



Department of  
Aging

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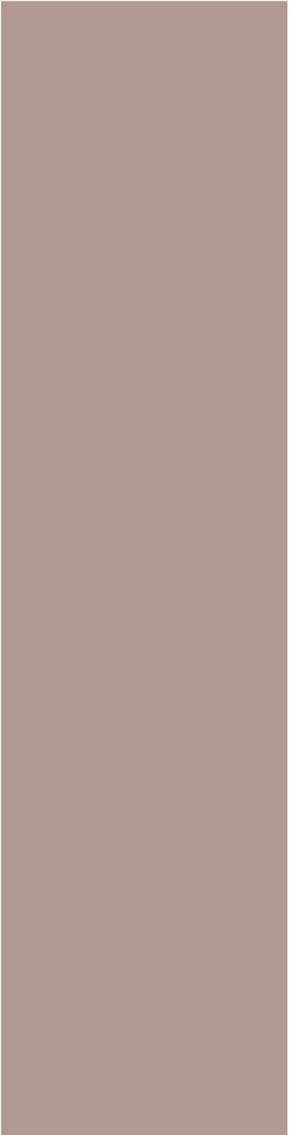
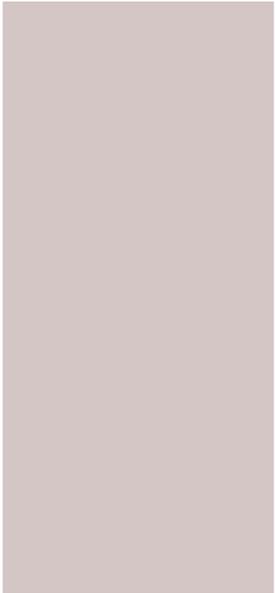
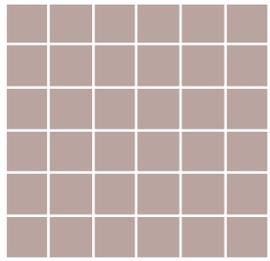
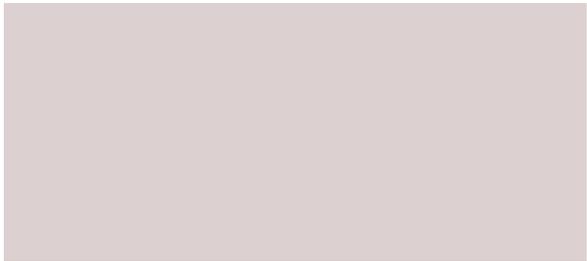
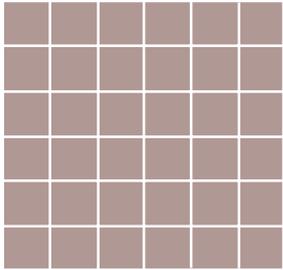
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# Senior Centers: Ohio's Blueprint for the Future



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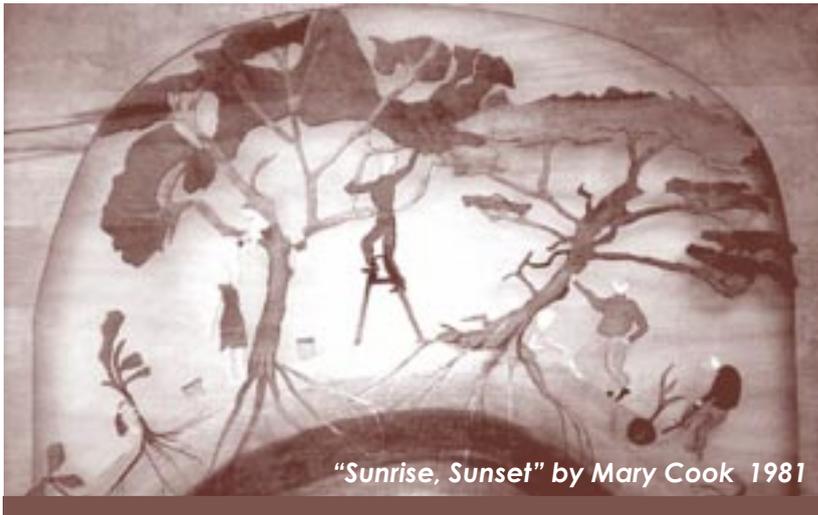
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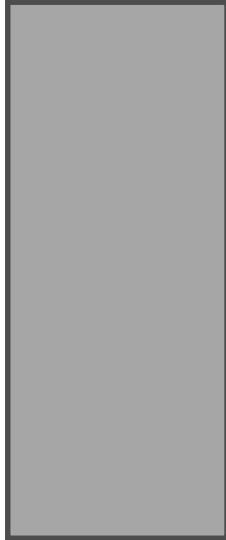
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**A special thanks to all senior centers  
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## Executive Summary

Senior centers play a vital role in Ohio’s aging network. To continue having an impact, centers need to be aware of and plan for future trends.

In 1995, the National Council on the Aging (NCOA) published *Senior Centers in America: A Blueprint for the Future*. Its purpose was to highlight changes in the aging population and offer suggestions about how senior centers could address these changes. This report provides insight into Ohio’s progress towards that Blueprint, and offers direction for the future. Recommendations from the Blueprint are summarized into five critical areas for Ohio: attracting baby boomers, fostering diversity, linking the generations, redefining the image of senior centers, and partnering for resource and community development.

### 1. Attracting Baby Boomers

To attract a new generation, the baby boomers, senior centers need to make a paradigm shift. Most senior center directors are aware of the challenge: of appealing to a group who while not particularly “joiners”, want to tone and stretch—mind and body—and surf the ‘net.’ There is a gap between baby boomer interests and preferences and current senior center offerings. How centers use this information may be a critical factor in the long-term outlook for senior centers. Increased competition provides the opportunity for senior centers to think in new ways about their mission.

### 2. Fostering Diversity

It’s a challenge to foster diversity in senior centers. While senior centers draw participants from different socio-economic populations, in general, program offerings are fairly homogeneous across the state. One barrier to change is participants like to be with people “like themselves” at senior centers or other organizations. These attitudes may fade, as baby boomers report being more open to being around people different than themselves.

There are also modest differences in rural, urban and suburban area senior center programming and for the interests seniors report. Most centers offer opportunities for volunteering, travel, games, hobbies, and fitness. Suburban centers are more likely to offer adult education programs, participatory sports, and computer classes. Regardless of location, the interests seniors report are not consistent with major activities currently available at senior centers.

### 3. Linking the Generations

While their life experience predisposes older persons for intergenerational activities, when asked directly about this seniors are generally for mixing generations, yet in community centers express a desire to preserve space “of their own.” Such centers seem a logical place for “ageless” activities, structured or serendipitous, to bring people together and to change ageist ideas.

### 4. Redefining the Image of Senior Centers

Many senior center directors and Ohioans agree the image of senior centers keeps many away. The common perception is that centers are for dependent “old people” doing unappealing activities. Many survey respondents said they didn’t “need” a center or weren’t joiners. More than bricks and mortar are needed to build a more inviting, appealing image.

### 5. Partnering for Resource and Community Development

Senior centers are diversifying funding and seeking new community partnerships. More than half receive Older Americans Act funding. Local sources, however, are the major source of funds for senior centers. Senior services levies are gaining popularity and there is a small but growing trend of planned giving. State PASSPORT Medicaid waiver funds are dwarfed by other sources, even for services senior centers already provide through other funding sources. A key to success in the future will be for centers to seek diverse funding and create new partnerships.

### What to Look for in this Report

Hopefully this information will help senior centers and Ohio’s aging network effectively prepare for the future. Findings are based on Ohio-specific data from senior center directors and Ohioans aged 50 - 55 and 65 - 70. PASSPORT, Older Americans Act, Senior Facilities, and Senior Services Levy program data were also considered. Each chapter ends with implications for senior centers and specific examples of innovative practices already used in some of Ohio’s senior centers.

## Introduction

Ohio has a vibrant and rich network of more than 300 senior centers, some of which have been vital assets to their communities for nearly fifty years. In early 2000, the Ohio Department of Aging (ODA) began evaluating the senior center network in Ohio to better understand their status and what they hope to be in the future. This paper is the result of that evaluation.

In 1995, the National Council on the Aging (NCOA) published *Senior Centers in America: A Blueprint for the Future*. Its purpose was to highlight changes in the aging population as well as in senior centers, and offer suggestions about what senior centers need to become to address these changes. The report, a summary of a daylong conference held in 1995, brought together many national leaders. The NCOA report was meant to be a blueprint for the future.

Seven years later, Ohio is interested in gauging how far we have come in turning the Blueprint into reality for our senior centers. While the Blueprint is specific to individual centers, there were also

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***Seven years later, Ohio is interested in gauging how far we have come in turning the Blueprint into reality for our senior centers.***

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policy and funding recommendations that were national or global in nature, and are not considered for the purpose of this project. Relevant program recommendations from the Blueprint, however, have been summarized into five critical recommendation areas for Ohio.

The structure of Ohio's report will roughly follow that of NCOA's Blueprint.

- Following an overview, chapter two provides background information on Ohio's aging network. It will also provide updated data on Ohio's senior centers.
- Chapter three provides an overview of older adults, and new research on older adults in Ohio and nationwide.
- Chapters four through eight address key recommendations in the Blueprint and Ohio's current status in meeting selected recommendations. Examples follow of the progress being made in Ohio's senior centers in the areas of attracting baby boomers to centers, cultural and generational diversity, intergenerational programming, the senior center's image in the community, and partnering for resource and community development.

## Methodology

We gathered information about today's senior centers from a variety of sources including surveys, focus groups, visits to senior centers, and existing data on services across Ohio. (See Appendix A for more detail on methodology; Appendix B for copies of all surveys).

<b>Method</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b><i>Focus Groups</i></b>	Seven focus groups were conducted around Ohio to collect viewpoints about use of senior centers, anticipated needs of "younger" older adults, and suggested changes.
<b><i>Interest and Activity Survey</i></b>	Over 1500 Ohio adults aged 50 to 55 and 65 to 70 responded to a mail survey on their interest and activities.
<b><i>Senior Center Staff Survey</i></b>	Over 280 senior center staff completed a survey on their programming, and funding and on the interests and activities of center participants.
<b><i>Senior Levy Survey</i></b>	ODA staff surveyed all of the entities in Ohio that are responsible for senior levies including many senior centers. The purpose was to learn more about local resources for senior programming.
<b><i>Facility Visits</i></b>	On the basis of the earlier surveys, ODA staff visited seven senior centers in urban, suburban, and rural areas to see their programming first hand.
<b><i>Database analyses</i></b>	Using existing statewide databases, ODA staff compared senior centers that provide services in the aging network.
<b><i>Review of Senior Facilities Program</i></b>	ODA staff reviewed the history of the Senior Facilities Program that provides funds to senior centers for capital improvements and renovations.
<b><i>Literature Review</i></b>	Numerous sources were reviewed to assure we were comparing our results to the most current research on senior centers.

## Summary

Because of the range of methods, the report is a comprehensive look at Ohio's senior centers. In the following chapters, the centers and their services are compared to the NCOA's *"Senior Centers in America: A Blueprint for the Future"* to benchmark and measure progress and direction for future priorities. The Ohio Blueprint should help Ohio's senior center network prepare to provide quality services that will appeal to the burgeoning baby boomer generation.

### What to Look for in this Chapter

**Centers per county:**  
1 to 60

**Annual operating budgets:**  
\$750.00 to \$6 million

**Open on weekends or evenings:**  
12%

**Funded with Older Americans Act dollars:**  
58%

**Funded with Medicaid (PASSPORT) dollars:**  
31%

**Accredited:**  
2%

**Seeking accreditation:**  
10%

**Seniors who drive themselves to the center:**  
54%

**Average male participation:**  
25%

**Participants who work full or part-time:**  
12%

**Participants at or above middle income:**  
50%

**Centers that offer in-home services:**  
25%

**Centers that offer services for persons  
under 60 with disabilities:**  
25%

**Activity most commonly offered:**  
volunteering



### Introduction

Senior centers have a long history of service to seniors. They continue to be a major partner in the aging network in Ohio and across the United States. Senior centers are as diverse as the communities they serve, and offer a range of activities and services designed to meet the needs of their communities.

Senior centers could play an even more important role in helping older Americans and their families. Older adults and their families are facing transitions between work and retirement, full independence and limited support, good health and chronic conditions. Senior centers now and in the future can bridge those gaps. As gateways to the aging network, many senior centers, along with

### Historical Highlights

1943	The New York City Department of Welfare establishes the William Hodson Community Center in Brooklyn, the first senior center in the United States.
1954	Muriel Bertsch establishes Ohio's first senior center in Hamilton.
1959	The first senior center state association, the Ohio Association of Centers for Senior Citizens, is formed.
1965	Passage of the Older Americans Act. Senior centers are identified as the primary organization for service delivery. Congress also establishes Medicare and Medicaid with the passage of Title XVIII and Title XIX of the Social Security Act, respectively.
1966	State Units on Aging created as required by the Older Americans Act.
1971	White House Conference on Aging recommends the establishment of a multi-purpose senior center in every community. The majority of Ohio's senior centers are built in this decade.
1973	Area Agencies on Aging created as required by the Older Americans Act.
1978	Ohio's legislature passes H.B. 1084 providing funds for the construction and renovation of multipurpose senior centers in Ohio.
1979	Martin Janis Senior Center opens as the Ohio Department of Aging's first multipurpose senior center.
1986	National Institute of Senior Centers affirms accreditation as a priority and institutes plan to revise national standards.
1990s	More than thirty new Ohio senior centers are established.
1998	National Institute of Senior Centers establishes the National Senior Center Accreditation Program.
1999	Wood County Committee on Aging in Bowling Green becomes Ohio's first senior center to receive accreditation.

Area Agencies on Aging, are "front doors" and vital sources of community-based support for older Americans.

Senior centers have evolved from one facility in 1943 to more than 15,000 in the United States today (*NISC March 2000 figures*). There were a reported 1.85 senior centers for every 10,000 persons aged 60 and over in 1995. Alabama, New York, and North Dakota had the highest percentage of senior centers, per 10,000 persons aged 60 and over. There are 1.94 senior centers per 10,000 persons aged 60 and over in the 2000 census in Ohio.

### History and Purpose

Today's senior center traces its roots to 1943 and the Hodson Center in New York City which focused on meeting the needs of low-income elders. Nutrition and recreation were two of the primary services offered. Ohio's first senior center was opened in the city of Hamilton in 1954.

In 1965, The Older Americans Act promoted the establishment and development of multipurpose senior centers. The Older Americans Act defines a multipurpose senior center (MPSC) as a community facility for organization and delivery of a broad spectrum of services, including health, mental health, social, nutrition, educational services and recreational activities for older individuals. Since then, many senior

centers have evolved from providing recreation and nutrition services to facilities offering a comprehensive range of social services.

## Focal Points

The Older Americans Act designates, funds and defines “focal points” as facilities established to encourage maximum co-location and coordination of services for older persons. Many senior centers are designated as focal points for their community. Other senior centers may act as focal points in their communities, but not be formally recognized as such because their services are not co-located with other senior services providers.

States report to the Administration on Aging the number of focal points designated, and the number of senior centers considered focal points. Nationwide 75 percent of focal points were senior centers. In Ohio 73 percent of focal points were senior centers.



## Certification and Accreditation

The National Institute of Senior Centers (NISC) and the Ohio Association of Senior Centers (OASC) are among the organizations that assist senior centers to accomplish their central mission. In the early 1990's, OASC began certifying senior center professional staff to a statewide standard used by peers, funding agencies, and the public to measure senior center professionalism. Ohio has nearly 200 certified senior center professionals.

In 1998, the NISC established the National Senior Center Accreditation Program. It promotes formal, national quality control and standards for senior centers. Five-year accreditation is based on self-assessment, peer review, an on-site evaluation, adherence to standards and guidelines issued by the NISC, and a recommendation by the National Senior Center Accreditation Board. Nationally, more than 90 centers, approximately 1 percent, have applied for and received NISC accreditation (*NISC March 2000 figures*). In Ohio, senior centers in Wood, Defiance, Meigs, Gallia, and Butler Counties have been accredited. The Strongsville Senior Center is currently seeking accreditation. Cost and time top the list of reasons for not seeking accreditation.

## Overview of Ohio Senior Centers

Ohio offers programs and services to older adults through more than 325 senior centers. They vary widely in who they serve, what they offer and how they are funded. An Ohio senior center may serve an entire county or only one neighborhood. It may offer a wide range of services or just a few. Ohio centers have one thing in common: a central mission to promote the dignity, self-determination, and well-being of older Ohioans.



## Organizational Structure

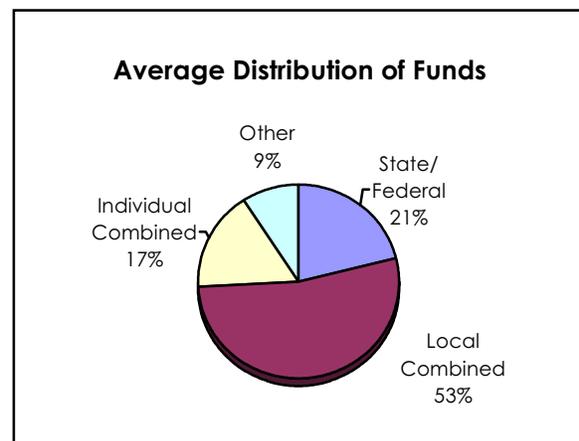
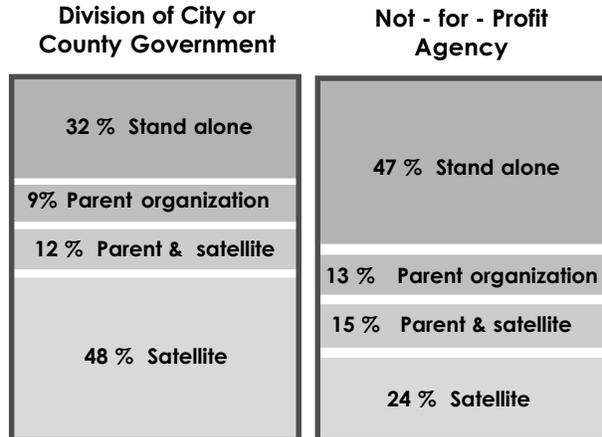
The organizational structure of a senior center impacts its capacity to provide services to the community. Two distinctions are most notable: government vs. not-for-profit, and stand-alone vs. a component of a larger organization.

There is no one organizational model for senior centers. Some began in governmental systems such as Parks and Recreation departments; others arose from not-for-profit organizations. Not-for-profits included advocacy groups such as women's auxiliaries, settlement houses, faith-based organizations, and community action organizations. According to the Ohio Senior Center Director Survey, one-fourth are part of a governmental system, and three fourths are not-for-profit organizations.

This diversity of origins has a direct impact on current structures. In Ohio, not-for-profits are more likely to be stand-alone agencies, having neither a parent nor satellites. Almost half of all government-based senior centers are satellites of a larger organization.

## Funding

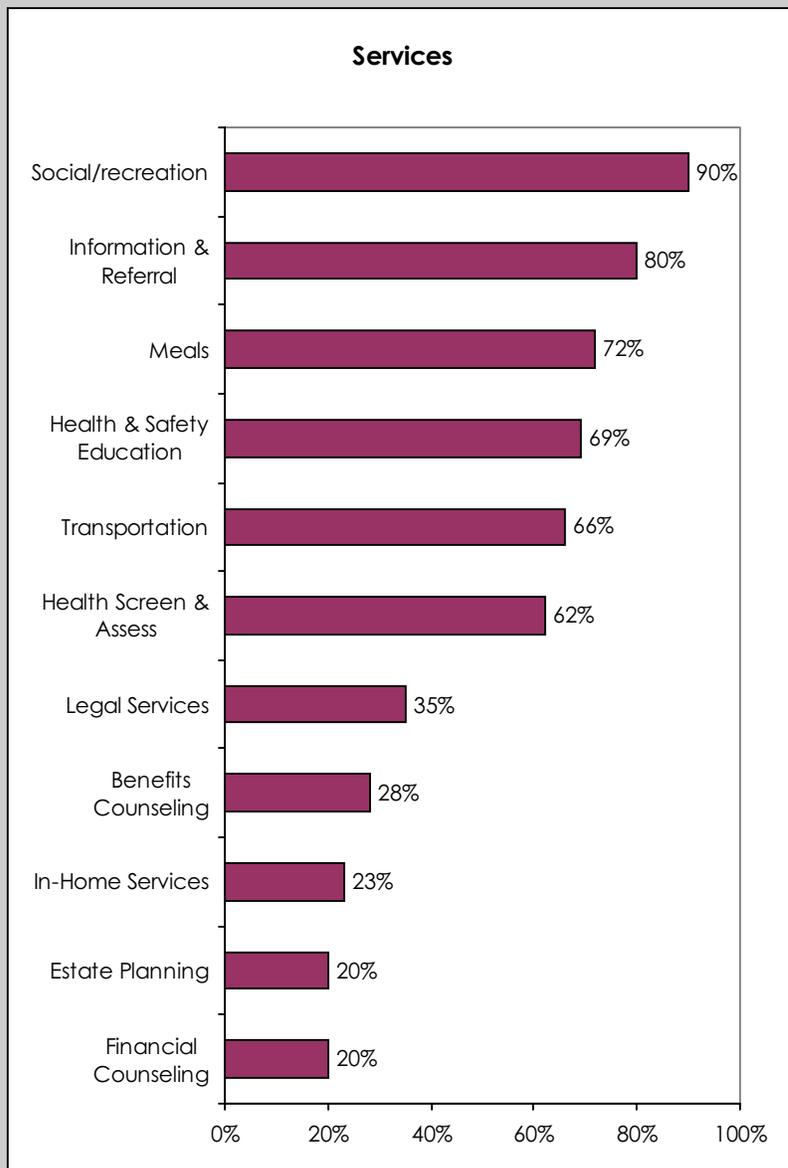
A variety of funding streams support senior centers, whose annual operating budgets range from \$750 dollars a year to \$6 million. Older Americans Act, PASSPORT (Ohio's Medicaid waiver program), and state funds are only a part of the financial picture. According to the Senior Center Director Survey, only 60 percent of senior centers receive any federal or state funds. Only one-fifth of their average budget was supported with these funds. Local funders are the most vital contributors to the senior center network. On average, more than one-half of most centers' budgets were supported by local dollars which includes local government funds, levy funds, and funds from local philanthropic organizations like the United Way. Some centers are solely supported with local funds. Senior center participants also may contribute financial support to the services and activities they enjoy at a senior center. One-fifth of the average senior center budget was funded with individual contributions, including "membership" dues and fees, donations, and dollars from fund raising projects.



