [ ] Escort
- [ ] Residential Repair/Renovation
- [ ] Health Support

Title III C1:
- [ ] Congregate Meals and Nutrition Education

Title III C2:
- [ ] Meals delivered to frail, home-bound individuals and Nutrition Education.

Title III D:
- [ ] Periodic Preventive Health services at senior centers or alternative sites.

Title III E: Caregiver Support Services:
- [ ] Information
- [ ] Family Caregiver Program
- [ ] Assistance in gaining access to services
- [ ] Individual Counseling
- [ ] Organization of Support Groups and Caregiver Training
- [ ] Respite Care
- [ ] Supplemental Services including Housing Improvement
- [ ] Chore
- [ ] Provision of Medical Supplies and Services and Legal Assistance for caregivers and grandparents or older individuals who are relative caregivers

Title V:
- [ ] Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

Title VII:
- [ ] Public education, training and information regarding Elder Abuse Prevention
5. Which of the following best describes your senior center?  
(Please CIRCLE the best answer)

- A not-for-profit agency ..............................................................1
- A division of city or county government ................................2
- Other .......................................................................................3
(Please specify) ___________________________________________

6. Does your organization operate one or more satellite program locations where support services are available?

- Yes ..........................................................................................1
- No ...........................................................................................2  [GO TO 7]

6a. If Yes, please list or attach a list of your satellite sites to this survey.

7. Are you a senior service(s) program operating within a larger organization?

- Yes ..........................................................................................1
- No ...........................................................................................2  [GO TO 8]

7a. If Yes, please name the parent organization and CIRCLE the number that corresponds to the category which best describes the parent organization:

Name of parent organization: ________________________________

- Neighborhood house ............................................................1
- Recreation department .........................................................2
- Council on aging/department of aging ...............................3
- Community center ...............................................................4
- Community action agency ..................................................5
- Senior housing .................................................................6
- Other ....................................................................................7
(Please specify) ___________________________________________
8. Please identify the geographic area from which you draw participants to your senior center. *(Please CIRCLE the best answer)*

- Single neighborhood .......................................................... 1
- More than one neighborhood .............................................. 2
- Small town/village (less than 10,000 inhabitants) .............. 3
- Large town/city (greater than 10,000 inhabitants) ............ 4
- Countywide ........................................................................ 5
- More than one county ....................................................... 6

9. From the list below, select the area that your senior center primarily draws (over 50%) participants from. *(Please CIRCLE the best answer)*

- Urban area ........................................................................ 1
- Suburban area .................................................................... 2
- Rural area .......................................................................... 3
- Other ................................................................................ 4

(Please specify) ____________________________________

10. On the average day, approximately how many participants attend your senior center?

   Number of Participants: __________

11. For each day your center is open, please write the hours of operation. If the center is closed on a particular day, on the line write “closed.”

   **Days** | **Hours**
   --- | ---
   Monday |  
   Tuesday |  
   Wednesday |  
   Thursday |  
   Friday |  
   Saturday |  
   Sunday |  

*(Example: 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.)*
12. What sources of public/assisted transportation are available to the senior center participants? *(Please CIRCLE yes or no for each response option)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Senior center provides own transportation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The senior center is on a public transit route</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Transportation is provided through a contractual arrangement with</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a Area Agency on Aging</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Transportation services for the participants are provided by</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>another source</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please name or describe the other source:
--------------------------------------------------------------------------
PART II: Activities, Services and Volunteering

