



Welcome to Aging Gracefully!

Please join us each month as we share tips for service providers & family caregivers on supporting people with intellectual disabilities as they grow older.

The demographic landscape of the United States – and the world – is shifting dramatically. In 2011, the oldest of the baby boomers turned 65. By 2060, the number of people 65 and older in the U.S. will have more than doubled, from 43.1 million to 92 million. With average life expectancy for a 65-year-old today at nearly 20 additional years, our country will see more and more people living into their 80s and beyond. This “age

wave” is the beginning of the new normal: more than a quarter of children born today will reach their 100th birthday.

Simultaneously, 60 million individuals worldwide have intellectual disabilities (ID). The increasing life expectancy of people with intellectual disabilities is now an established fact. Although adults with intellectual disabilities, especially those with Down Syndrome, have historically had short life-spans, now, in most developed countries, many reach old age. As they age, some live independent lives, yet those with more serious life issues require lifelong support. Because of compelling needs associated with their aging, this segment of the world’s growing elderly population deserves special attention.

Older people with intellectual disabilities develop the same age-related impairments and have the same health care requirements as the aging population in general. They have

the same needs and rights as other older adults with regard to access to medical care, adequate nutrition and housing, social interaction, employment, leisure activities, and other resources.

Each month we will bring topics forward that relate to the special needs of the elderly with intellectual disabilities. See our 'coming soon' section for our schedule for the year.

Achievement-oriented societies tend to devalue people with intellectual disabilities as unproductive and dependent. As they grow older, this "handicapism" combines with age-ism.

As many as 50% of all people with intellectual disabilities live with family. In many cases, the family members themselves are aging. Without proper support, the number of adults with special needs requiring services is far greater than the service providers' capacity.

Adults with intellectual disabilities are too

often excluded from planning for aging services. As governments and organizations plan to accommodate a growing number of older and aging adults, those with intellectual disabilities should be included in census counts, and their needs must be factored into planning. Many adults living on their own or with their families require and can benefit from the same services and supports being provided to all people who are elderly, but planning must account for special needs, as well. Senior services or supports help minimize age-associated conditions and encourage healthy aging

Many universities and organizations have made available via the Internet resources that can help adults with intellectual disabilities, and their friends, advocates, and families.

World Health Organization documents detailing health-related issues and circumstances that affect longevity can be accessed at www.iassid.org. The University of

Illinois at Chicago maintains an informational web site with many useful publications on aging and intellectual disabilities:

www.uic.edu/orgs/rrtcamlr/index. Adapted from the *International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual Disabilities' Fact Sheet on "Aging and Intellectual Disabilities"*.

Want more information on Ageism? See the article at www.carf.org/EffectsofAgeism

Coming Soon! Topics for 2017 Aging Gracefully

February	Lighting & Dementia Care
March	Fall Prevention
April	Psychological Changes
May	Life Story Book along with Older Americans Month
June	Weather
July	Dehydration, Constipation & Urinary Tract Infections
August	Transitions

September	Preparing for Holidays
October	Nutrition & Aspiration
November	How the Environment Can Affect People with Dementia
December	Stress, Anxiety & Relaxation

Activity Tip: Scent Guessing

Object:

Sensory stimulation with familiar scents

Materials:

A couple yards of calico fabric of a natural color.

Ground coffee, cinnamon stick or powder, dried lavender and rose petals, rubber bands and colorful ribbons.

Instructions:

Cut 4 pieces of calico 7 in. long by 6 in. wide.

Sew pieces on three sides to make squarish 'pockets' and leaving one side to insert chosen scents.

Insert each one with one of the chosen scents and close opening; first with a rubber band and then with a nice colorful ribbon. Make sure seniors cannot untie them.

Seat seniors (2 or 3 only) around a table and pass them one pocket at a time. Encourage them to guess what the scents are. Give clues e.g.

‘It smells like something we drink in the mornings’

‘It smells like something we sprinkle on donuts.

Praise them for trying and encourage conversation about the scents. Ask which ones they like

This activity is adapted

from: <http://www.goldencarers.com>

Let us know what you think about our newsletter. Send questions, comments or

requests for assistance to
seniorcommittee@lucasdd.org. Please
forward to others who may in be interested in
the topic.

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