Source: Ohio Senior Center Director Survey, 2001

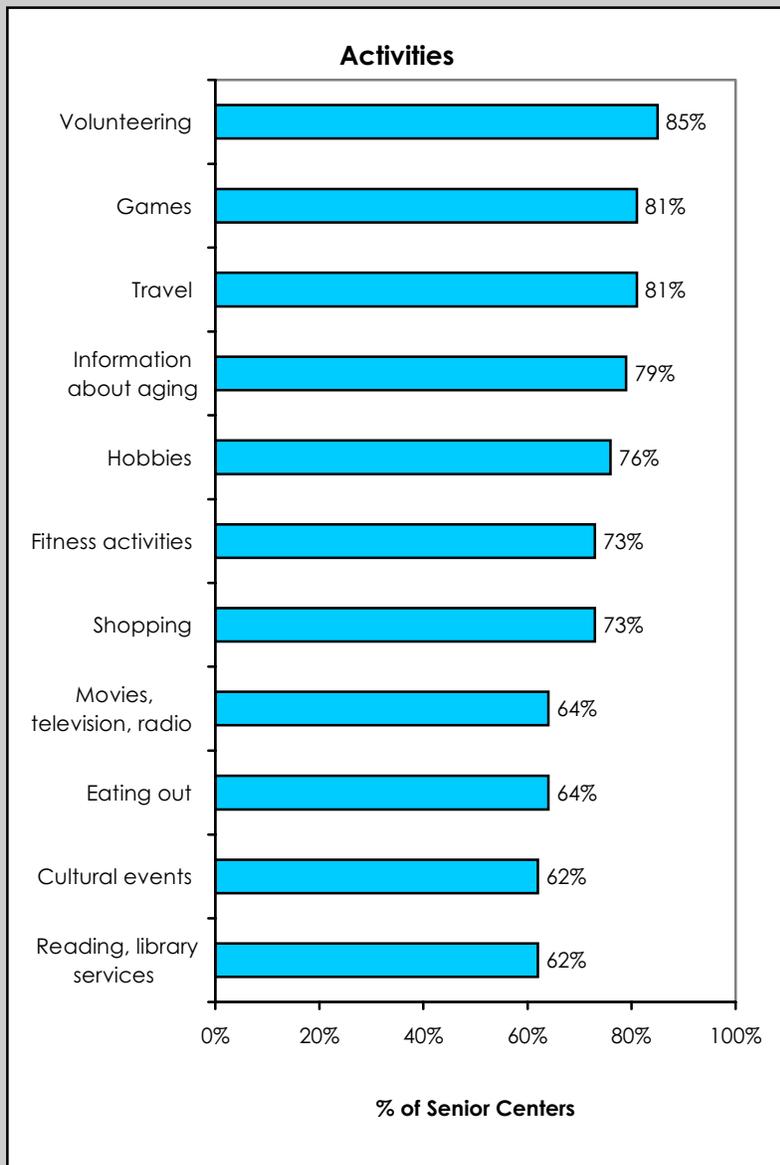
## Services and Activities

A number of traditional services are offered by nearly every senior center in Ohio. More than three of every four offer recreation, information and referral services and meals. Transportation, health and safety education, and health screening and assessments are also commonly provided. Senior centers that offer this full array of services fit the definition of focal point as



described in the Older Americans Act. After these six services there is a steep drop-off in frequency other services offered. Notably, in-home services such as personal care are offered by less than 25 percent of all senior centers.

Most activities offered at senior centers are social or recreational in nature. These include games, travel, and fitness activities. Some activities take place at the senior center, others occur in the community.



Source: Ohio Senior Center Director Survey, 2001

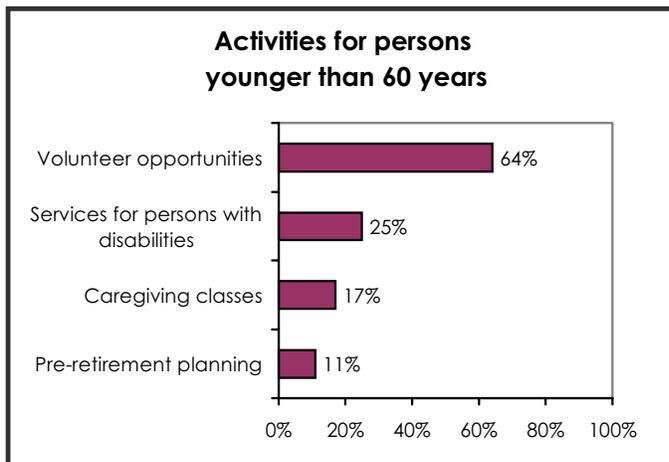




Opportunities for seniors and others in the community to volunteer are a very common component of senior centers. In fact, centers often rely on volunteers to run their daily operations and programs.



Perhaps more important than any formal service or activity a senior center offers is what older adults offer each other. The senior center is a place of mutual support and companionship - a "home away from home". Often found in abundant supply is help in time of crisis, comfort in the loss of a spouse, and assistance with everyday needs.



Source: Senior Center Director Survey, 2001

When asked what programs are provided for persons younger than 60, one quarter mentioned services for persons with disabilities. About 20 percent offered caregiving classes, and more than 10 percent provided pre-retirement planning classes.

### Senior Center Participants

Senior centers serve older adults from all socioeconomic groups. The Ohio Senior Center Director Survey confirms that most centers serve a mix of income groups. Nearly all (96 percent) serve some low-income participants, and nearly two thirds serve some above middle income. As a statewide average, senior centers estimate that 50 percent of participants were middle income or above.

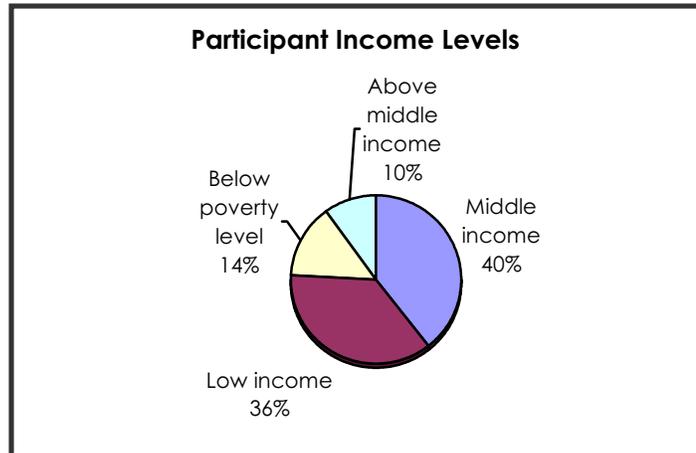
In general, 87 percent of participants are no longer working.

Low participation from men is a common occurrence prompting many centers to create more activities to interest males. On average, only one of four senior center participants is male.

Statewide, more than half of all senior center participants drive themselves to the senior center. Overall, 20 percent of participants use transportation provided by the senior center.

### Hours of Operation

Senior centers in Ohio vary in hours of operation, but most are open between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Fifty percent of centers surveyed are open 40 - 45 hours a week; only 10 percent are open more than 46 hours a week. Twelve percent indicated they are open some evenings or on weekends.



Source: Ohio Senior Center Director Survey, 2001



**“We need to be open the days and the hours most conducive to an older adult who works part-time or cares for grandchildren or a spouse.”**

– Senior center director

## Summary

For nearly 50 years, older Ohioans have found senior center resources in their own communities planned to address their leisure interests. The typical participant, a retired female of any race or socioeconomic status, has opportunities and choices at the local senior center. Exactly what they are varies widely from center to center based on factors that include funding, organizational structure and local leadership. As the number of centers has grown, so has the scope of programs offered, expanding in some centers to serve older, homebound adults.

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## References

The National Institute of Senior Centers at The National Council on Aging Conference, March 29, 2000, Washington D.C.

### What to Look for in this Chapter

1. The population of older adults is growing and will continue to grow, especially for the oldest old.
2. Older adults of the future will be better educated and will continue to work longer.
3. Older adults feel good about their health, but still face health risks.
4. More older adults will be caregivers.
5. Older adults will be more diverse.
6. Older women will most likely continue to live alone; older men will more likely live with their spouse.
7. Upcoming baby boomers may be much less interested in being involved in their communities.



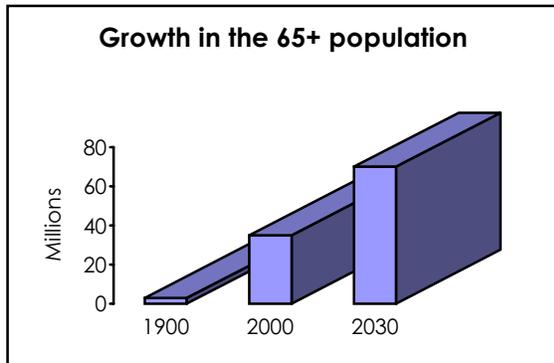
## Introduction

This chapter is a review of trends and demographic shifts to examine the impact of an aging society on Ohio and the nation. Information reviewed includes a look at seniors today and what to expect in the coming decade. The U.S Department of Commerce (1995) wrote a thorough and well-organized summary of demographic trends, *Sixty-Five Plus in The United States*. This chapter mimics the structure and relevant results from that report.

## Population and Demographic Trends

**The population of older adults is growing and will continue to grow, especially for the oldest old.**

At the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there are an estimated 35 million people age 65 or older in the United States (almost 13 percent of the total population). This is a big change from 1900, when there were only 3 million people in this same age group (only 4 percent of the population).

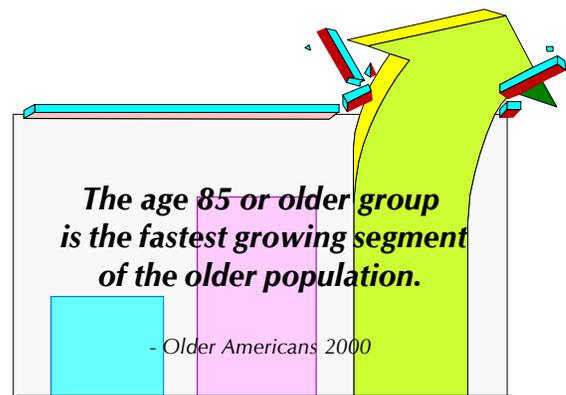


Source: Sixty-Five Plus, 1995

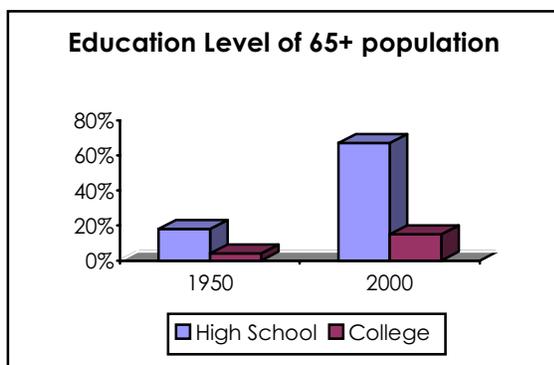
By 2011, the “baby boom” generation will begin to turn 65. In the next 30 years, twenty percent of the total population will be age 65 or older. The size of the older population will double to 70 million by 2030 (*Sixty - Five Plus, 1995*).

In 2000, 2 percent of the population was age 85 or older. This age group is the fastest growing segment of the older population. By 2050, those 85 years and older will increase to almost 5 percent of the U.S. population (*Older Americans 2000*).

For senior centers, with increasing numbers comes opportunities to reach out to more older adults in your communities.



### Older adults of the future will be better educated and will continue to work longer.



Source: Older American 2000

Older adults today are far better educated than were past generations. In 1950, eighteen percent of America’s older population had finished high school. By 2000, 67 percent had completed high school. Likewise, those with a bachelor’s degree increased from 4 percent in 1950 to almost 15 percent by 2000. “Additionally, while only 12 percent of the elderly had college degrees, 20 percent of 55 to 59 year olds and 27 percent of 45 to 49 year olds did” (*Sixty-Five Plus, 1995*).

“Research shows those better educated tend to be healthier longer and better off economically” (*Sixty-Five Plus, 1995*). Higher levels of education impacts lifestyle choices, interests, and how long people choose to work. Those with higher

education tend to remain in the workforce longer (*Older Americans 2000*).

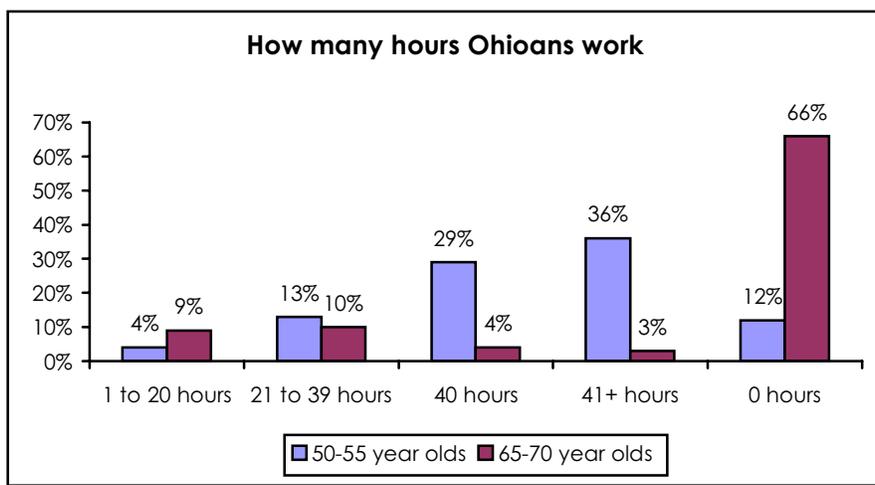
For senior centers, this means the interests of older adults may change because of higher education levels, and traditional senior center offerings may no longer appeal to this generation.

The *Myths and Realities of Aging 2000* survey found that only 24 percent of respondents cited “reaching a certain age” as a key factor in deciding to retire. The relationship of age, work, and retirement is undergoing profound change (*Fishman, 2000*).

As evidence of this, work patterns and retirement ages of men and women are dramatically different than in the past. In 1963, 76 percent of men 62-64 years old were working. By 2000, less than half were employed, and only 12 percent of men age 70 and older were working (*Older Americans 2000*).

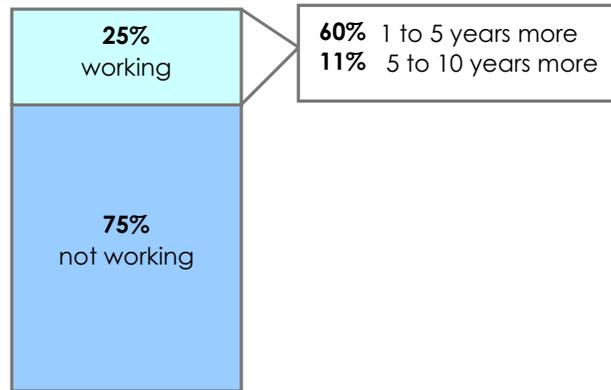


The rate of labor force participation by older women has increased during the same time. More than half of women 55-61 were working or seeking employment in 2000 (*Older Americans 2000*). Older women may continue to work because they are either not covered by a pension plan or have not yet put in sufficient years to qualify under a retirement plan.



Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000

According to our Interest and Activity Survey, more than one in four Ohioans aged 65 - 70 are still working, most part-time. For those 50 - 55 years old, fully 36 percent report working more than 40 hours. In a recent Butler County, Ohio survey of adults in the same age groups, those



#### Employment of 65 – 70 year olds

Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000

who still worked said they do so because they like or enjoy interacting with others, want to stay active, or need the money.

As more women continue to enter the labor market, they may have less time to participate at a senior center.



#### Older adults feel good about their health, but still face health risks.

Older Americans reporting chronic disability dropped from 24 percent in 1982 to 21 percent in 1994. In that 12 year period, fewer reported difficulty walking, climbing stairs, stooping, and reaching over one's head. Women are more likely to report chronic disability than men, and African Americans are more likely to report chronic disability than Caucasians or Hispanics (*Older Americans 2000*).

This overall decrease in chronic disability is reflected in how older Americans feel about their health. In 1996, 72 percent of older Americans reported their health as good, very good, or excellent. Although positive reports of health status decline with age, still two-thirds of those 85 and older reported their health in the excellent or good categories (*Older Americans 2000*).

However, there are a few negative health trends in older adults. Cancer and heart disease among those 65 and older increased between 1984 and 1995 by 5 - 7 percent – the two leading causes of death in this age group. Chronic diseases also increased: arthritis by 3 percent and diabetes by 2 percent. Only hypertension remained steady during the decade. African Americans were more likely to have arthritis and diabetes than whites or Hispanics (*Older Americans 2000*).

Memory impairment and depression also increase with age. Only about 4 percent of those 60 - 64 years old report memory impairment, but by age 85 this rate goes up nearly tenfold to 35 percent. The rate of depression nearly doubles in those 85 and older from their younger peers (23 percent to 15 percent). Women have less memory impairment than men, but until age 85 they report more depression (*Older Americans 2000*).

### **More older adults will be caregivers.**

One reason for early retirement is to care for an older parent or spouse who is ill. Among caregivers of older adults, 12 percent are persons age 65 and older. Hispanic and Asian American caregivers are younger on average than white caregivers. Of older caregivers, 23 percent are caring for a spouse, an increase of almost 9 percent during the 1990's (*Older Americans 2000*).

Older caregivers face difficulties not faced by younger caregivers. Older care recipients require higher levels of care, and there is a higher physical and emotional burden placed on older caregivers (*AARP, "Family Caregiving in the U.S.", 1997*).

Older adults also care for grandchildren. About 5 percent of all children are living in the household of a grandparent. Often the grandparent is the primary caregiver to the child. Grandparents also care for another 5 percent of all children during the day when parents are working (*AARP, 1997*).





### Older adults will be more diverse.

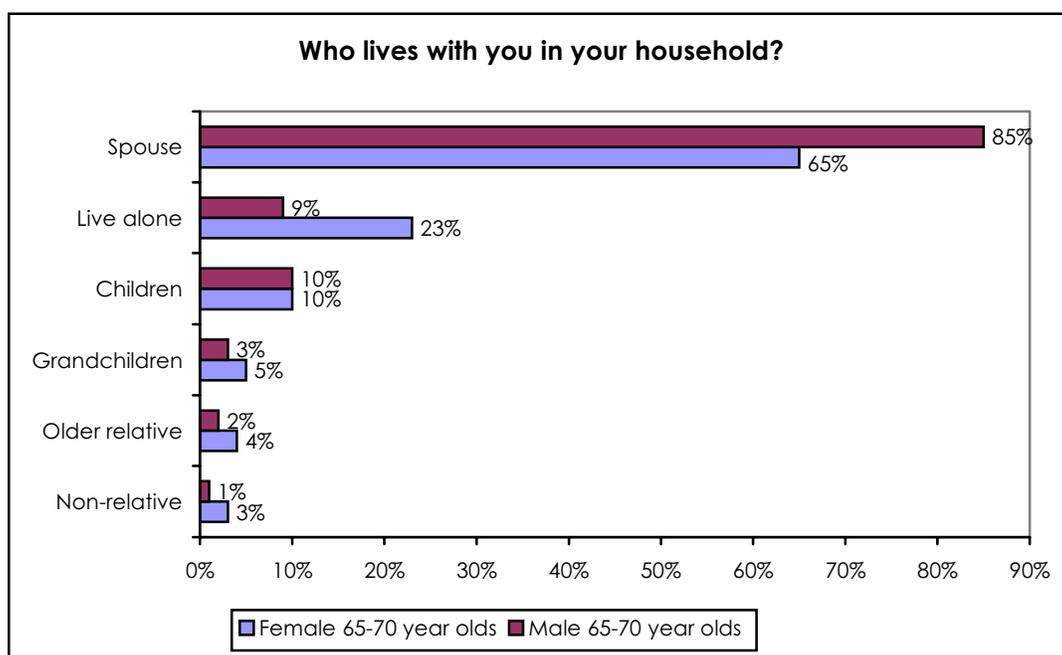
The percent of non-Hispanic Caucasians older adults dropped 6 percent in the past decade, to 84 percent. By 2050, this population is expected to drop to around 67 percent of the total 65+ population. At the same time the percent of Hispanic elders will increase to 16 percent, African Americans to 12 percent, and those of Asian heritage to 7 percent of the total population. It is expected that the number of Hispanic older adults will be at 13 million by 2050 (*Older Americans 2000*). As we will see in chapter five, this is a key area for senior centers to address in the future.