Activities

1. In the list below, please *CIRCLE* “Yes” or “No” for each activity to identify what is offered at the senior center. In addition, if the activity is offered at the center, and you have *CIRCLED* “yes,” also *CIRCLE* the number that represents how often that activity is offered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Is Offered?</th>
<th>If Offered, Frequency of Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Exercise Classes (Tai chi, Yoga)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Dancing (ballroom, line, square, etc.)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Games (pool, bingo, cards, bridge, dominos, bocce ball, mah jong, etc.)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Fitness or Exercise Room</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Participation Sports (golf, softball, tennis, etc.)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Visual Arts (painting, pottery, etc.)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Music (singing, instrument, chorus, etc.)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Crafts (quilting, needlepoint, basket weaving, etc.)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Other Creative Expression (drama, journaling, writing, etc.)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Woodworking</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Gardening</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. Computers</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Is Offered</td>
<td>If Offered, Frequency of Availability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. Education Opportunities (college courses, lectures, etc.)...</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n. English as a second language classes</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o. Library/Bookmobile</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p. Health Seminars</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q. Discussion Groups (book/news club)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r. Trips, Travel Group, Field Trips</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s. Pitch-ins or Pot Lucks</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t. Religious/Spiritual Pursuits</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u. Other (please specify)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. In the list below, please **CIRCLE** “Yes” or “No” for each service to identify what is offered at the senior center. In addition, if the service is offered at the center, and you have **CIRCLED** “yes”, also **CIRCLE** the number that represents how often that service is offered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>If Offered?</th>
<th>If Offered, Frequency of Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes  No</td>
<td>5 or more times per week  2 to 4 times per week  1 time per week  1 to 3 times a month  Less frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Adult Day Services ...............</td>
<td>Y  N</td>
<td>4  3  2  1  0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Congregate Meals ..........</td>
<td>Y  N</td>
<td>4  3  2  1  0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Home Delivered Meals ...............................................</td>
<td>Y  N</td>
<td>4  3  2  1  0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Food Pantry/Food Commodities......................................</td>
<td>Y  N</td>
<td>4  3  2  1  0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Nutrition Education and Training....................................</td>
<td>Y  N</td>
<td>4  3  2  1  0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Flu Shots &amp; other Immunizations .....................................</td>
<td>Y  N</td>
<td>4  3  2  1  0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Health Monitoring/Screenings (blood pressure screening, osteoporosis screening) ................................</td>
<td>Y  N</td>
<td>4  3  2  1  0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Medication Management .................................................</td>
<td>Y  N</td>
<td>4  3  2  1  0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Medical Equipment and Supplies.......................................</td>
<td>Y  N</td>
<td>4  3  2  1  0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Home Care (personal care, homemaker/housekeeper, home health aide, .................</td>
<td>Y  N</td>
<td>4  3  2  1  0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Telephone Reassurance/Emergency Response............................</td>
<td>Y  N</td>
<td>4  3  2  1  0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. Caregiver and Respite Services........................................</td>
<td>Y  N</td>
<td>4  3  2  1  0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. Energy Assistance.............</td>
<td>Y  N</td>
<td>4  3  2  1  0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>If Offered?</td>
<td>If Offered, Frequency of Availability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n. Home Repair</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o. Counseling, Support Groups</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p. Information &amp; Assistance with Employment</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q. Information &amp; Assistance about Housing Opportunities.</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r. Information &amp; Assistance with Legal Affairs (living wills, power of attorney, etc.)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s. Information &amp; Assistance with Medicare, Medicaid, Long-Term Care Insurance, etc.</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t. Information &amp; Assistance about Taxes</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u. Transportation Provided by the Senior Center</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. Assistance with Accessing other Community Transportation Options (e.g. bus passes, rural transit networking, out of county transportation)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w. Other (please specify)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Volunteering

3. For each of the volunteer activities, *CIRCLE* “Yes” or “No” for each activity that volunteers provide at the senior center.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volunteer Activity</th>
<th>Available?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Benefits Counseling (e.g., Social Security)</td>
<td>Yes 1  No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Friendly Visiting</td>
<td>Yes 1  No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Fundraising</td>
<td>Yes 1  No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Information &amp; Assistance with Legal Affairs (living wills, power of attorney, etc.)</td>
<td>Yes 1  No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Information &amp; Assistance with Medicare, Medicaid, Long-Term Care Insurance, and prescriptions</td>
<td>Yes 1  No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Information &amp; Assistance with Senior Health Insurance Information Program</td>
<td>Yes 1  No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Information &amp; Assistance with Tax Preparation</td>
<td>Yes 1  No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Information &amp; Assistance with Transportation</td>
<td>Yes 1  No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Packing/delivering Home Delivered Meals</td>
<td>Yes 1  No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Packing/serving Congregate Meals</td>
<td>Yes 1  No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Providing Respite/Sitter Services</td>
<td>Yes 1  No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. Mentoring Children &amp; Other Intergenerational Activities</td>
<td>Yes 1  No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. Teaching Classes</td>
<td>Yes 1  No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n. Setting up/cleaning for Classes and Events</td>
<td>Yes 1  No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o. Speaking to Groups about the Center (Marketing)</td>
<td>Yes 1  No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p. Planning or Coordinating Special Events</td>
<td>Yes 1  No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q. Telephone Reassurance</td>
<td>Yes 1  No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r. Working at the Reception or Welcome Desk</td>
<td>Yes 1  No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Activity</td>
<td>Available?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s. Office Work (e.g., typing/computer use, filing, keeping records/books)</td>
<td>1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t. Working on the Newsletter</td>
<td>1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u. Other (Please specify)</td>
<td>1 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Thank you for your cooperation!)
Appendix B: Definitions

Older Americans Act (OAA) – Through federal funds from the Administration on Aging – via the Florida Department of Elder Affairs and area agencies on aging – the OAA provides a variety of in-home and community-based services such as adult day care, caregiver training and support, chore, congregate dining, home-delivered meals, homemaker services, information and referral, medical transportation, nutrition education, personal care, and shopping.