### Older women will most likely continue to live alone: older men will more likely live with their spouse.

Men have higher death rates than women at every age. As a result, elderly women outnumbered elderly men in 1994 by a ratio of 3 to 2 (20 million to 14 million.) This difference grows with advancing age. At ages 65 to 69, it is 6 to 5. After age 85 it reaches 5 to 2. Although older women will outnumber older men in the first half of the 21st century, the life expectancy of older men is expected to slowly increase (*Older Americans 2000*).

Today, 79 percent of men age 65 to 74 are married, compared with 55 percent of women of the same age. Even for those age 85 or older, about 50 percent of men are married, compared with only 13 percent of women. Older men are also more likely to remarry than are older women although the remarriage rate is not high for either group. The result is there are many older women who are widowed. While 7 percent of the older population today is divorced, the percentage will rise as baby boomers enter retirement already divorced (*Older Americans 2000*).





Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000

Living arrangements also differ by ethnic group. White and African American older women are more likely to live alone (41 percent) than older Hispanic women (27 percent) and Asian women (21 percent). It is likely more older women will live alone in the future. “Thus, while most elderly men have a spouse for assistance, especially when health fails, most elderly women do not” (*Sixty-Five Plus*, 1995).

In Ohio, living arrangement of those 50 - 55 are very similar to those 65 - 70. In both groups, nearly three in four live with a spouse, and less than one in five lives alone (*Ohio Interest and Activity Survey*, 2000).

It could continue to be a challenge for senior centers to draw more men to their centers, as men are more likely to have companionship at home and feel less need to socialize with others.

### Upcoming baby boomers may be much less interested in being involved in their communities.

In *Bowling Alone*, author Robert Putnam (2000) touches on another change in our society. Putnam argues that there has been a drop in people's participation in civic and social activities—from formal to informal involvement. Some areas of decline include:



Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000

- **Political participation:** Voting is down 25 percent, to its lowest level in 200 years. The greatest decline is among well-educated members of society.
- **Civic involvement:** Putnam says that more people join civic organizations today than in the past, but they are less participatory. For example many people join AARP and the Sierra Club, but do not actively participate. Their only involvement is through organizations' mailings, and they rarely attend meetings and events sponsored by the groups. Meanwhile, membership in organizations fostering camaraderie and civic involvement, such as VFWs, continues to decline.

According to the Interest and Activity Survey conducted for this report, 23 percent of adults aged 50 - 55 did not belong to any organization. Membership was also low for local groups that meet regularly; 11 percent were involved in hobby-related groups and another 11 percent in fraternal organizations.

- **Religious organizations:** There is a 10 percent decline in organized religious participation according to Putnam. The number of the highly active remains the same while there has been a decline by those nominally involved. While overall religious involvement declined, this trend is more pronounced in main-line communities with a growth in evangelical religious organizations.

Of Ohio 50 - 55 year olds surveyed, 53 percent reported a strong interest in religious and spiritual pursuits. But they do not actively participate in organized activities. Only 25 percent reported belonging to a church or religious organization.

- **Workplace:** Putnam finds that union membership has declined across every sector of business except government. While professional organizations have grown, most eligible persons are not participating. As with civic involvement, participation is often more passive.

According to the Interest and Activity Survey, only 12 percent of Ohioans age 50 - 55 are members of a professional organization.

- **Informal connections:** According to Putnam's research, people communicate less with neighbors, and get together socially less often. For example, people play cards with friends less frequently, but more play solitaire. People invite fewer friends for dinner. People eat out more, picnic less, and have fewer family dinners. Even entertainment has changed. Viewing sports, concerts and movies has increased, but actual participation in these activities is down. Passive involvement is the trend.

According to the Interest and Activity Survey, 80 percent of those age 50 - 55 reported a strong interest in eating out. Of the group, 43 percent in this age group are interested in spectator sports while 38 percent participate. Only 9 percent are involved in sports or fitness organizations.

- **Volunteering:** An overall increase in volunteering nationwide masks a big change, Putnam says. The increase is among older adults with more time, better health and stronger civic commitment than previous generations. Meanwhile volunteering has declined especially among younger women who once were home with children, and who were actively involved in their communities, and who are now working outside the home.

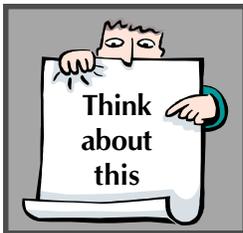
According to the Interest and Activity Survey, 41 percent of those 50 - 55 are interested in volunteering. Yet only 11 percent of 65 - 70 year olds and 9 percent of 50 - 55 year olds belong to volunteer organizations. They may be volunteering elsewhere, but they do not participate in organizations identified as "volunteer."



Two theories explain these trends. One is that people **of all ages** participate less in their communities. This suggests changes within society that affect all ages in an equal manner. Another interpretation proposes that changes are simply differences in behavior of succeeding generations. Younger generations choose to participate less than older citizens do. There are now more people in this younger age group which explains, Putnam argues, as much as 50 percent of the decrease in involvement.

Implications for senior centers are clear. As baby boomers enter our senior population, there will be fewer interested in becoming involved – not just in senior centers, but in many other activities that currently rely on senior volunteers.

Putnam says that television, urban sprawl that separates people from each other and creates bedroom communities, and changes in work – including an increase in women working, cause the decline in civic participation. As technology changes and the Internet becomes more important, this trend will continue to impact senior centers.



### Implications for Senior Centers

To summarize key demographic trends:

- Timing and nature of retirement is changing. Some may never retire and others will return to work or work part-time. They may have even less leisure time for the activities being offered by senior centers now.
- While older adults are healthier and more health conscious, chronic conditions may still limit activities outside of home.
- Many older adults may be caregivers for their spouses, parents, or grandchildren, which could limit the time they have for outside activities. Senior centers may draw caregivers in through offering support and resources.
- A growing ethnic diversity among older adults means senior centers need to provide a greater variety of activities.

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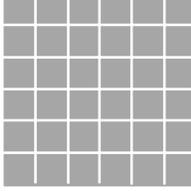
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## NCOA's "Senior Centers in America: A Blueprint for the Future" Recommendations

Senior center programs and operations must **adapt to the changing, more active life styles of today's (and tomorrow's) older adults**. Such adaptation might involve extending evening and weekend center hours and programming; **greater sensitivity to cultural preferences** for mid-to-late afternoon main meals rather than strict adherence to noontime offerings; and elective approach to program and activities planning, allowing more choices for those who prefer a **more elective participation** rather than spending all day at the center.

**Extended hours** to better serve a diverse population that will pursue varied activities and may be best served on the weekends and evening.

Changes in **food programs to reflect the tastes** of a discerning group of participants.

Centers must be "**Vital Aging**" centers that provide services and programming designed to enhance the capacity of all participants, foster personal growth, and meet the health screening and health education as well as "**wellness**" needs of participants.

### What to Look for in this Chapter

1. Baby boomers have a broader range of interests than the current 65 - 70 year olds, but many of their interests involve passive entertainment.
2. Baby boomers report high interest in travel, computers, physical fitness, and adult education offerings.
3. There is low interest in key programs offered by many senior centers such as volunteering, games, and participation in musical activities.
4. Baby boomers know of a nearby senior center, but only about half report that they are likely to attend one in the future.
5. For baby boomers and older adults today, a major reason to attend a senior center is the opportunity to be with friends.



### Introduction

Many think of older Americans as a homogeneous group, however, the findings reported in chapter three suggest they are and will continue to be increasingly diverse. Even within similar cultural backgrounds, though, there are distinct generational differences, and differences based on age and life experiences. At the March, 2001 ASA/NCOA conference, speaker Ann Fishman defined three generations: the GI generation, the Silent generation and the Baby Boom generation (*Myths and Realities, 2001*). Her premise is that each generation had different defining experiences, which shape interests and defines what compels them to join others or to share in community activities. According to Ms. Fishman, these differences are:

**Generational Profiles**

<b>Baby Boom Generation (born 1943 – 1964)</b>	<b>Silent Generation (born 1925 - 1942)</b>	<b>GI Generation (born 1901 - 1924)</b>
Current ages: 38 – 59	Current ages: 60 -76	Current ages: 77 –101
Vietnam and the 60's were the defining experiences	Korea was a defining experience	WWII and the Depression were the defining experiences
Are in peak earning years; women have spending power for first time	Vital and active, in prime of life	Feel they have earned a rich retirement
Want hands on experiences	Want adventure without the risk	
Distrust authority	Respect the opinions of experts	
Enjoy being in control – not pre-packaged options		Respond to pre-packaging
Expect to be treated special		
Care about the environment		
Expect quality of life in aging		
Busy people		Enjoy reading; good grammar important to them
The ME generation		

Source: Fishman, Myths and Realities of Aging 2000.

These observations are an acknowledgement that, in a number of ways, the groups are exactly opposite of one another. The silent generation respects expert opinion while baby boomers distrust these same opinions. This theory offers hints as to future seniors’ interests, and how to market to each of these unique generations within our aging population.

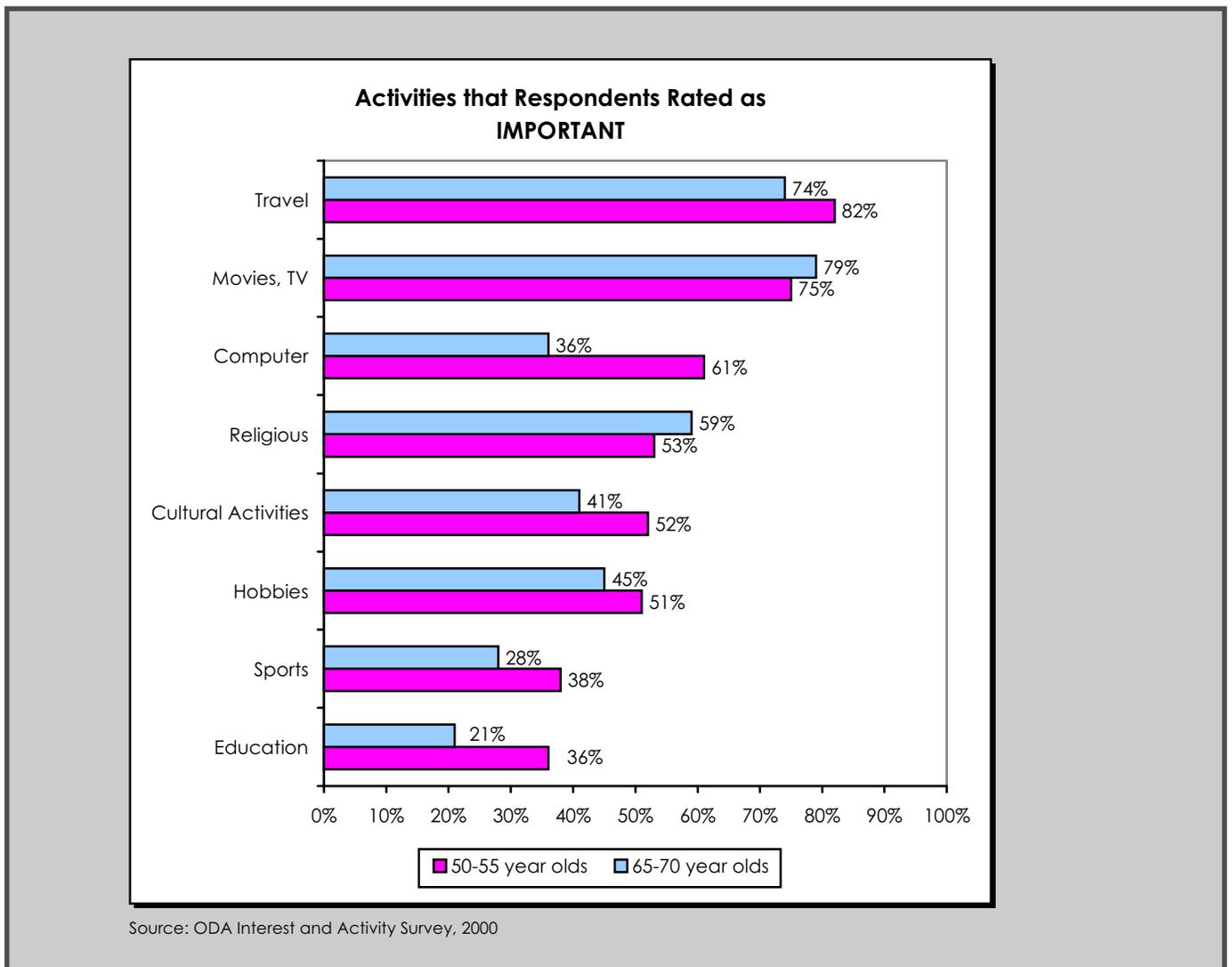
A major concern for senior center professionals is whether the centers can or will remain viable once baby boomers join the senior population. We’ve discussed earlier that nationally baby boomers appear far less likely to join organizations. Is this true in Ohio as well? To understand the challenges senior centers face in the future, and to learn what they are doing today to address these concerns, this chapter further explores how adults age 50 - 55 differ from those 65 - 70.

- How are those 50 - 55 and those 65 - 70 alike and how are they different? Results will be compared to current senior center offerings.
- How do those 50 - 55 and 65 - 70 view organizations in general and senior centers specifically? How likely are they to attend senior centers?
- What are senior centers in Ohio doing to address these new customers?

## Interests and Involvement

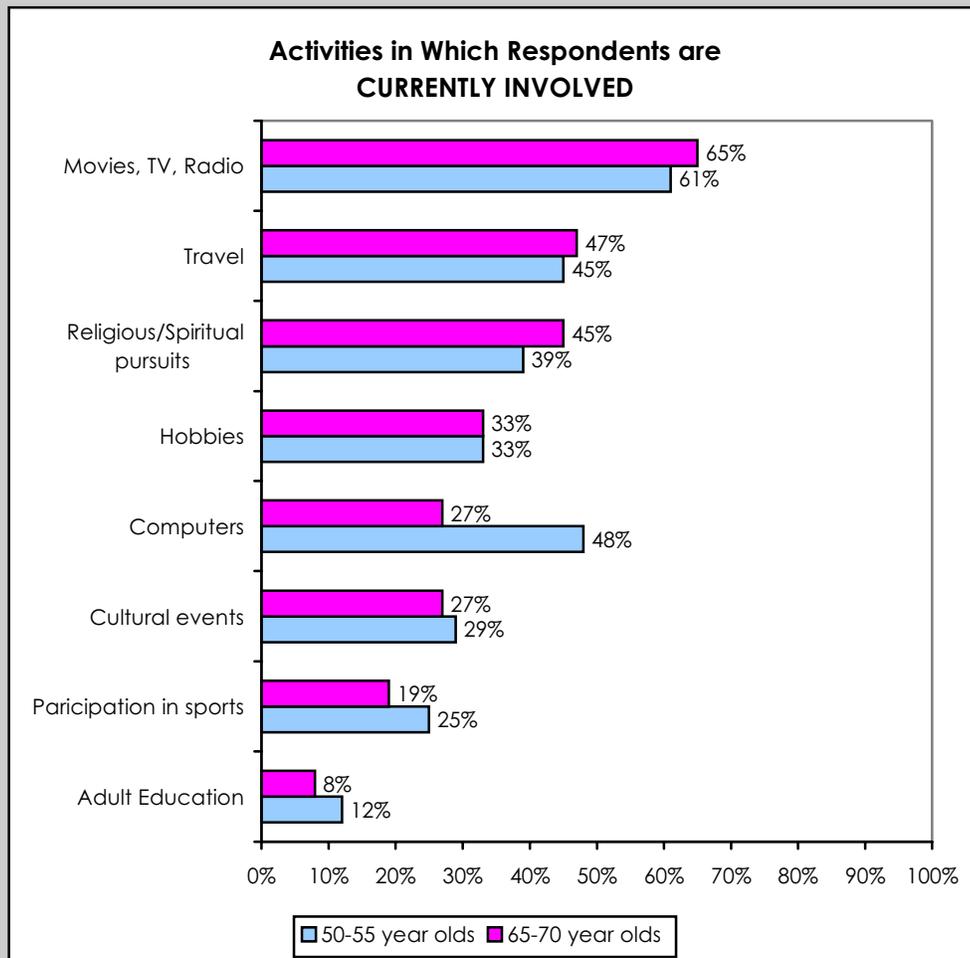
### Comparing Interests and Involvement of 50 – 55 year olds with 65 – 70 year olds

The Interest and Activity Survey included questions on both interests and activities in which 50 - 55 and 65 - 70 year old Ohioans participate.



The types of activities preferred by each of these age groups were often similar. A larger percentage of the 50 - 55 year olds identified nearly every activity as important. Significantly, computers and adult education were twice as important to this younger group. Movies, TV and radio, and religious activities were the only activities for which the 65 - 70 year old respondents reported greater preference than their younger counterparts.

The differences between the involvement in activities of 50 - 55 and 65 - 70 year olds were smaller with a few exceptions. The 50 - 55 year olds were more active in sports and eating out, and much more active in using computers. The 65 - 70 year olds were more active with religious activities and movies, television and radio. The small differences in activities between the groups may be mostly a function of free time. Those 50 - 55 are less likely to be retired so may not have

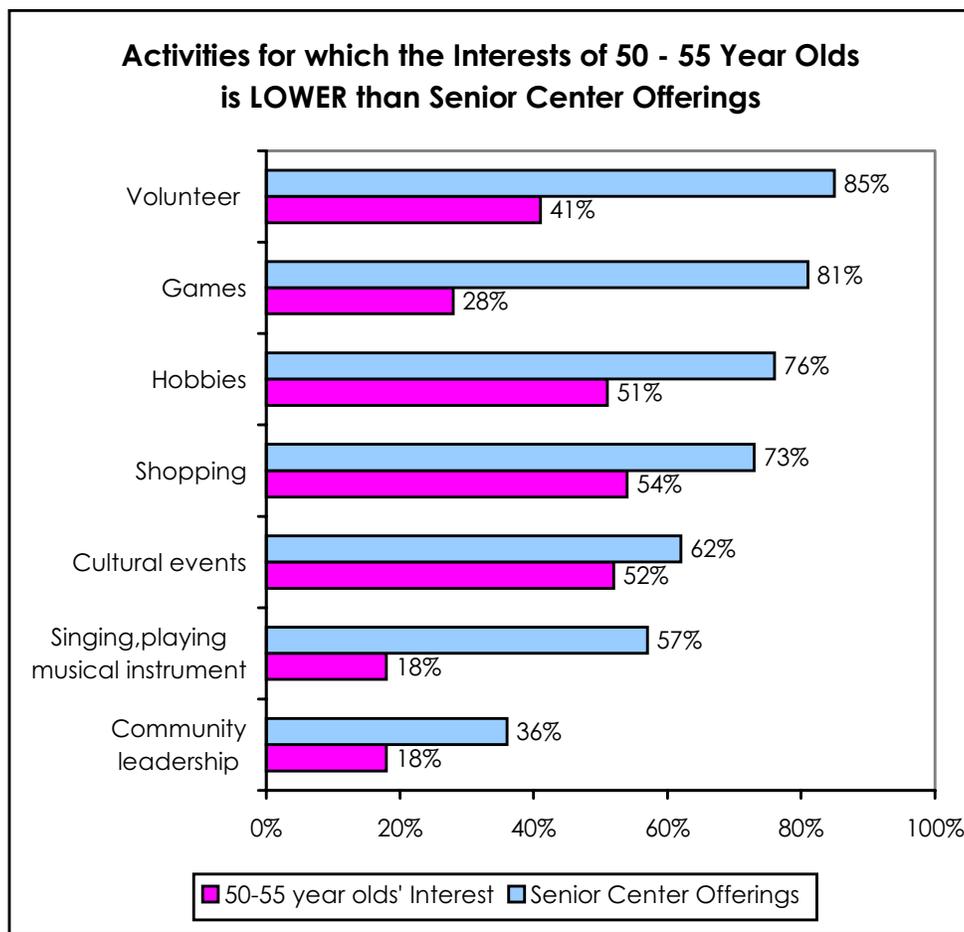


Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000

the time to enjoy activities which interest them. When available time is factored in, it is striking how much more active this younger group is in than those 65 - 70.

### Comparing Interests of 50 - 55 Year Olds to Senior Center Offerings

Large gaps exist between senior center offerings and the interests of those 50 - 55. Current senior center activities appear to be less desired by this population. The following chart highlights differences. For example, there is a large gap between offerings and interest in games and volunteering. There is a wide margin between senior center offerings and adult interest in singing or playing a musical instrument as well. While 60 percent of senior centers offered it as an activity, less than 20 percent of those 50 - 55 felt that it was important to them.



Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000

Conversely, a number of activities of interest to those 50 - 55 are not always offered at senior centers. Surprisingly, gardening was where we found the greatest disparity between interest levels of survey respondents and senior center offerings. Though not a conventional senior center activity and more often done in one's own backyard, it is worth looking at as a useful center activity in the future. Some centers indicated they were planning to build new facilities and

purchase of land for gardening might be a consideration in building plans. An added bonus of pursuing gardening at senior centers is that it is an activity preferred by 50 - 55 year olds that is not an isolating, individual or passive activity.

Religious activities were not a common activity in senior center programming. Perhaps adding transportation to religious activities will become an important consideration in the future.

It is striking that passive activities are of greater interest to 50 - 55 year olds. Those 50 - 55 enjoy watching sports although the survey showed greater interest in participating in sports and adult education. Both opportunities are easily within the scope of senior centers and could be a drawing card for seniors in the future.

***Significantly, computers and adult education were twice as important to those 50 - 55.***



***Large gaps exist between senior center offerings and the interests of those 50 - 55. For example, there is a large gap between offerings and interests in games and volunteering.***



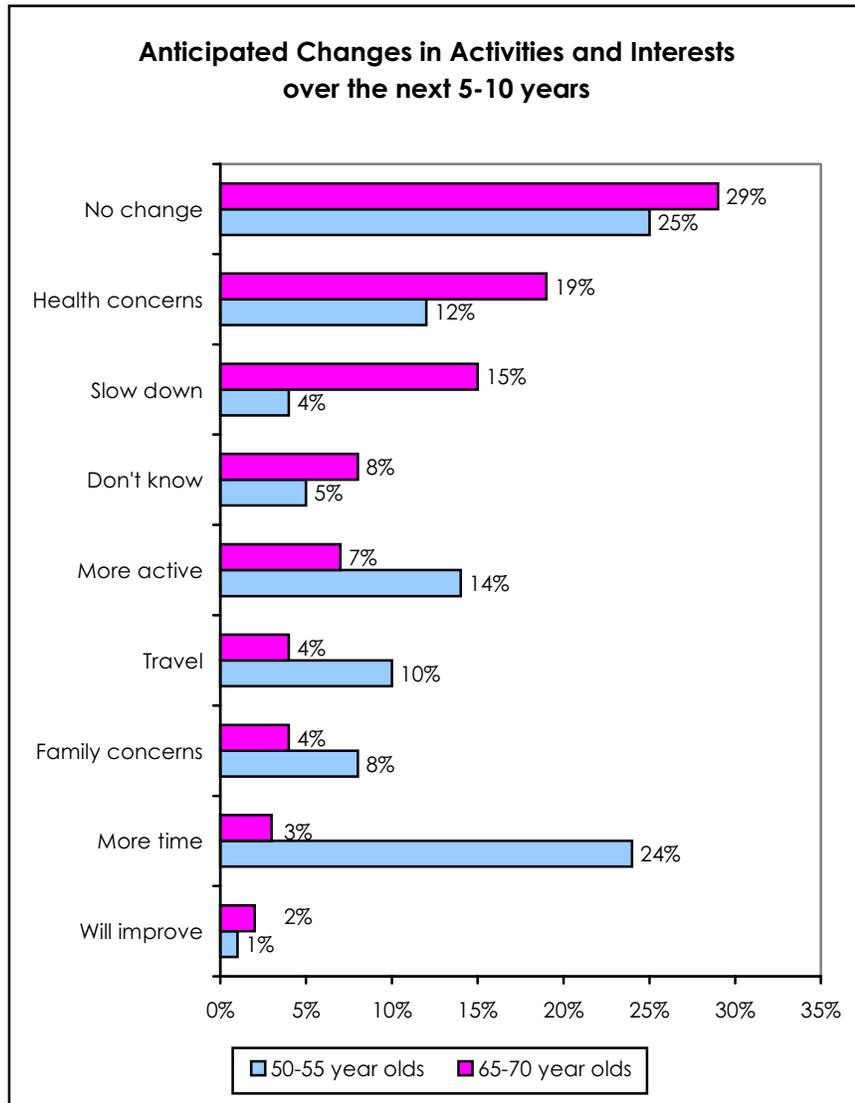
***Surprisingly, the greatest difference between interest levels of older adults and senior center offerings is gardening.***



### Expected Changes in Those 50 and Older

With a firmer picture of what activities interest our next generation of seniors and how they differ from previous preferences, the next question asked is

*How do you think your activities and interests will change over the next 5 to 10 years?*



Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000

Respondents, particularly the 50 - 55 year olds, expect to be as active if not more so in coming years. Only 4 percent expect to slow down. They say they intend to actively seek opportunities for socialization and entertainment in the future. As a corollary, health was a concern for both age groups.

To summarize: those 50 - 55 who were surveyed showed a broader range of interests than those 65 - 70. This younger group engaged in activities in greater numbers, even though they typically work full time. They are interested in more passive entertainment, but also have a greater interest in physical fitness and adult education than the 65 - 70 year olds.

Often activities available at senior centers do not match interests of a younger population that expects to be vital and active as they age. Senior centers must adapt to these changing interests to remain viable in the future.

### ***Participation in Organizations for those 50 and Older***

***Survey respondents were asked to list organizations with which they were currently involved.***

Because the Interest and Activity Survey used an open-ended question, percentages may not reflect everyone involved in these organizations, but answers reveal which types of organizations appeal to each age group. The 50 - 55 year old respondents were more likely to respond that they were not involved in any organizations than the 65 - 70 year olds. The younger group members are more likely to belong to fitness clubs, hobby-related clubs, and professional organizations.

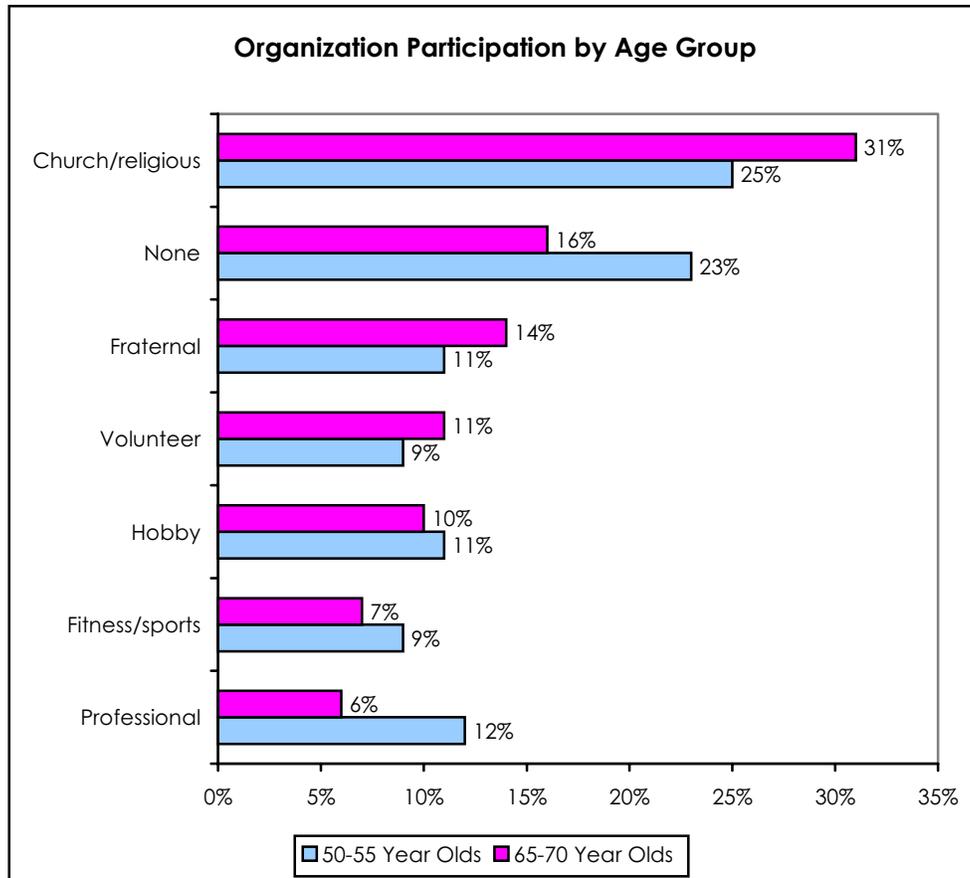
***50 - 55 year olds say they intend to actively seek opportunities for socialization and entertainment in the future.***



***The younger group members are more likely to belong to fitness clubs, hobby-related clubs, and professional organizations.***



This information can be interpreted in different ways. One might conclude those 50 - 55 have many interests, but do not need to fulfill those interests by joining organizations. On the other hand, those 50 - 55 are still active in careers and raising families, and simply may not have time for joining organizations.



Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000

### *What do you look for in an organization?*

Knowing what 50 - 55 year olds look for in organizations helps understand generational differences. Senior center directors and Interest and Activity Survey respondents concur on the top criteria Ohioans use to select an organization: to relax in a friendly environment, to be with people like themselves, and to maintain a challenging environment where they can grow and learn. Those 50 - 55 and those 65 - 70 share these three desires; however there are some differences in priority. The younger group wants opportunities to learn and serve, and to be recognized for good work. The older group is more likely to want to be with people like themselves, and to have a place to express their faith.

**Criteria for Joining Organizations Varies by Age**

<b>More Important to 50-55 Year Olds</b>	<b>More important to 65-70 Year Olds</b>
Opportunities to serve	People like myself
Opportunities to keep learning	Express faith
Leadership role	Relaxing, friendly environment
Place where accomplishments would be recognized	Good reputation
Use paid employment skills	

Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000

**Impressions of Senior Centers**

Here are questions that were asked:

- **50 - 55 year olds: Are there any centers in your area? Has anyone you know or someone in your family ever attended, or currently attends a senior center?**
- **65 - 70 year olds: Have you ever been to one of these senior centers? Have you or anyone you know ever attended, or currently attend a senior center?**

Two-thirds of those 50 - 55 are familiar with a local senior center, confirming that centers have reasonable visibility in their communities. Nearly 30 percent of those 65 - 70 have been to their center. Many also know someone who attended a center, and have personal contact with senior center participants. This indicates that impressions they have of senior centers come from first- or second-hand knowledge, and are not just general impressions.

A Butler County (Ohio) survey found that 56 percent of respondents were familiar with the centers in their county though only 4

**Familiarity with Senior Centers**

<b>Knowledge of or Attendance at a Senior Center</b>		
	<b>Knowledge of 50-55</b>	<b>Attendance 65-70</b>
Yes	66%	29%
No	6%	0%
No, but I know there where one is located	0%	55%
No not sure	0%	0%
Don't know	25%	0%

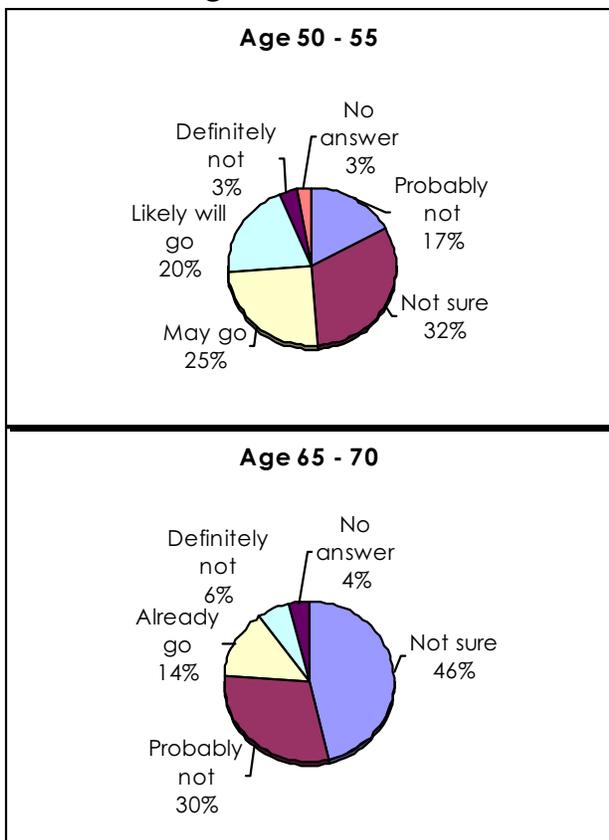
<b>You or Someone You Know Attended a Senior Center</b>		
	<b>50-55</b>	<b>65-70</b>
Myself		20%
Spouse		12%
Parent	30%	9%
Older relative	10%	43%
No one	46%	36%
Older friend	24%	0%
Grandparent	3%	0%

Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000

percent were members (*Butler County, 2000*). The Interest and Activity Survey did not ask if they were members, but only if they had ever gone to a senior center. The Butler County survey also found that persons already members of other organizations were more likely to know about senior centers as a social option by learning about it from other members, the media, friends and family. (*Butler County, 2000*).

The next questions on the Interest and Activity Survey were:

### Likelihood of Senior Center Participation Varies with Age



Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000

The two age groups were approached in a slightly different fashion. The 50 - 55 year old age group was asked, ***“Looking into the future, what could a senior center offer to attract you?”*** The 65 - 70 year olds were asked, ***“For those who participate in senior centers, why do you like to spend time there?”*** Response was low for both questions; however, more 50 - 55 year olds responded.

Those 50 - 55 years old indicated they would be attracted by companionship and educational opportunities, plus general activities including hobbies, games, and exercise facilities. But 11 percent said not much about a senior center would attract them.

- ***50 - 55 year olds: Based on your current impressions of senior centers, what is the likelihood that you will participate in a senior center in the future?***
- ***65 – 70 year olds: What is the likelihood that you will participate in a senior center?***

Almost half of those 50 - 55 are open to coming to senior centers in the future. Of those 65 - 70 that answered, nearly half are not sure, and more than 35 percent either probably or definitely will not attend a senior center. Since this age group was not asked if they “may go” to a senior center a comparison between the groups is less accurate.

Statewide and Butler County survey results show nearly 75 percent of those not members of a center expect to visit one sometime in the future (*Butler County, 2000*).

### ***What could a senior center offer to attract you?***

Respondents 65 - 70 who participated in senior centers said companionship was their main interest with education and exercise being a less common response for this group. Once again results confirm earlier findings that those 50 - 55 look for fitness opportunities and adult education more so than their 65 - 70 year old counterparts.

In Butler County, respondents 50 to 70 identified a range of activities and opportunities that would draw them to senior centers. Most reflect three major categories: meeting new people; learning new things; and participating in activities. Volunteerism was a popular choice as were staying healthy through exercise, check ups, health education and participation in support groups. More than half described themselves as very active and 24 percent had caregiving responsibilities (*Butler County, 2000*).

***What is it about a senior center that keeps or would keep you from going there?***

There were fewer responses to this open-ended question. Those 50 - 55 years old thought transportation issues or lack of a center nearby forestall their going to a center in the future. Health and a perception of people who attend senior centers also appears to be a barrier, as we will see in chapter 7. The type or mix of activities are less common reasons for not attending. On the contrary, 65 - 70 year olds said lack of time is their largest barrier to attending a center. Other interests, family and friends, and poor image are said to be reasons for not going to a center in their area.

Along with previous information, indications are that many of those 50 - 55 were open to coming to a senior center. They know others who have done so, and they suggest that given the right offerings they would come. This is tempered somewhat by the awareness that this group is less likely to join any organization.

**Reasons for Participation**

<b>Ranking by 50 - 55 year old adults</b>	<b>Ranking by 65 - 70 year old adults</b>
1. Friends	1. Friends
2. Education	2. General activities
3. Exercise	3. Exercise
4. General Activities	4. Education
5. Hobbies and games	5. Hobbies and games
6. Service	6. Food
7. Food	7. Service

Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000

**Reasons for Non-Participation**

<b>Ranking by 50 - 55 year old adults</b>	<b>Ranking by 65 - 70 year old adults</b>
1. Transportation or location of center	1. Lack of Time
2. Health	2. Other interests
3. Image that people are not like me	3. Image that people are not like me
4. Offerings	4. Family and friends
5. Family and friends	5. Don't need or not interested
6. Don't know	6. Transportation or location of center
	7. Offerings
	8. Personality (not a joiner)

Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000

***“To become an increasingly vital place for adults 55+ through a constant eye on what they want and at the same time taking care of the over 80 crowd. Must be willing to think outside the box and offer wider variety of activities.”***

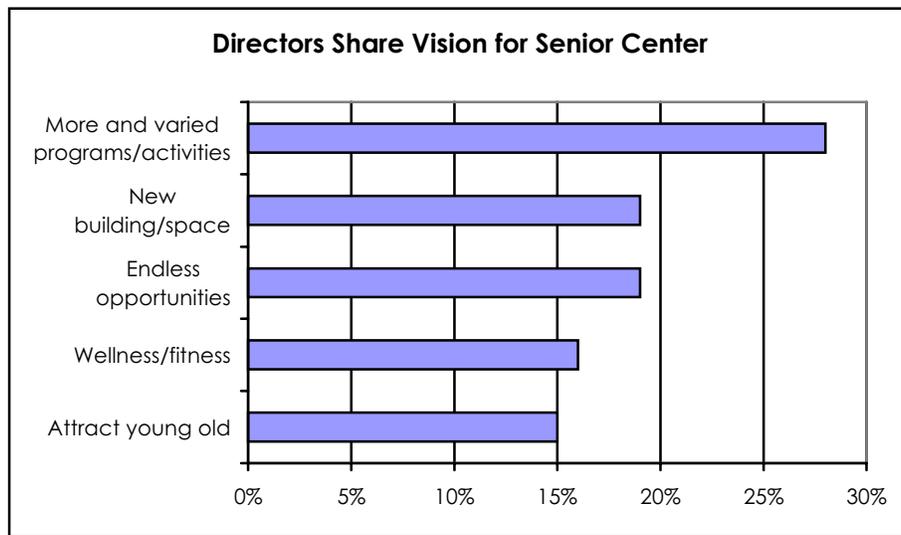
- Senior center vision statement

## Senior Center Efforts to Prepare for the Next Generation of Seniors

When senior center directors were asked about preparations for the future, increased funding and moving to new or better facilities topped their wish lists.

More and varied programming is needed to keep up with changing needs. Senior center professionals understand their potential customers are changing and are making plans to address these changes. A number of respondents mentioned attracting younger seniors, doing more on wellness, and bringing more computers into their centers as priorities.

Senior center directors, when asked to write a vision statement for their organizations, expressed a desire to address the needs of younger seniors as reflected by the chart below. It suggests centers are aware of future needs and changes, and are making plans to address this population.



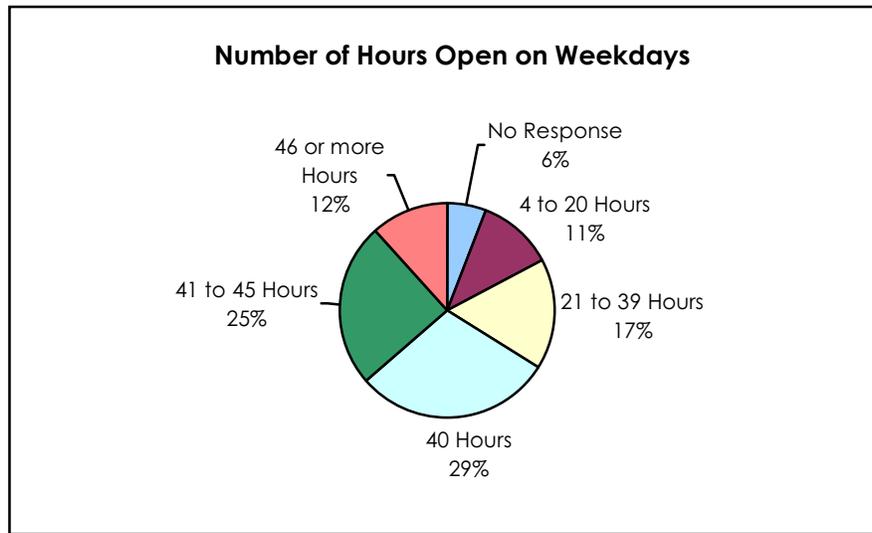
Source: ODA Senior Center Director Survey, 2001

The one thing centers can do now to attract more active seniors is to be open beyond typical working hours. A recent article confirms this need: “A recent poll of 2000 boomers conducted for the AARP reports that 80 percent of those surveyed plan to work at least part-time, either for the money or for self-expression, after they retire.” (Joyce, 1999). The Butler County study confirms, “Of those that still work, the reasons given were: interacting with others, they like the work, a desire to stay active and monetary reasons.” (Butler County, 2000).

With the recent change in federal law allowing Social Security recipients to work with no penalty, its likely that more of the seniors considered potential customers for senior centers are working.

**Hours of Operation**

Senior center directors were asked about current hours of operation. A very small number of centers are open outside of our typical (8-5) workday. Fewer than 15 percent are open more than 46 hours per week, and only 12 percent are open on weekends. Half of those operating on weekends are only open 2-5 hours. In Butler county, while daytime hours throughout the work week were preferred by respondents, nearly 30 percent would use the senior center during evening and weekend hours.



Source: ODA Senior Center Director Survey, 2001



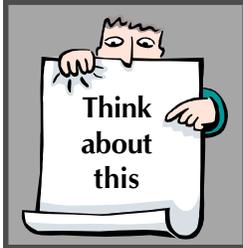
### **The Hithergreen Senior Center Story**

Serving Centerville and Washington Township, Ohio

The Hithergreen Senior Center of Centerville and Washington Township attracts more active and younger members. Their secret is to let members develop programs that interest them. "Our staff tries to stay out of the way and let our members be creative " says the director. The center is also committed to making programs self-supporting through fees, so they seek activities their members will support.