The OAA also funds programs providing specialized services. For example, Title III-C of the OAA funds the Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP), which provides reimbursement for the purchase of United States-produced agricultural and other food commodities for use in nutrition projects operating under approved OAA contracts. Title V of the OAA funds the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), which offers low-income persons, age 55 and older, part-time paid community service assignments, on-the-job-training and the opportunity to obtain unsubsidized employment.

Paratransit transportation – Paratransit is an alternative mode of flexible passenger transportation that does not follow fixed routes or schedules – typically, in vans or minibuses. Paratransit services may vary considerably on the degree of flexibility they provide their customers. At their simplest they may consist of a taxi or small bus that will run along a more or less defined route and then stop to pick up or discharge passengers on request. At the other end of the spectrum, the most flexible paratransit systems offer on-demand, call-up, door-to-door service from any origin to any destination in a service area. In Florida, paratransit is funded by a federal grant to the State of Florida’s Transportation Disadvantaged Commission.

Rural – As defined in section 288.0656(2)(b), Florida Statutes, a rural community is:

1. A county with a population of 75,000 or less.
2. A county with a population of 100,000 or less that is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or less.
3. A municipality within a county described in subparagraph 1 or subparagraph 2.
4. An unincorporated federal enterprise community or an incorporated rural city with a population of 25,000 or less and an employment base focused on traditional agricultural or resource-based industries, located in a county not defined as rural, which has at least three or more of the economic distress factors identified in paragraph (a) and verified by the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development.
Appendix C: Summary of the 2004 Senior Center Profile Survey

The Florida Department of Elder Affairs, in partnership with the Florida Association of Senior Centers, conducted the 2004 Senior Center Profile Survey to gather comprehensive profiles of all senior centers, regardless of funding sources. Below is a brief summary of the survey’s results. Percentages represent responding centers. The full report, including profiles of the participating senior centers, is available in the senior center section of the department’s Web site or by calling (850) 414-2000.

Senior centers are highly visible focal points within their communities and offer programs and services for older individuals in five main categories: health (including mental health), social interaction, nutrition, education and recreation. According to the department’s 2004 needs assessment survey, about 337,000 Floridians age 60 and older visit Florida’s approximately 240 senior centers each year.

In Florida, senior centers are operated by a variety of host organizations – such as private non-profit organizations (67 percent); municipal governments (22 percent); county governments (9 percent); and other types of organizations (2 percent).

Senior centers vary in their hours of service as well as programming. The best models of senior centers offer a wide variety of programming that attracts participants of many ages and economic backgrounds. Model centers involve many community partners and engage participants in the center’s planning and curriculum selection.

Hours of Operation
- Most (75 percent) are open at least 30 hours a week.
- Some are open on weekends (17 percent on Saturdays and eight percent on Sundays).

Location
- Most (58 percent) are free-standing buildings.
- About 14 percent are in recreation or community centers.
- About 11 percent are in county or local government buildings.

Staffing
- Most (84 percent) have a full-time director.
- Almost half (46 percent) have only one full-time employee.
- Many senior centers rely on volunteers to maximize limited staff resources.

Funding
- Most (51 percent) senior centers receive funding from five or more sources.
- Most (53 percent) centers do not charge fees for participation.
- Most (60 percent) centers receive state and/or federal Older Americans Act funding.
**Senior Center Participants**

- About 26 percent of senior centers are open to participants younger than age 65.
- The most frequently reported popular activities (in 53 percent of centers) are recreational activities such as bridge or card playing, board games, bingo, dancing and field trips.
- The second most frequently reported popular activities (in 18 percent of centers) are health and wellness activities such as exercise, aerobics, Tai Chi, health screenings and health support.
- The senior services *most* likely to be offered in senior centers are information and referral, congregate meals and transportation.
- The senior services *least* likely to be offered in senior centers are mental health counseling, adult day care services and financial assistance.
- Other activities may include the following:
  - Advisory councils (participatory governing)
  - Arts and crafts – painting, ceramics, needlecrafts
  - Educational classes – computer, languages, creative writing, history, book discussion groups
  - Genealogy
  - Intergenerational projects
  - Library services
  - Legal services
  - Special events – dances, fundraisers, banquets, luncheons
  - Travel groups
A Partnership Between the
Florida Department of Elder Affairs
and the
Florida Association of Senior Centers

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TTY: (850) 414-2001
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E-mail: salyers@talgov.com