Gone are once popular potlucks and the breakfast club, both replaced by the "Lunch and More" speakers' program. Tuesday nights are for pinochle, bridge, and yoga, and for those interested in global issues, the center sponsors a "Great Decisions" program run by members weekly. The pilots' club established less than two years ago now has 90 members. The dulcimer club with 35 members busily builds instruments, regularly inviting the pre-school children in the building to hear their music and practice with them using spoons and dancing. During the warmer weather, the Pedaling Pals sponsor bicycle rides to nearby attractions such as the Fort Ancient Historical site.

The center is also reaching out to other organizations for programming. For example, it worked with the Centerville-Washington Township Historical Society to hold an annual Antique Appraisal Day and conduct a Trash and Treasure Sale in spring. As a result of such outreach, the nearby Washington Township Recreation Center offers a special rate for center members to use its swimming pool, and for music lovers the Dayton Philharmonic makes season tickets available through the center.



## Implications for Senior Centers

Overall, information in this chapter suggests senior centers need to work to prepare for baby boomers. While many offerings at senior centers interest up and coming seniors, there are also many interests not being addressed. While no one is suggesting that senior centers must stop offering what they now do, some of them may simply need a new emphasis – for example, music and games to more closely reflect this population’s interests. In some cases, and given scarce resources, a center may need to make hard choices about whom they should attract and what will interest that target population.

Beyond a need to look at offerings, senior centers must also be aware of a dwindling interest on the part of prospects to belong to any organization. While this does not mean senior centers will become obsolete, it suggests senior centers have to re-think how they do business. They may need to be more open to offerings that do not take place at the center. Many baby boomers tell of concerns about getting to a center, or a center not being located near their residence. This challenge may be met by moving more activities out into the community. Baby boomers also may not want to “join” a senior center, but may prefer attending specific events that interest them.

Operating hours continue to be an issue as well. Survey results suggest centers are aware of the need to reach younger seniors, and many are beginning to take steps to doing so. However few regularly open their doors at times when working older Ohioans can attend. This will be one of many important steps to prepare for the future.

Respecting the social norms of each generation, and appreciating what is important to each presents a unique challenge to make senior centers attractive across the generations. When what is attractive to succeeding generations is exactly opposite, to some degree it will be necessary to choose a target to market, fully recognizing their choice may keep other populations away.

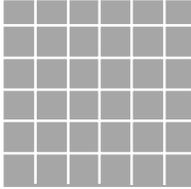
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## NCOA's "Senior Centers in America: A Blueprint for the Future" Recommendations

**Programming must be culturally sensitive** and based upon the prerequisite identified in previous research on serving diverse populations: a planning process that includes those who will be served, ethnic/diverse staff, appropriate location of the center, and adequate transportation.

Promote **intercultural sensitivity training** in senior centers to enhance mutual understanding and respect among different cultural groups.

Create **sensitivity programs** in senior centers **to promote understanding of persons with disabilities**.

Develop **programs that are specific to the ethnic and linguistic groups** within a multi-ethnic center. At the same time, develop programs that encourage interactions among diverse populations, that emphasize commonalities, and that promote exchange of ideas as well as an understanding of differences.

Develop **joint planning with units and agencies that serve populations with mental health problems, mental retardation, and developmental disabilities** to serve the elderly in these populations appropriately.

Design senior center **programs based on participants' ability levels**. Older Americans have a wide range of characteristics and experience.

Develop and implement programs that **promote a positive image of a diverse senior center population**, contributing to their community.

In developing of policy, funding, and roles of senior centers, planners should recognize the **special role played by rural senior centers**. Rural centers may be the only available resource to area elders and , as such, need to have the flexibility and support to serve the diverse needs of these elders.

Planners for the traditional senior center model must address changing senior demographics and **continue targeting monies and services to those with special needs related to low income and minority status**. We further recommend trying to **include seniors outside traditional target groups to ensure equal participation by all strata of society**. Such diversification would enrich the experiences of all participants and possibly generate income from upper income senior who could pay on a fee-for-service basis.

### What to Look for in this Chapter

1. Older adults and baby boomers are looking for organizations with people like themselves and which are relaxed, friendly places to be.
2. Centers that serve low-income clients offer more in-home services while those serving higher income older adults offer more social and recreational opportunities.
3. Rural, urban, and suburban centers offer many of the same kinds of activities, but rural centers offer fewer cultural activities and participatory sports.
4. Men and women express similar interests in activities such as travel and hobbies, but more men report interests in sports and more women prefer reading, religious activities, and shopping.
5. Many senior centers are actively seeking ways to expand their programming to attract older adults from throughout their communities.



## Introduction

The theme running through NCOA Blueprint recommendations is that of cultural diversity. This includes the need to recognize the full diversity within a community and to be aware there are very different needs in each community across the state. Diversity encompasses gender, income, education, geography, level of disability and ethnic differences. Rural, urban, and suburban centers each have unique populations and needs.

Diversity can be seen two ways:

- A heterogeneous senior center population that serves the many diverse groups within the same center. This can be a difficult issue to confront.
- A uniquely homogeneous senior center population that serves unique ethnic and cultural populations of their community. In these instances, the unique populations make up a large portion of the community, and centers may still be serving a relatively homogeneous group. This is especially relevant for rural, suburban and urban centers and those uniquely ethnic centers serving a primarily Hispanic or Asian populace.

While many of the NCOA Blueprint recommendations address heterogeneous senior center populations, this chapter also explores the challenge of serving unique homogeneous populations.

## The Challenge of Diversity: A desire to be with others like themselves

What is the challenge of diversity and its impact upon senior centers? Perhaps the reason senior centers have been successful is they bring like-minded people together. To find out more, Interest and Activity Survey respondents and senior center directors were asked these questions:

***Interest and Activity Survey Respondents: When you're deciding whether or not to join an organization, what do you look for?***

***Senior Center Directors: What do you think are important concerns or issues for older people when they consider participation in an organization?***

### Reasons People Join

	<b><i>Interest &amp; Activity Survey Respondents Opinion</i></b>	<b><i>Senior Center Directors' Perception</i></b>
Be with people much like myself	57%	67%
Be with people different than myself	9%	5%
Relax in a friendly, comfortable environment	57%	80%
Challenge myself to keep growing, learning	45%	50%

Sources: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000, and ODA Senior Center Director Survey, 2001

There are several interesting things to take from these results. First, a major goal people have when joining an organization is to be with people like themselves. Too much diversity may be a detraction at a center, if not handled in a way that shows the common interests of all participants.

Second, while most survey respondents prefer to be with people like themselves, senior center directors believe this to a greater extent than does the general public. This would suggest that seniors are more open to diversity than directors believe.

However, when the Interest and Activity Survey was looked at by those who attend senior centers compared to those who don't, 75 percent of the former reported wanting to be with people like themselves. Those drawn to a center may be seeking out a place with homogeneity more than those who do not attend senior centers.

### Senior Center Participants Value Homogeneity More

	<b><i>50-55 Year Old Adults</i></b>	<b><i>65-70 Year Old Adults</i></b>	<b><i>Current Senior Center Participant</i></b>
Be with people much like myself	54%	60%	75%
Be with people different than myself	10%	8%	11%
Challenge myself to keep growing, learning	49%	43%	46%

Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000



When comparing responses from the 50 - 55 year old group to the 65 - 70 group, the younger are less concerned about being around people like themselves, and more open to being around people who are different. They are more interested in organizations that help them grow and learn, suggesting a greater interest in diversity. Still more than half of this younger group do seek out people like themselves. Again, the need to be inclusive must be handled in a way that welcomes all. The desire to be around people like

ourselves is not confined to any one part of the state - rural, suburban, and urban adults all responded in a similar fashion.

In the same vein, both directors and Interest and Activity Survey respondents were asked why people would not come to senior centers. Questions were as follows:

Questions	Results
<i>What do you think would keep you from using a senior center when you are older? (50-55 year olds)</i>	12% commented that "people there are not like me" (third most common response)
<i>What is it about a senior center that keeps you from going there? If you do participate in senior center activities, tell us what you think keeps people from going. (65-70 year olds)</i>	15% commented that "people there are not like me" (again third most common response)
<i>In your opinion what are the three most common barriers that keep older adults from going to a Senior Center? (Directors)</i>	49% mentioned negative image of senior centers (number one reason given by Directors)

Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000, and ODA Senior Center Director Survey, 2001

These open-ended questions invited people to write whatever thoughts they had. Percentages are lower as a result, but trends are similar to those found with the previous question. While

people previously responded that they desire to be around others like themselves, here a major reason given for not attending senior centers is that the people who do are different.

Fully 14 percent of all Interest and Activity Survey respondents (50 - 55 and 65 - 70 year olds combined) report no interest in joining a senior center because of the image of a senior center that people there were “not like me.” Another 6 percent reported no interest because of their own personality, many claiming to not be outgoing or not liking large groups of people.

When asked what barriers kept older adults from their centers, half of all directors mentioned image. Although image can mean many things, part of the issue is the perception that people who attend centers are “different than me.”

## Serving Economically Diverse Populations

Despite these challenges, senior center directors that responded to the survey serve diverse needs that exist within their communities. The following table points out that while centers may serve people of primarily one economic background, most maintain a mix of economic backgrounds at their center. Nearly 20 percent of those in centers serving low-income customers are, in fact, middle or high-income clients. Similarly, centers that serve high-income clients also serve 20 percent who are low income or below poverty.

### Estimated Income Status of Senior Center Participants

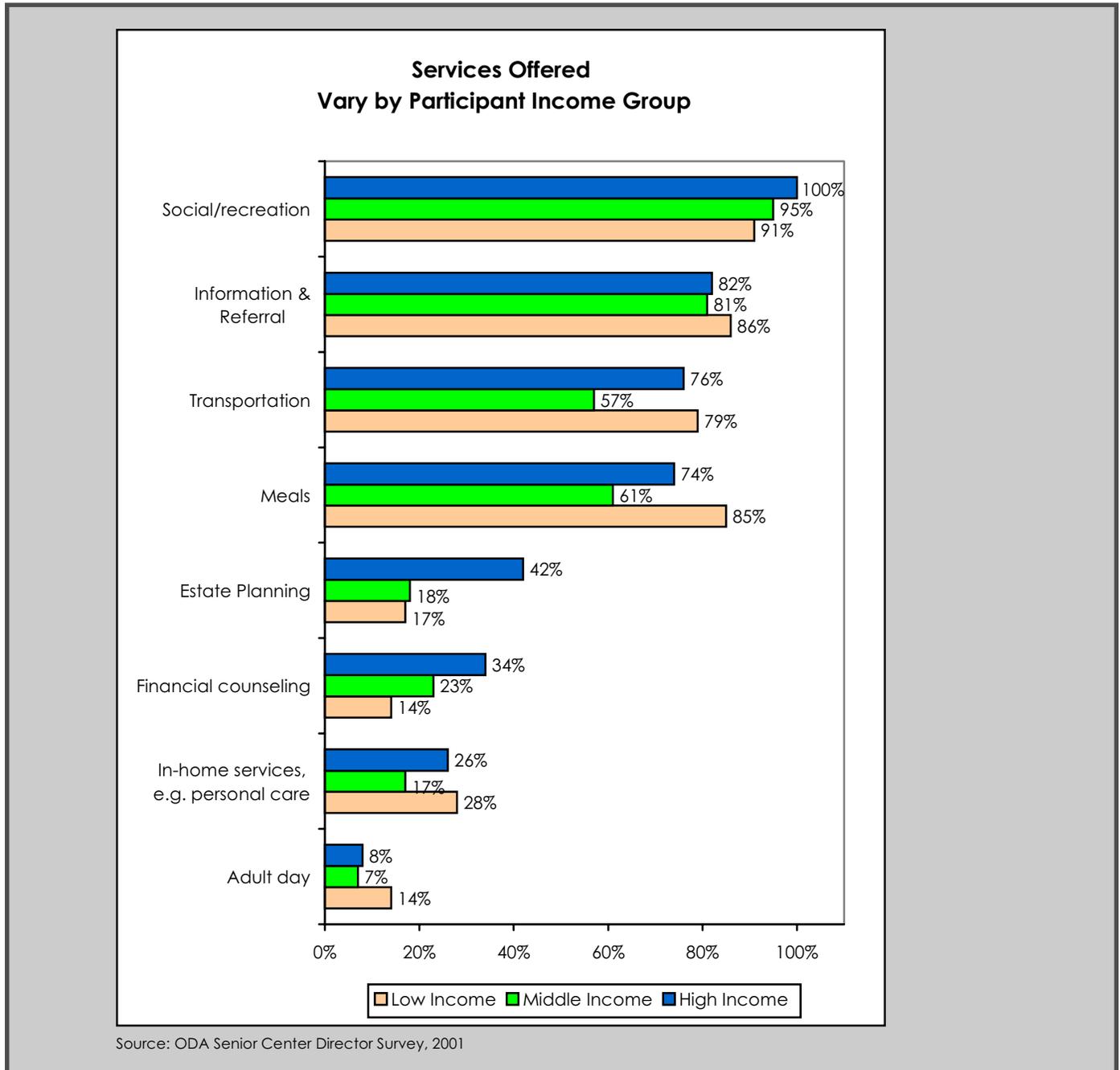
	Centers that serve primarily <b>low income</b> clients	Centers that serve primarily <b>middle income</b> clients	Centers that serve a significant number of <b>high income</b> clients
Percent of <b>below poverty</b> clients	25%	5%	4%
Percent of <b>low income</b> clients	55%	22%	16%
Percent of <b>middle income</b> clients	15%	65%	42%
Percent of <b>high income</b> clients	4%	7%	38%

Source: ODA Senior Center Director Survey, 2001

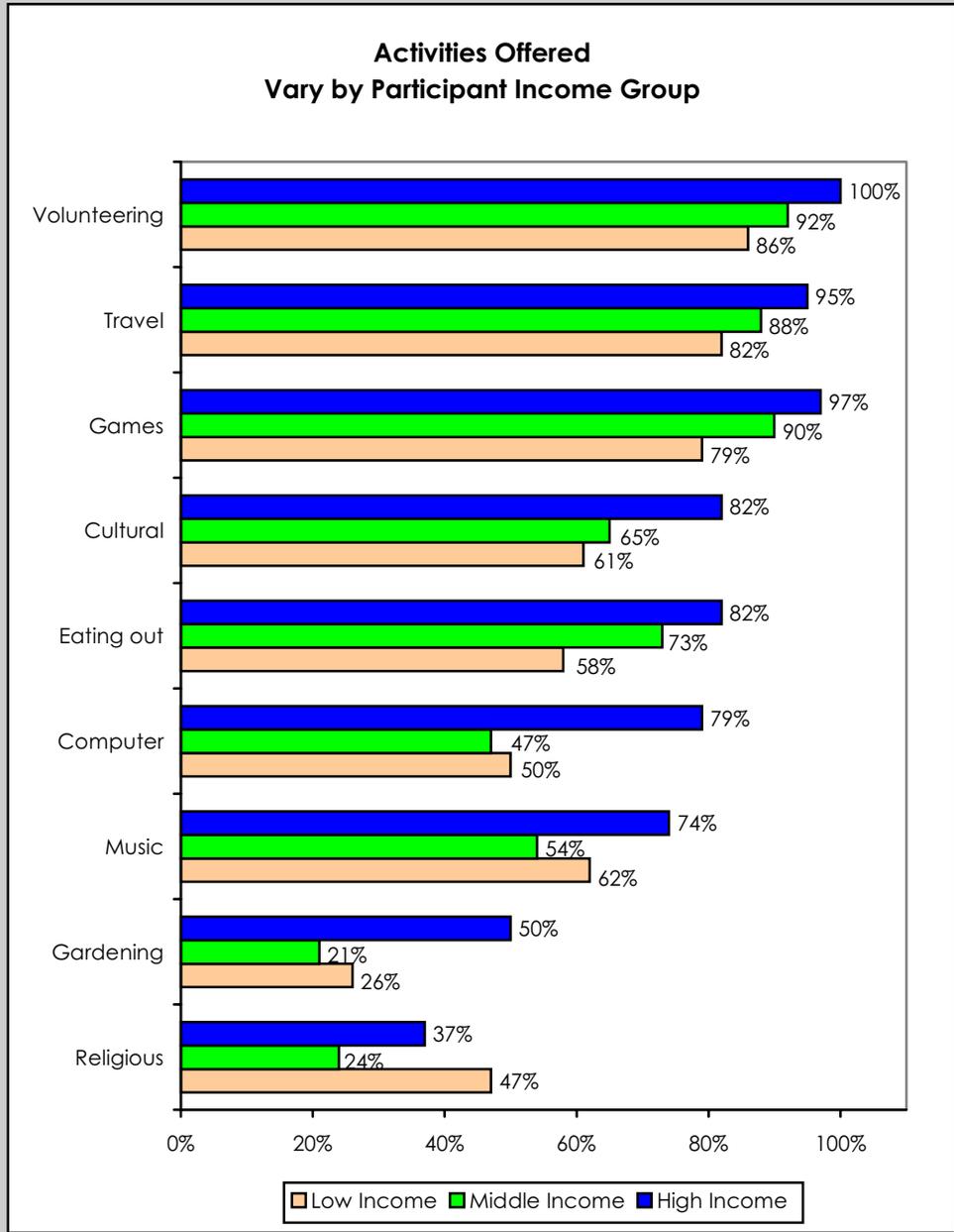
Suburban centers on average serve more than 30 percent of clients who are low income, while urban centers offer services to 37 percent of their clients who are middle or high income.

As noted there are two ways of looking at diversity. So how well do senior centers address the unique social and cultural needs in their communities? While our Interest and Activity Survey did not collect information on ethnicity or income, senior center directors were asked to report the percent of clients in each of the four income categories above. We also collected data on geography of the client and the center – rural, suburban, and urban comparisons.

Centers that serve a majority of low-income older adults provide more in-home services, such as personal care, home delivered meals, transportation, and adult day services. Centers that serve more high-income older adults offer more social and recreational opportunities, more estate planning and financial counseling. In general, this suggests centers are sensitive to the needs of those they serve.



Similarly, in terms of activities offered, “high-income” centers consistently offer more activities, with the rare exception of religious activities. Those serving more low-income older adults, however, offer a number of activities not currently offered to middle-income older adults, such as gardening, music, and computers.



Source: ODA Senior Center Director Survey, 2001



## Serving Culturally Diverse Populations

There are many sub-populations in Ohio. To understand how Ohio's senior centers respond to cultural differences, one must look at how centers respond to the unique needs of urban, rural and suburban residents. How closely do senior centers services match the interests of their given population? We asked of senior center directors:

***Please check all activities or opportunities from the following list that are available through your Senior Center***

Overall, senior centers - rural, suburban, and urban - provide many of the same offerings.

We asked adults aged 50 - 55 and 65 - 70:

### Senior Center Offerings by Region

	Rural Centers	Suburban Centers	Urban Centers
Volunteering	85%	88%	86%
Games: bridge, billiards, etc	79%	84%	86%
Travel: for example, films, tours, day trips	77%	86%	86%
Hobbies: creative arts, crafts, antiques, etc	76%	77%	78%
Fitness activities: aerobics, treadmill, walking, etc.	73%	73%	77%
Shopping	73%	70%	78%
Movies, television, radio	61%	61%	74%
Eating out	60%	70%	68%
Singing, playing musical instruments	58%	53%	61%
Reading, library services	57%	72%	63%
Access to cultural events: theatre, museums, etc	49%	73%	76%
Relaxing, listening to music	47%	47%	55%
Computers, Internet	43%	63%	53%
Religious or spiritual pursuits	34%	22%	46%
Participatory sports	28%	42%	32%
Ways for members to assume community leadership	27%	48%	41%
Gardening	32%	31%	20%
Spectator sports	30%	44%	19%
Adult or continuing education classes	31%	42%	18%

Source: ODA Senior Center Director Survey, 2001

*We'd like to know about your interests and what keeps you from being as involved as you would like to be. Place checks in the ...columns to indicate if the activity is important to you...*

In general, senior centers across the state offer programming more like each other than in response to the interests of older adults. Volunteering, games and hobbies, offered by a high percentage of senior centers, are not high on the interest scale of Interest and Activity Survey respondents. Across the board eating out, reading, going to movies, relaxing or listening to music, and gardening were higher on the interest scale of survey respondents but lower on the scale of senior center offerings. Respondents showed a high interest in travel and fitness activities and senior centers were keeping pace with these interests.



### Respondents' Interests Differ from Senior Center Offerings

	Rural Respondents	Suburban Respondents	Urban Respondents
Volunteering	36%	40%	36%
Games: bridge, billiards, etc.	26%	27%	29%
Travel	73%	81%	78%
Hobbies: creative arts, crafts, antiques, etc.	52%	47%	43%
Fitness activities: aerobics, treadmill, walking, etc.	62%	74%	67%
Shopping	56%	56%	54%
Movies, television, radio	78%	75%	79%
Eating out	79%	79%	76%
Singing, playing a musical instrument	18%	17%	18%
Reading	75%	78%	74%
Cultural events: theater, museums, etc.	34%	53%	50%
Relaxing, listening to music	62%	61%	64%
Computers, Internet	39%	53%	48%
Religious or spiritual pursuits	57%	57%	56%
Participation in sports: bowling, golf, softball, etc.	29%	36%	33%
Community leadership	14%	16%	15%
Gardening	60%	58%	52%
Spectator sports	38%	44%	40%
Adult or continuing education classes	22%	30%	30%

Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000

**Rural Findings**

- Rural adults show a far greater interest in eating out, movies, reading, relaxing or listening to music, gardening, religious pursuits, and spectator sports than what the senior centers offered in rural regions.
- Rural adults show less interest in volunteering, singing or playing musical instruments, or hobbies than what most centers offered.

**Suburban Findings**

- Like their rural cohorts, approximately three-quarters of suburban adults enjoy eating out, reading, and watching movies or television or listening to the radio. More than half of the suburban adults that responded to the Interest and Activity Survey enjoy relaxing or listening to music, gardening and religious pursuits. Suburban centers were more likely to meet the customers preference than rural centers, although there are still gaps between interest and offerings. As in rural areas, there is a disparity between an interest in gardening and senior center offerings.
- Travel was most important to suburban respondents. Suburban centers also appear to be meeting the demand for computers and Internet services.
- Suburban adults seem less interested in hobbies, volunteering, games, singing or playing musical interests, and community leadership opportunities than senior center offerings. Although suburban respondents show the greatest interest in cultural activities, senior centers offered these activities still more than the level of reported interest.

**Urban Findings**

- Urban adults share many interests with their counterparts in suburban and rural areas: movies, television, radio, travel, eating out, reading, relaxing or listening to music, and religious pursuits. Like their suburban counterparts, urban centers are more apt to meet the interest needs of their community because activities offered tend to parallel, but not quite match, interest levels of urban adults.
- There are disparities between urban center activities and interest for a number of activities. While many senior centers offer hobbies, opportunities to volunteer, games, and singing or playing musical instruments, less than half to less than one-third of urban adults express an interest in them.

## Gender Differences In Activities and Organizations

### *Interests and Activities*

Men and women are socialized early in life as to activities that are expected to interest them. But in the recent past, there have been shifts with more women interested in traditional male activities such as sports and more men enjoying traditional female activities such as cooking. Perhaps in the future there will be fewer gender-based differences in activities.

There are many similarities in interests and activities among men and women fifty and older. They are equally likely to be interested in travel and almost as likely to enjoy hobbies according to our Interest and Activity Survey. Men do express greater interest in both spectator and participatory sports than women. Women express greater interest in reading, religious activities, and, true to the stereotype, shopping.

When asked about interests which they would like to “learn more about in the next 10 years,” men’s choices were specific and utilitarian – things they can use! Eight of every ten men say they want to learn about specific community resources. Sixty to seventy percent want to know about estate planning, legal issues, handling finances, and the aging process. Even more men than women want to know about caregiving. Women, on the other hand, want to learn about communicating with family.

### *Involvement in Organizations*

Women are more likely than men to belong to “any” organization. The Interest and Activity Survey shows men are more likely to join fraternal organizations than are women (18 percent to 8 percent). One-third of women report they belong religious organizations compared to 23 percent of male respondents.

When considering organizations, men and women look for “people like myself” and a “place with a relaxed and friendly environment.” Half of the women also report looking for a “place to grow” and a quarter wanted an organization in which they could express their faith. These were not high on men’s list.

Men were less inclined to join a senior center than were women (22 percent to 13 percent). One of every three respondents were not sure they would join a senior center. Responding to what



would attract them to a senior center, men and women mention friends and companionship (13 percent to 10 percent). Women were more likely than men to be interested in educational programs, exercise, and hobbies.

### Vision Statements that Embrace the Entire Senior Community

"We see ourselves as the "center" for the entire community of seniors."

"Being the only senior center in a rural county, we are like an oasis in the sand, a place where you can go and be an equal to get information, education, socialization and recreation."

"A place known to all older adults in the community as a warm, welcoming place accommodated to their abilities, where they can make friends and get help suited to their needs."

"To continue being there for people. To treat them with respect and love."

"To grow in unity, excitement, as well as in numbers."

### Senior Center Plans to Address Diversity

Many senior centers know they need to better address diversity, and are actively considering ways to meet the needs of their entire communities. Senior center directors were asked:

*In a sentence or two, describe your vision of your Senior Center in the future.*

A general response was to add more and varied programs and activities, something mentioned by more than one-quarter of all respondents. Another 14 percent state they wish to be a resource for all older adults, and 14 percent want to expand membership in their community. One director said:

"I would like to create a center that could provide friendly services - *where all feel welcome*. I plan to have the basic to the complex - a quiet place to knit and chat, also a computer area, library, book discussions, astronomy..."

While some want to broaden their appeal, other centers recognize they served a specific niche, and either don't believe they can or want to serve a broader population. The following quote underscores how some view their situation:

"Our services are limited to the very elderly, most poverty stricken, neediest because of limited funding opportunities and lack of government support."

"I see our center providing social services including meals and transportation not only to our low-income clients but also reaching out to higher income seniors who can pay for services when they need them. We want to be a resource for all older persons."



## The Hispanic Senior Center Story

Cleveland, Ohio

The Hispanic Senior Center in Cleveland, established in 1984, is a place where ethnic values are embraced and preserved, a place where traditional foods are served and the language and music are familiar.

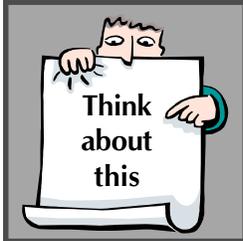
This center, located on the main floor of a high rise assisted living facility, serves an almost exclusively Hispanic population, most of whom live in surrounding neighborhoods. Eighty percent of participants use the center's transportation, in part due to language barriers posed by public transportation.

Meals prepared on site follow menus developed by participants. Religious services are accessible in a small on-site chapel. The center's participants enjoy Spanish language movies and videos, and can use translation services and literacy programs. Two outreach workers are advocates who help members access services and make home visits.

Intergenerational and cultural programming is successful at this center. Seventh and eighth graders learning Spanish visit the center to practice their new language skills. Recently, visiting artists from Puerto Rico guided older adults and youth through development of a theatre production. Young artists have created a wall mural depicting the history of Hispanic immigration in the United States.

The center is part of Catholic Charities Services Corporation, a faith-based, non-profit organization. In the director's opinion, one barrier that keeps older adults from participating in the senior center is lack of a culturally diverse staff. Limited space and financial resources restrict the health and fitness activities, needed by a population with a higher incidence of diabetes. Lack of space inhibits relaxing, listening to music, singing, or playing an instruments without disrupting others.

Shifts in the family structure contribute to under-utilization of the center's resources. Adult children move to the suburbs, leaving the older family members behind. Likewise, the traditional role of hispanic women has changed; they work, too, to support families, so leaving no one is at home to look after the young children except the grandparents. A place like the Hispanic Senior Center can help address issues that, unfortunately, are not unique to this community.

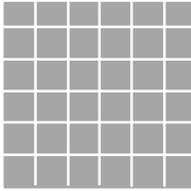


## Implications for Senior Centers

Many NCOA Blueprint recommendations express the need for senior centers to serve their diverse communities. Our findings tell us that many baby boomers and older adults seek out places that are homogeneous, and some will not attend senior centers because they perceive other center participants as different from themselves. Senior centers face balancing the tension between offering diverse activities to attract new members and those activities favored by currently active senior center participants.

There is evidence that senior centers meet diverse needs in their communities, especially in terms of serving economically diverse consumers. Senior centers in Ohio offer a wide range of services and activities that appeal to a great many of those currently eligible to attend senior centers.

To continue to meet the needs of older adults, senior centers need to look at the interests of its aging population and tailor activities to match these interests. In particular, rural, suburban and urban centers should look at the unique interests of their communities and diversify offerings even more than at present. This does not forestall senior centers from offering opportunities to volunteer, play games or have space for hobbies, which appeal to one-quarter to one-half of Survey respondents. The differences in priorities between adults and senior centers signal that to grow senior centers will need to better understand the needs of their potential consumers.



## NCOA's "Senior Centers in America: A Blueprint for the Future" Recommendations

Programming will need to be both **intergenerational** and **multigenerational**, focusing on the interdependence of the generations and recognizing the increasing number of grandparents raising grandchildren, the problem of managing a "cluttered nest" (return of the adult child with the grandchildren), and how to minimize the conflicts that arise when adult children and their aging parents do not agree on life transitions or decisions affecting the family. In addition, the new senior center needs to recognize its important contribution as a resource to the community, enhancing older participants' transmission of the cultural heritage and helping to ease younger persons' transition to old age.

### ***Intergenerational program recommendations:***

- Political activism regarding voter education (i.e., programs like Kid Vote.)
- Intergenerational immunization programs
- Intergenerational health, wellness, promotion and disease prevention programs.
- Grandparents parenting grandchildren
- Celebration of diversity – "salad vs. melting pot"
- Volunteer service credits program, and
- DARE for Seniors.

Senior centers should develop common definitions of "intergenerational" that cut across all generations and cohorts.

Senior centers are community focal points and therefore should function as catalysts for the coordination and/or provision of intergenerational programs in the community.

As community focal points, senior centers must encourage the use of intergenerational programs and market them as cost-effective measures to address such issues as grandparents raising grandchildren, children at risk, and adult children of aging parents.

Senior centers must establish partnerships with other traditional and non-traditional groups to provide community solutions for all age groups.

### ***Intergenerational funding***

- Fees for service for specific and ongoing events
- In-kind partnerships with community colleges, corporations, agencies, foundations, police and fire departments, and emergency medical technicians.
- Increasing the positive image of aging and intergenerational programs through education of the media at all levels.

### What to Look for in this Chapter

1. More than half of the centers offer intergenerational programming, but it is not a primary focus for the centers.
2. Most centers offer volunteer activities such as mentoring youth and educational programs on family communication skills.
3. Family obligations such as childcare for grandchildren keep some older adults from coming to senior centers.
4. Intergenerational programs offer many positive benefits for older adults including making new friends and learning new skills.



## Introduction

Intergenerational opportunities at senior centers can be seen as two general categories: formal opportunities (specific events sponsored to bring older and younger members of a community together), and informal opportunities (such as those available when a senior center is connected to a community center). This chapter explores formal and informal intergenerational opportunities.

## Desire for Intergenerational Community

A question in focus groups with older Ohioans asked about their level of interest in intergenerational activities.

Interest in intergenerational activities was mostly favorable in these group discussions. In general, older adults are more likely to speak positively about much younger folks like grandchildren, and express an interest in involving them occasionally in center activities.

There was some mixed sentiment about blending age groups. As we heard in the Interest and Activity Survey, some focus group participants specifically said senior centers attract them for the opportunity to be with folks like themselves. They showed disinterest, even fear, about having older children, like mid- and high-schoolers around. Others explained how caring for grandchildren limited their involvement with a senior center.



### Seniors in Schools Program

The Seniors in Schools Program was funded in 1997 through a grant from the Corporation for National and Volunteer Service. Volunteers from the Meigs County Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) are assigned to teach Meigs County history in one of the fourteen third grade classrooms throughout the three local school districts. The volunteers are helping the children develop more accurate and positive attitudes toward aging and learning more about the history of their community.

- Senior center innovative practice

Some spoke of the need to change the “ageist” beliefs of younger persons, and even said they would enjoy projects to make younger people aware of all that older adults do. One senior citizens group produced a skit about medications for a nursing class at the local high school; another group of retired teachers taught fifth graders about local history. Older volunteers were surprised at how much students were interested. One commented “If they don’t come to us, then sometimes we have to take it to them.”

In general, those who attended focus groups reported:

- Seniors are generally “for” intergenerational activities but if they were housed in a community center, they wished to preserve a space of their own.
- Community centers could help care for grandchildren, an activity some say limits their opportunities for involvement with senior centers.
- Community centers and intergenerational activities would help break down barriers between generations and eliminate ageist ideas.
- By virtue of their life experiences which broaden their views, older persons are likely the catalysts for intergenerational interaction. Older adults should be the ones to initiate contact with younger members of the community.



**“The senior centers of the future are the McDonalds of today. Retirees drinking their senior coffees, watching the children in the playlands while checking up on the young adults. At the same time they are socializing with their peers.”**

- Senior center vision statement

## Current Formal Intergenerational Opportunities

Our directors’ survey found:

- 55 percent of senior centers offer intergenerational programming.
- 85 percent offer volunteer opportunities (some mentoring younger generations).
- 28 percent offer communication and relationship skills with family and friends, including grandchildren

When asked about innovative practices, 11 percent described intergenerational programs currently in place at their center. Clearly, centers are providing opportunities, since intergenerational activities were the fifth most common practice mentioned.

However, when centers were asked in a sentence or two to describe the vision of their senior center in the future, only 5 percent mentioned intergenerational activities.

## Current Informal Opportunities

Asked whether they were a stand-alone organization or part of a larger organization, half of the respondents report having a parent organization. Fifteen were part of a community center, and another four are a part of a neighborhood house. Many also report being part of a recreation department. In this number are some centers that are housed with other recreational facilities. Some, such as the Cleveland Heights senior center, have just moved into a newly remodeled community center.

While still a small number, more senior centers may benefit from co-locating with other community organizations. In our Interest and Activity Survey we asked Ohioans 65 - 70 years old:

***What is it about a senior center that keeps you from going there? If you do participate in senior center activities, tell us what you think keeps people from going.***

While this is another open-ended question and the percent may be lower, 14 percent of respondents report that time with family keeps them from coming to senior center. This significant

confirmation of the value of personal time with loved ones was the fourth most common response.

We asked in the Senior Center Director Survey:

***In your community, what are the most significant sources of competition for your center for the time and attention of older adults at this time?***

Seven percent said that families and caregiving responsibilities were their competition. As the sixth most common response, time spent with family or providing care to family members explains why some choose not to participate in senior centers. While the results don't necessarily demonstrate intergenerational programming would bring more seniors into a center, they do suggest that opportunities to include an entire family in a center's activities may be worth consideration.



## Intergenerational Program Outcomes

The OhioReads/STARS program funded by the Ohio Department of Aging is one of the most successful intergenerational programs in Ohio. STARS (Seniors Teaching and Reaching Students) enables adults age 55 and older to volunteer an average of 11 hours a week to tutor at-risk children in kindergarten through fifth grades. There are nearly 600 volunteers in 47 elementary schools.

OhioReads/STARS benefits both the school children and its older volunteers. By the end of the 2000-2001 school year:

***"I've thoroughly enjoyed getting to know him and have him work with my first graders. He's genuine about his care and concern for them all. He's so devoted to his responsibilities. Always on time, never has missed a day. He is a true asset to the STARS program"***

*- Teacher at Perrin Woods Elementary School in Springfield regarding a STARS volunteer.*



**Elderly United of Springfield  
Partners  
with OhioReads/STARS Program**

For the past three years, Elderly United in Springfield has been recruiting and supervising volunteers for the OhioReads/STARS program at Lincoln and Perrin Woods Elementary Schools. Springfield Schools have been under academic emergency status and need volunteers to help students improve reading, math, and writing skills. Last year all 14 students in the STARS sample at Lincoln and 6 of 7 in the STARS sample at Perrin Woods were promoted to the next grade. In addition, almost all of the students improved their attitudes towards school, classroom behavior, and self-esteem.

Currently 16 volunteers at Lincoln and 12 at Perrin Woods tutor and mentor more than 200 students. Fifty-five percent of STARS students at each school were below grade level in all three subjects.

- 73 percent of STARS students improved in reading, 69 percent in math, and 68 percent in writing.
- 78 percent of STARS students were promoted to or placed in the next grade at the end of the school year.
- Self-esteem improved for three-quarters of STARS students and 79 percent of classroom teachers reported that students looked forward to the tutoring very much.

Among benefits to volunteers are:

- Almost all volunteers (96 percent) report that they are making new friends.
- 95 percent report they feel they are making a difference in the life of a child - 77 percent said volunteering for the program allows them to give back to the community.
- More than half (55 percent) of the volunteers report they have more confidence in their own abilities.
- 22 percent report their health improved during the past year and only 4 percent reported a decline.
- 95 percent report they would return to the next school year.

About a third of all OhioReads/STARS volunteers heard about the program through a friend or relative. Senior centers have been an important resource to the STARS program. In the 2000-2001 school year, 12 percent of its volunteers learned about STARS from a senior center. This was up from 7 percent the previous school year.



## The Strongsville Recreation and Senior Complex Story

Strongsville, Ohio

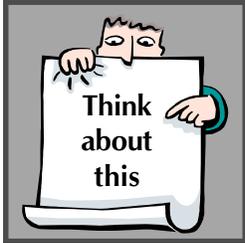
What makes Strongsville different from many other intergenerational programs? The expectation that people of all ages will share activities, sometimes structured, more often serendipitous due to shared interests or traditional generational roles.

Marketed as “comprehensive recreation programming for children, adults, and seniors,” the Strongsville Recreation Department’s goal is to improve life for all residents of this Cleveland suburb. This ambition is achieved through the physical layout of this recreational center built in 1998, the leadership of community stakeholders, and a collaborative partnership between the younger director of the recreation center and the director of the senior center!

While the Senior Complex occupies one distinct area, seniors can access the entire complex: three pools, cardiovascular and strength training equipment, gymnasiums, indoor lap track, and more. Grandparents can watch little ones take swimming lessons or do their own laps next to people the age of their own children. Likewise, woodworking classes held in the senior center’s well-equipped woodshop are open to all ages. Seniors help with a traffic school for children and chaperone teen dances. They operate a snack bar where everyone is welcome. The senior center also offers classes on issues important to those of pre-retirement age in preparation for this key life change.

There is a 37 acre Strongsville Backyard Preserve adjacent to the center which encourages the natural blending of generations. This ongoing project provides passive recreation for the community and improves wildlife habitat, while providing volunteer opportunities for older adults, boy scouts, and other community members.

Where else would senior center participants adopt the name, Silver Stallions, after their local high school teams, the Stallions, but in a community whose recreation complex welcomes all ages to participate in activities and share camaraderie under one, albeit very large, roof?

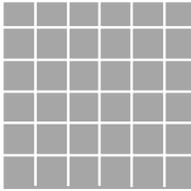


## Implications for Senior Centers

As results from our OhioReads/STARS evaluation show, there is no doubt seniors and children alike benefit from relationships created across generations. This only leaves the question of whether such relationships should be fostered through senior centers, and if so, how to make them happen.

In our focus group, seniors were apprehensive about intergenerational events. Senior centers will need to handle such efforts thoughtfully, and provide seniors with opportunities to create, innovate and lead such events.

Since families are such an extremely important part of the lives of older adults, opportunities to involve them in senior center activities may be a key strategy for the future. A number of centers are finding that this would include bringing a senior center inside a community center.



## NCOA's "Senior Centers in America: A Blueprint for the Future" Recommendations

Staff of successful senior centers will regularly **monitor their image** in the community **and change** the image **when appropriate**.

**The image of senior centers should be improved and reshaped.** While much of this can and should be done on a local level, a nationally recognized image of centers would lend cohesiveness and consistency to local messages and serve the present and future users of the center.

Senior centers becoming **more technologically sophisticated** and having more highly trained staff to meet the needs of their participants.

Become leaders in using **the latest available technology** to ensure effective and efficient access to home and community-based long-term care services.

Senior centers must **market programs by developing professional brochures and other materials showcasing specialized programs to targeted customers.** (e.g., the older population, the health care network, other service provider community referral agencies, community business and educational organizations) and these materials should be disseminated and used to increase older adult involvement and to develop community partnerships.

The traditional senior center model must **develop new approaches to participant recruitment and service marketing. Public policy definitions of "outreach" must be expanded** to enable senior centers to be funded to improve the efficiency, cost effectiveness, and outreach outcomes through the better use of research demographics, marketing, and other strategies, trends, and methodologies.

**Document and publicize the cost effectiveness of senior centers in the home and community-based long-term care continuum.** Senior centers must **do a better job of selling an economic message** to their constituencies.

### What to Look for in this Chapter

1. Most baby boomers and older adults look for friendship and companionship at senior centers.
2. The image of senior centers limits participation; older people are hesitant to be associated with other older people.
3. Lack of transportation and knowledge of programming are also keeping older adults away.
4. Better marketing is needed in many communities to let the public know more about the senior center's offerings.
5. Ohio senior centers are seeking to improve funding and to update facilities in order to attract more older adults and baby boomers.



## Introduction

While NCOA Blueprint recommendations show that senior centers need to improve their image, some suggest that marketing is most needed. Others suggest a negative image of senior centers may be well founded, and that senior centers must move forward to be in step with the needs of seniors. The latter may be for their use of technology and computers, tools of vital interest to adults age 50 and older. Recommendations indicate that senior centers are often not as sophisticated as they should be.

To determine if this is so, we'll look at the image seniors have of senior centers today, based on our Interest and Activity Survey and survey of senior center directors to gauge how they are perceived by seniors in the communities. Since the image of senior centers is often linked to technology, we will review the interest level of Ohioans for computers and related technology. Finally, we'll examine what senior centers are doing to change their image and improve their marketing.

### Perceptions of Senior Centers

Two questions were asked of those 50 - 55 and those 65 - 70.

When asked what would attract them to a center, or what is the most important aspect of senior centers, Ohioans answered: fostering connections with others. Especially true among older respondents, more than one-third of all those who answered this question, mentioned friendship and companionship. The younger group focused more on centers as places that foster opportunities to travel. Fitness and hobbies were also important to this group. A number of older respondents found nothing positive to say about senior centers. Though many seek a place to socialize and be with friends, others do not believe a senior center fills this need. Some negative responders noted they like to be around people of all ages. In short, their need to socialize with others includes people not in their own age group.

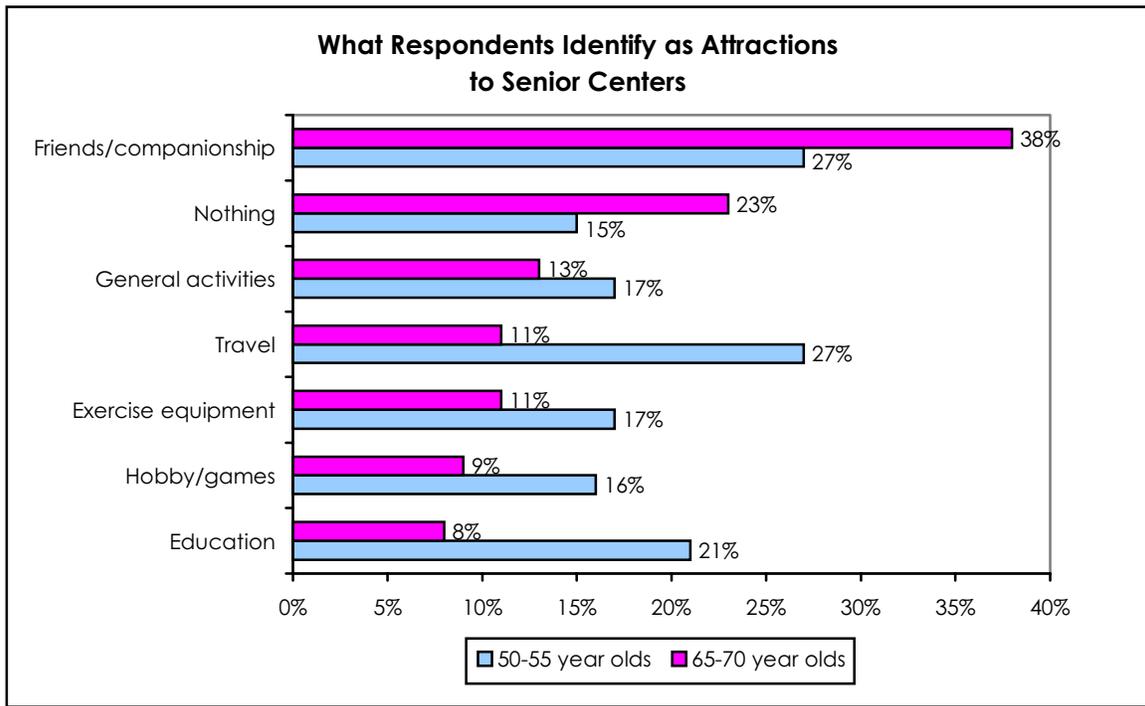
**Questions to 50-55 Year Olds**

- 1. Looking into the future, what could a senior center offer to attract you?*
- 2. What do you think would keep you from using a senior center when you are older?*

**Questions to 65-70 Year Olds**

- 1. For those who participate in senior centers, why do you like to spend time there?*
- 2. What is it about a senior center that keeps you from going there? If you do participate in senior center activities, tell us what you think keeps people from going.*

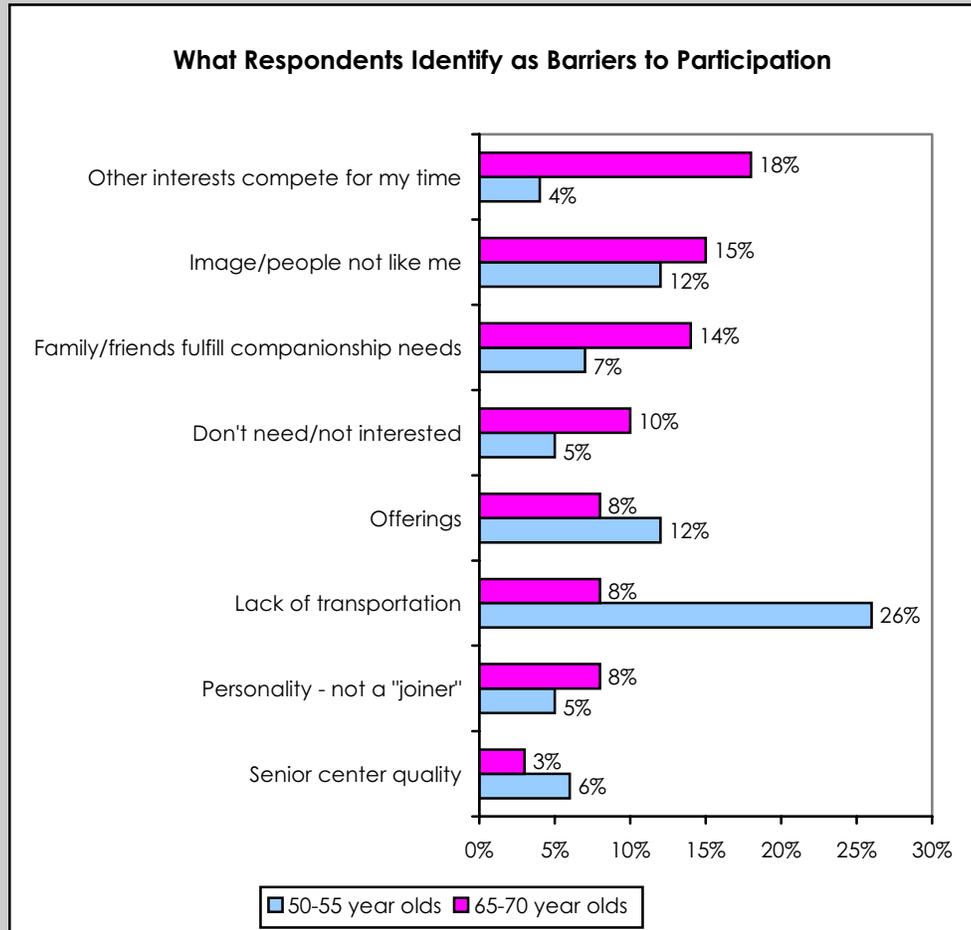
Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000



Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000

**When asked what keeps them from coming to a senior center, image played an important role in decision-making.**

When asked what keeps them from coming to a senior center, image played an important role in their decision-making. The following chart shows about one in seven said image is what keeps them - or will keep them - from attending a senior center. Similarly, almost one in five of those 65 - 70 said they have other interests than those available at a senior center. A common quote was: "Not needed at this time; I have plenty to do." The notion they don't "need" a senior center confirms a perception that senior centers only exist for those who "need" something as opposed to somewhere to find things they like to do.

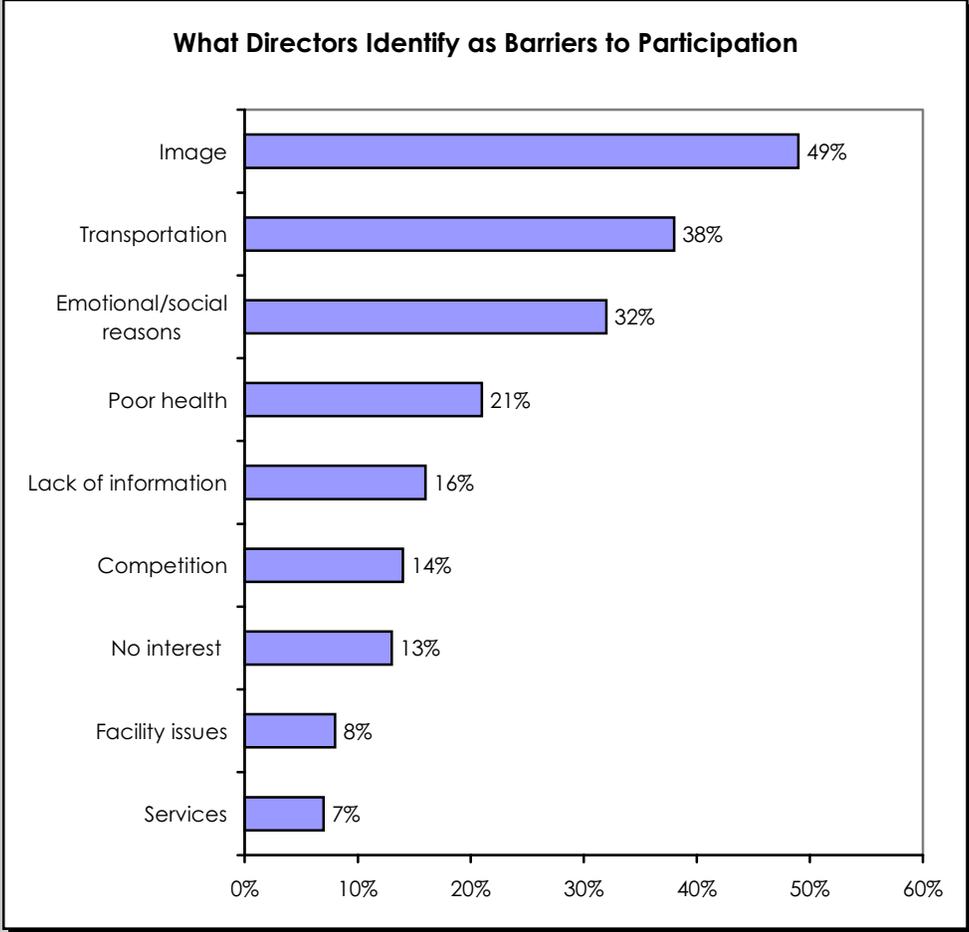


Source: ODA interest and Activity Survey, 2000

*Senior center directors were asked what they perceive as barriers to seniors using their center.*

Nearly half of all directors mentioned image as one of the top three reasons seniors won't come. Another 16 percent said lack of information was a significant barrier that demonstrates a need for better marketing.

**Nearly half of all directors mentioned image as one of the top three reasons seniors won't come.**



Source: ODA Senior Center Director Survey, 2001

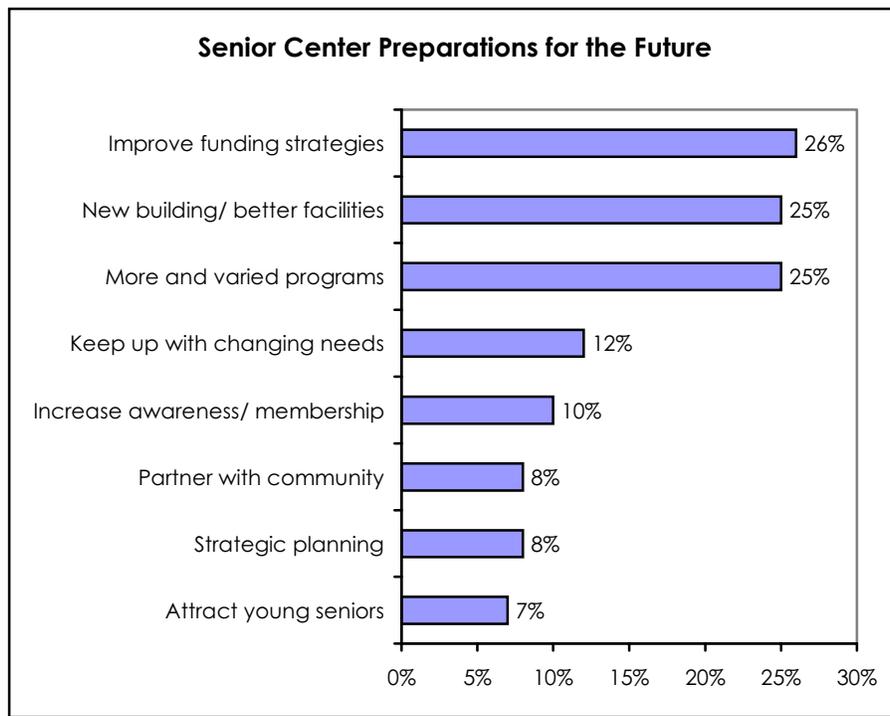
So while Interest and Activity Survey respondents gave a number of reasons why they won't come to a senior center, negative image was clearly a key reason - one which may be the basis for a number of other reasons. Directors left no doubt they must change the image to be successful in the future. Coupled with what people seek in a center, it is obvious that senior centers need to seek out avenues to improve their image by emphasizing opportunities for friends to come together to participate in an array of activities they enjoy.

## Future Strategies

Since negative image is one of the biggest hurdles senior centers face in bringing more seniors into their centers, senior center professionals were asked:

### *What two things are you doing now to prepare for your senior center's future?*

Strategies being considered may be critical to the future success of a senior center. Funding is and will continue to be a critical issue for senior center directors. Improved facilities and innovative, market-driven programs are needed for senior centers to prepare for the future. In spite of negative perceptions, only ten percent of senior center directors rate better marketing as a high priority. It appears that improvements or innovations in services will also need to be supported by better marketing and outreach to off-set negative perceptions and attract new customers.



Source: ODA Senior Center Director Survey, 2001

### Perceptions and Opinions of Those 50 - 55 and 65 - 70

"Image of senior centers - people compare them to nursing homes. Older people are hesitant to be associated with other older people."

"Why limit yourself to one unique age group? Go for the spice of life."

"Senior centers not changing programs to fit interests of "flower children," can't visualize senior centers playing the Rolling Stones, Beatles, etc."

"When you go occasionally you are shut out by the "cliques" formed by the people who go regularly. After sitting by myself a few times I quit going."

"The desire to live a well-rounded life. Senior centers exclude those that are not seniors. We tend to isolate the elderly in our society, instead of respecting them."

"Stereotypes of bingo and shuffleboard keep people from going to senior centers."

"I'm spending my time doing other things such as gardening, home remodeling, traveling, part-time employment."

"Not enough parking – unfriendly atmosphere. The one in our town is depressing and unfriendly. I would rather pay higher membership fees and have an attractive, bright, well landscaped place to attend. Something cheerful."

### Senior Center Vision Statements

"A place to learn, grow, be energized, access resources and as a base for community interaction and integration."

"The successful mixing of the young senior adults with the aged senior adults in all areas of programming and facility usage."

"To always have the ability to change and adapt as the need for services changes."

"A friendly haven for seniors, and a place where they can come to feel accepted, worthy and supported."

"It will be a Family Center with an emphasis on wellness and intergenerational activities. It will house a bank, pharmacy, health clinic and grocery store. College courses will be available on site and the day care will be for all ages."

"The senior center of the future will be the primary focal point for information and referral, education and an entry point to access the health care system."

"A center where seniors can be comfortable and relaxed, with a swimming pool, exercise equipment, weights, aerobics, running and walking track, healthy foods snack bar, restaurant, spa amenities, card room, library sited in a park area with outdoor activities."

Sources: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000, and ODA Senior Center Director Survey, 2001

A needs assessment conducted in Butler County in 2000, asked persons 50 – 70 years of age about senior centers. Stake holders can use these results to target public relations messages and plan program changes in each of the three senior center service areas surveyed. Recommendations include increasing public awareness of senior centers, reviewing and increasing senior center programs and services and promoting positive image of seniors. (*Butler County, 2000*).

When Ohio senior centers describe their vision for the future, it is of a well known, vital place in the community that attracts all ages with varied and creative programs.

### Computer Usage Among Older Adults



Getting and staying technologically up to date is a first step to improve the image of senior centers. They are more likely to attract baby boomers by offering computer training. Adults age 50 and up are eager to learn more about computers and the Internet. A recent study by the Pew Internet and American Life Project confirms that nearly 60 percent of those in their fifties and early sixties already use a computer regularly. Among those 65 and older, nearly a quarter have a computer at home, double the rate of only a few years ago (*America Clicks, 2001*).

Internet usage is growing rapidly. Forty percent of folks between 50 and 64 have Internet access, as do 18 percent of those 65 and older. While younger Internet users chat or shop on-line, half of those 50 to 64 and 44 percent of those 65 and older use it to find financial and health information. More than 90 percent use the Internet for e-mail, which is especially useful for sending and receiving photographs to and from far-away family members. A third of folks 65 and older use it to play games.

Computer classes are popular at senior centers where they are offered. Centers that do not offer Internet access find that seniors are going instead to local libraries.

### Small Efforts Have a Big Impact

In the persuasive book *Tipping Point*, author Malcolm Gladwell argues that it is often very small things that decide whether a marketing campaign or movement takes hold. In particular, he suggests a small number of people, and small changes in appearance can lead to very large changes in the fortune of an organization. His ideas have direct implications for senior centers.

Gladwell argues that very few people often have an inordinately large impact on what happens and that there are two types of particularly influential people.

- **Connectors:** Gladwell contends that in a community a small number of people connects many, many others together. These connectors maintain a large number of social contacts, most of whom they know on a more surface level. Connectors bring people together. For a senior center, having connectors as active members of an organization or on a board could be critical.
- **Salespersons:** These are people with a strong gift for persuasion. They have a great ability to affect people's emotions and influence their decisions. They use the same words as others, but their charisma makes words more meaningful. Often organizations struggle when a director with strong charisma leaves. While always dangerous to be too dependent on the charisma of a single individual, organizations must recognize the ability some have to attract many others into their organization.

Gladwell's other main premise relates to appearance. "Large changes can happen by tinkering with the smallest details of the immediate environment" (pg 146). In particular, he offers this idea on the power of context:

- **The Broken Windows Theory:** Using the dramatic drop in New York City crime in the early 1990s Gladwell shows how little things can have a large impact on much bigger issues. A place that looks unsafe can encourage behaviors that people would not consider in a well-maintained place. Graffiti in the subway system telegraphs that more serious deviant behavior is acceptable. In short, small cosmetic changes can impact heavily on behavior. Replacing broken windows and scrubbing subway cars did, in fact, lead to significant reductions in a variety of criminal acts in New York.

Useful for senior centers is the positive side of the broken windows theory. Small improvements made to the exterior of a facility send a message about what kind of people are inside, and create an expectation about the senior center. Small efforts can pay big dividends in how people perceive the center.



## The Defiance Senior Center Story

Defiance, Ohio

The senior center in Defiance County embraces the entire community, from school-aged youngsters to the frailest senior. One participant's comment captures this continuum well: "The first time I came, I applied for my Golden Buckeye card; the second time was to advocate for the levy; the third time I had a stroke - then the senior center came to me."

In 1999, one in every three seniors in Defiance County participated in senior center programs which included in-home services. Even without their frequent public service announcements on local television and radio stations, the center's presence is known in every township by its Hot Shot vehicles that deliver the meals made in the center's kitchen to the county's home-bound elderly.

Younger people are there as volunteers, driving seniors to doctors' appointments, delivering meals, even bringing a parent to the center for socialization. One said, "I don't need the services yet, but see it as an insurance policy - it will be there when I need it."

The center's strong community connections foster more realistic views of aging. Local college students developed a web site for the center, taught computer skills and hosted a "senior prom" attended by 300 people with an average age of 64. As one senior quipped, "They are looking at us with new eyes - Gee, he's not so old. He's an OK guy."

Even the local correctional center partners with the center. Carefully screened and supervised inmates who have lived in the community, learn job skills and build self esteem while providing free labor to the center. Inmates like the seniors and seniors are accepting of them.

"When you retire you think you are going to sleep late, watch TV and go fishing every now and again. But you can't keep doing this. You got to get up and get out." In Defiance County, a good place to start is the senior center. Who knows what or whom you will find there!



## Implications for Senior Centers

Image is a tough issue senior centers must address. While many enthusiastically support senior centers, others hold to the image that senior centers are for people who “need” them. Senior centers must dispel negative perceptions. Further, if an image is accurate (i.e., senior centers are for “old people” who need something that they can’t find elsewhere), then senior center managers or professionals must decide if this role has long-term viability in their community. If not, they must change to meet the needs of more members in their community.

Given the interest seniors have about technology, senior centers have an immediate opportunity to update their image by offering classes and activities that use computers and related electronic gadgets.

Further, many who are drawn to senior centers are there to connect with friends or make new friends. Even those who choose not to participate flatly state that relationships keep them occupied, so marketing senior centers as places to interact with others can be a powerful draw. This approach could be more convincing if senior centers find a way to bring in others who previously chose to not join. In short, they need to find ways to bring new social groups into the center, so a wider variety of people can find others “like themselves.”

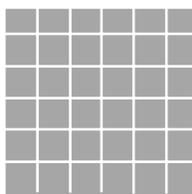
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## NCOA's "Senior Centers in America: A Blueprint for the Future" Recommendations

### **Resource Development**

**Funding for senior center programs should be allocated to foster growth and development of the senior center infrastructure** – not in a way that limits the opportunities available to senior centers.

More resources should be put into the activities and programming of senior centers through the OAA. Over the past ten years, the percentage of support to the programs of senior centers coming from **OAA dollars** has consistently dwindled. There needs to be a commitment on the part of the OAA and US AoA to the important role of senior centers, and this commitment needs to include **expanded resources**.

Senior centers, without question, need to be more aggressive in exploring the long-range benefits **of planned giving as a component of community education and funding strategies**.

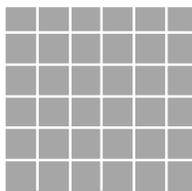
Senior center boards and directors should educate themselves about **existing foundations**, especially those that have identified senior centers and/or **senior center specific programming as one of their fundable categories**.

**Strengthen senior center funding by fostering deferred giving** through bequests, trusts, and life insurance ("planned giving"); memorials and tributes; endowments; real estate, securities, and personal property; voluntary income tax check-off funds and the creation of new tax districts, assessments, and levies earmarked for home and community-based long-term care.

For new program development, address the need, develop the program, and then find the funds required – rather than first seeking funds and then developing the program.

**The research and development program recommendations offers promise for enhanced revenue generation in the future.** With some initial investment in marketing and staff training, centers can provide services to the local community – businesses as well as other non-profit organizations.

Encourage **the provision of seed money and technical assistance to centers for entrepreneurial endeavors** that tap the talents and interests of a diverse population.



**The Older Americans Act should be expanded to allow for cost-sharing and fees-for-service in center budgetary planning and to fund clusters of organizations that work to coordinate resources and services within the community.** Such expansion would increase units of service available for eligible seniors.

Senior center boards and directors must **consider forming for-profit subsidiaries**, separate from their IRS non-profit status, to raise operating revenues through the sale of products and/or specialized services to customers and other.

### ***Community Development***

Develop **joint planning with units and agencies that serve populations with mental health problems, mental retardation, and developmental disabilities** to serve the elderly in these populations appropriately.

Senior centers providing sub-contracted services to **new “players” in the senior market** – such as hospitals, libraries, and private companies.

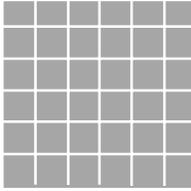
Package and market staff expertise regarding retirement and later life issues and decisions. **Contract with corporations to conduct pre-retirement in-services for those employees nearing retirement. Provide training for utility meter readers, postal workers, bank tellers, and others** who have frequent and regular contact with older adults to train them how to recognize signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or the onset of dementia. Train them to make appropriate referrals to community agencies on behalf of their clients.

**Coordinate service delivery with other community service providers to avoid duplication of services** so that a net gain in the availability of resources can result in more seniors being served. **Collaborate on joint proposals** combining expertise and resources of two or more agencies to secure funding for collaborative projects and initiatives.

Senior centers **must operate as brokers of home and community-based long-term care** by developing partnerships for fee-for-service agencies, corporate and contractual arrangements, and third party payments.

**Determine how the senior center fits in the managed care systems and similar collaboratives in the local and regional health care industry.** Identify an area of service delivery or other areas to manage or provide to the system on a fee-for-service basis, such as specialized medical transportation to hospital sites.

**Provide incentives for private industry to develop, enhance, customize, and make available the latest** technology, information, **resources**, and training to enable senior centers **to serve constituents with such barriers as visual or hearing im-**



pairments, language barriers, and other impediments to functioning.

Build positive working relationships between local aging services and the business community to **educate them about the positive economic impacts of marketing to senior adults** in the community. Quality of life issues are important considerations for new and existing businesses and industries in local communities. Future and current employers must begin to **support their employees with comprehensive systems of family services that include services that focus on caregiving.**

### What to Look for in this Chapter

1. Local government provides almost one-third of the funds senior centers receive. The Older Americans Act (OAA), in contrast, provides less than 20 percent. A small albeit growing trend in funding is planned giving.
2. Senior centers provide a substantial percentage of OAA funded services including transportation, congregate and home-delivered meals, and homemaker services.
3. Senior centers have consistently received only six percent of PASSPORT dollars although centers in rural areas receive more than twice the PASSPORT funds as do those located in suburban areas.
4. Senior services levies are gaining popularity as a source of funding for senior services generating an estimated \$67 million in 2001. Most of these levies were initiated and administrated by senior centers or local councils on aging.
5. When senior centers look to the future, their top concerns are improving funding and physical facilities and expanding program offerings to better meet their participants' interests.

## Introduction

Finances are never far from the minds of senior center directors. To prepare for the future, directors will have to explore new funding opportunities. A well reasoned strategy with a clear vision for the future is an essential component of any long-term financial plan.

The environment in which senior centers exist today is very different from when the Older Americans Act was first enacted. There are more entertainment options and restaurants, seniors are more financially comfortable than in previous generations, and there are more home and community based service providers than before. In this environment, senior centers must partner with "competitors" to create a seamless network of services for seniors in their communities. In some cases such partnerships will evolve naturally and be highly collaborative. In others a sense of competition and "turf wars" may develop. In either case, authors of the NCOA Blueprint argue for the need to use the intrinsic expertise of senior centers to expand into new arenas and to nurture new partnerships.

This chapter examines the resource and community development status of senior centers in Ohio. Our review analyzes funding sources, the diversity of these sources, and total budgets.

This includes looking at the impact of Ohio's H.B. 1084 Senior Facilities Program and the impact of local senior services levies.

Consideration of community development requires a review of the opportunities available to senior centers. This includes a discussion of markets in which they may find opportunities to create partnerships, what senior centers report they are now doing to partner, and how they work with "competitors" in their communities.

## Resource Development

### *Senior Center Operational Budgets*

Senior center directors were asked to share their 1999 annual operating budgets, estimate how much different funding sources contributed to operational budgets, and provide a description of their fee practices. More than 40 percent did not respond to this question, especially those who were a part of a larger organization. From those that offered this information, annual budgets ranged from as low as \$750 to \$6 million. Because senior center budgets vary across the spectrum, it is difficult to generalize budget concerns across senior centers.

#### Senior Center Operational Budgets

	Totals
Total Number of Budget responses	199
\$1-\$50,000	16%
\$51,000-\$100,000	11%
\$101-\$200,000	15%
\$201-\$300,000	11%
\$301-\$400,000	9%
\$401-\$500,000	8%
\$500,000-\$1,000,000	9%
\$1,000,000-\$6,000,000	7%

Source: ODA Senior Center Director Survey, 2001

Some characteristics are more notable when senior centers are grouped by small, medium and large budgets. Small-budget senior centers (less than \$100,000) are more likely to be non-profit centers. Medium-budget centers (between \$100,000 and \$500,000) are more likely to be suburban centers serving higher income participants. Large-budget centers (more than \$500,000) are more likely to offer in-home services and receive some levy funds, but not rely mostly on local funds. Rural centers are more likely to be at either end of the budget spectrum.

*Senior centers were then asked to estimate the percentage of a variety of funding sources in their operational budget.*

Choices given in the survey for funding sources included:

Category for analysis	Source
<b>State or Federal</b>	Older Americans Act or Senior Community Services Block Grant PASSPORT
<b>Levy</b>	Local senior services levy
<b>Local</b>	Fund raising United Way Membership dues or special fees Local government
<b>As appropriate</b>	Other

Source: ODA Senior Center Director Survey, 2001

Results from this question can be viewed two ways:

1. The **total percent** an agency receives from sources in the above table; and
2. Whether an agency receives **any** funds at all from the listed sources.

*When looking at total percents*, local monies made up the largest source of funds for senior centers, confirming how effective communities can be at securing funding.

On average, of centers that responded most rely on local funds for more than half their budget. Suburban centers and those serving older adults with higher incomes are much more likely to rely on local funds; rural centers and those serving lower income older adults are less likely to receive local funds. Centers funded with mostly local dollars were also less likely to offer a variety of services, such as in-home services, transportation, and meals.

Twenty percent of the average senior center budget comes from state and federal funds. Almost six out of ten respondents indicated their organization was funded with Older Americans Act dollars – on average 17 percent of their budget. Overall, only three of ten were funded by PASSPORT, which contributed an average four percent to budgets.

Likewise, one-fifth of budgets came from individuals, including dues and fees, donations, and dollars generated by fund raising projects. Less than half of the respondents charge general membership fees. One-fifth ask for donations or optional membership fees and more than 60 percent have special fees for trips.

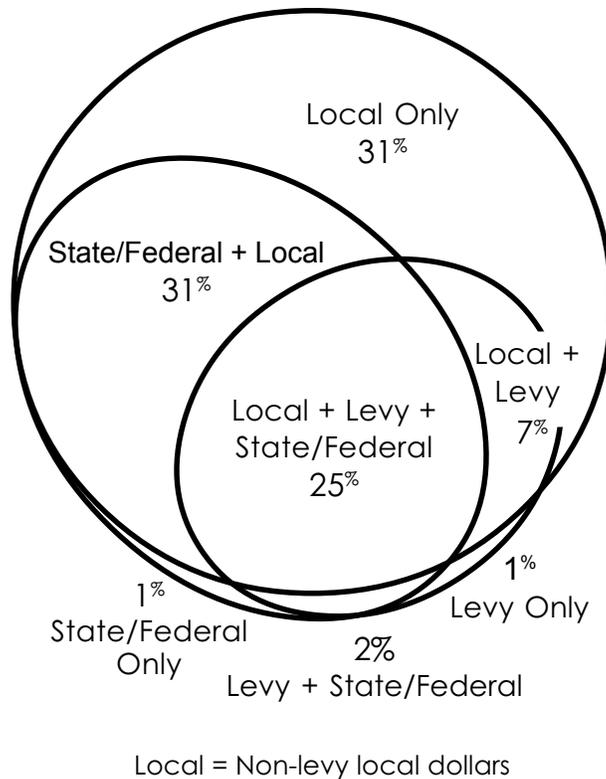
Agencies more reliant on federal funds are more likely to provide in-home services and serve

lower-income participants. Centers receiving **any** state or federal funds were more likely to receive funds from multiple sources, and most rely on other funds for the majority of their budgets. For example, of those that receive any state or federal dollars, only one in four counts on those funds for more than half of their budget. Ninety-three percent of those that receive any state funds also receive local funds.

Conversely, many centers were primarily funded with local dollars, with nearly one in three reporting that they receive no levy, state or federal dollars. (See “Local Only” in the Funding Combinations diagram below.) Those that report receiving **any** local funds were less likely to receive federal funds.

Nearly two out of three respondents do not receive levy dollars. However, those that do are more likely to secure funds from multiple sources, including other local funds and state or federal funds. In other words, those with levy funds are better able to bridge the gap between local and federal funding sources. Of those with any levy dollars, nearly 80 percent receive state or federal funds as well.

**Funding Combinations**





**“We are promoting a planned giving program, resulting in over \$50,000 of contributions in one year.”**

**“We are seeking to diversify our income sources.”**

- Senior center preparations for the future

Of the many different sources of funding the average center receives, nearly one-third get funding from one or two sources while nearly 70 percent receive funding from four or fewer.

### Degree of Impact of Funding Sources

Funding Source	Percent of total budget that comes from the funding source	Percent that receive ANY funds from the funding source
Local government	31%	59%
Other state or federal sources	22%	60%
Older Americans Act	17%	58%
Levy	14%	35%
Fund raising	10%	59%
Dues	7%	53%
United Way	6%	41%
Passport	4%	31%

Source: ODA Senior Center Director Survey, 2001

### Frequency of Multiple Funding Sources\*

	Percent of surveys	Number of surveys
1 Source	12%	23
2 sources	17%	34
3 sources	20%	40
4 sources	19%	37
5 sources	13%	26
6 sources	10%	20
7 sources	7%	14
8 sources	3%	5
Grand Total		199

\*See table above for funding sources

Source: ODA Senior Center Director Survey, 2001

**Senior Centers as Older Americans Act and PASSPORT Providers**

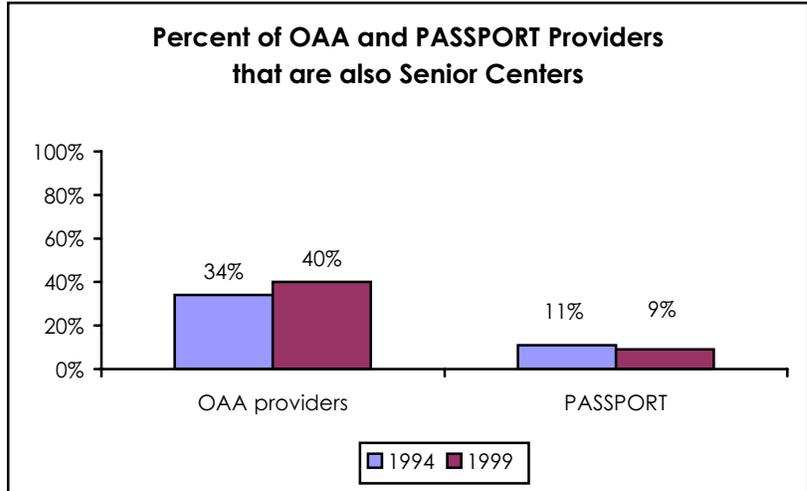
Historically, senior centers have been major players in the aging network infrastructure. Four of ten Older Americans Act providers **are** senior centers, and this percent is growing.

In 1990, PASSPORT became available in all 88 Ohio counties providing in-home services to those who would otherwise be in nursing homes. This meant more service and funding opportunities were opened to senior centers. However,

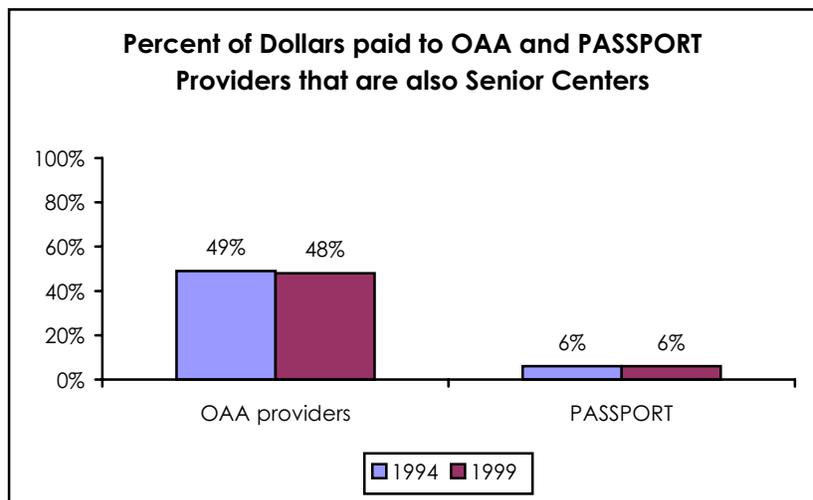
because PASSPORT services are predominantly offered in the home, senior centers have not played as large a role in PASSPORT services as in the Older American Act programs. In 1999, for example, only nine percent of all PASSPORT providers were senior centers. Whether senior centers are PASSPORT providers varies across the state. In Area Agency on Aging 1 in southwest Ohio 18 percent of senior centers are PASSPORT providers. But in some regions of the state no senior centers are PASSPORT providers.

Senior centers annually earn approximately \$40 million Older Americans Act - related service dollars. This is almost one-half of all dollars earned by Older Americans Act providers in Ohio.

Average revenue received by senior center PASSPORT providers doubled between 1994 and 1999. In 1994, senior centers earned nearly four million PASSPORT dollars. By 1999 that figure increased to nearly \$8 million—an increase attributed to overall growth of the PASSPORT program. During the past five years, senior centers have consistently received only six percent of PASSPORT dollars. Regional



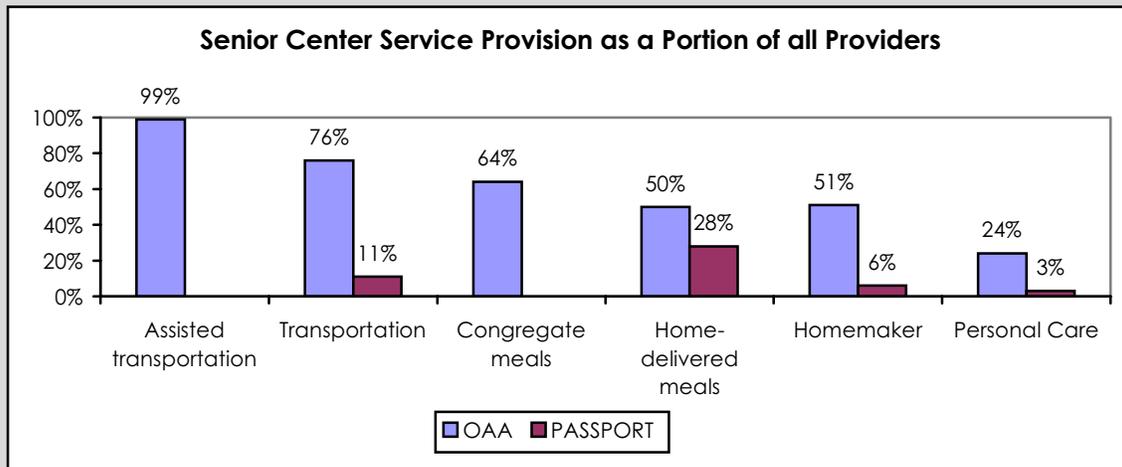
Source: ODA PASSPORT and OASIS databases



Source: ODA PASSPORT and OASIS databases

differences exist with more than half the money going to rural senior centers. Suburban centers, the fastest growing sector for older adults, received only about 15 percent of senior center PASSPORT dollars.

### Senior Centers Play a Vital Role in Older Americans Act Service Delivery



Source: ODA PASSPORT and OASIS databases

#### Compared to all Older American Act Providers in 1999, senior centers provided:

- 99 percent of all assisted transportation miles,
- 76 percent of all transportation miles,
- 64 percent of all congregate meals,
- 50 percent of all home-delivered meals,
- 51 percent of all homemaker hours, and
- 24 percent of all personal care hours.



#### Overall, in 1999, as a portion of all PASSPORT providers, senior centers provided:

- 11 percent of all transportation miles,
- 28 percent of all home-delivered meals,
- 6 percent of all homemaker hours, and
- 3 percent of all personal care hours.



For Older Americans Act-based services, senior centers play a vital role in service delivery. In the past five years, senior centers maintained but have not expanded their role using either Older American Act or PASSPORT funding. Overall, where they used federal and state dollars for services, they provided congregate meals and transportation.

**The Impact of Ohio’s H.B. 1084 Senior Facilities Program Grant Dollars**

State House Bill 1084, now known as the Senior Facilities Program, was once a major player in funding for senior centers. Since 1978 this funding source has provided more than \$25 million dollars for construction and renovation of senior facilities. In State Fiscal Year 2001, ODA received 40 applications and funded 26. A review of all 1084 projects revealed:



- More than \$92 million has been spent, including local match dollars since 1978.
- Eighty-four of the 88 counties in Ohio received funds through this program; Wayne, Putnam, Miami and De-fiance counties were the exceptions.

**H.B. 1084 Leveraged Funds Statewide**

Service Area	H.B. 1084 dollars	Percent of H.B. 1084 dollars	H.B. 1084 + Local dollars	Percent of total dollars
1	\$5,033,968	20%	\$19,264,765	21%
2	\$1,867,082	7%	\$7,930,298	9%
3	\$ 732,726	3%	\$2,466,037	3%
4	\$2,299,813	9%	\$12,463,972	13%
5	\$2,192,411	9%	\$6,087,778	7%
6	\$2,642,868	10%	\$9,645,816	10%
7	\$2,312,826	9%	\$7,746,079	8%
8	\$1,535,514	6%	\$5,228,164	6%
9	\$ 844,745	3%	\$2,350,808	3%
11	\$1,242,655	5%	\$3,531,686	4%
10A	\$3,286,195	13%	\$10,679,599	12%
10B	\$1,556,410	6%	\$5,246,541	6%
Grand Total	\$25,547,213	100%	\$92,641,543	100%

Source: ODA H.B. 1084 database

- Fifty-nine percent of dollars was spent on renovating existing buildings, and another 25 percent on new construction.
- Seventy-one percent of all dollars are local dollars, amounting to over \$65 million since 1978.
- Nearly \$60 million of the \$92 million total was spent in the 1980's, accounting for two-thirds of all dollars.
- In the 1990s, only \$21 million was spent. In 2001 \$11.5 million alone was spent, almost half as much as all of the 1990s. Unfortunately, in the current tight fiscal environment Ohio did not allocate any funds in State Fiscal Years 2002 and 2003 towards the Senior Facilities Program.

### **Senior Services Levies in Ohio**

**Few states allow local levies; Ohio is one of two with legislation permitting senior services levies.**

Many communities, dealing with static federal and state funding and an increase in the age 60+, 75+ and 85+ populations, look to property tax levies as a potential funding source for program expansion and development. Levies provide additional operational benefits, including local control, flexibility, accountability and, if used responsibly, a stable source of future funding.

Few states allow local levies; Ohio is one of two with specific legislation permitting senior services levies. Ross County passed the first county-wide levy in 1978.

Based on responses to the ODA survey, senior services levies were expected to generate \$67 million in 2001, ranging from \$9,000 in Vinton County to \$16.8 million in Franklin County. This is an increase of \$10 million over the amount reported in 1998, when a survey was last conducted.

**Senior services levies were expected to generate \$67 million in 2001.**

In recent elections, 14 of 17 local senior services levies on ballots were passed. Of these, each of the 12 up for renewal or replacement passed, but only two of five new levies passed.

As of November 2001, most of the 58 senior services levies in Ohio were countywide and only six were municipal or township levies. The majority cover a five-year period with an average of 1 to 1.2 levy millage. Seventeen levies have had millage increased since their initial passage. (See Appendix C for a profile of Ohio's senior service levies).

### Ohio Counties with a Senior Services Levy



Most (48 of 58) of these senior services levies were initiated and administered by senior centers or local councils on aging. The rest were managed by area agencies on aging, community action organizations or other local entities.

Communities use funds from senior services levies based on community needs and how state and federal funds are allocated within the community. The 2001 survey identified services most frequently funded by senior services levies as:

Transportation	94%
Senior center operations	86%
Home delivered meals	81%
Information and Referral	78%
Congregate meals	72%
Recreation	67%
Senior center maintenance	67%
Homemaker	64%

Other services included those for individuals, home modification and senior center construction and rehabilitation. More than a third of levy programs reported having waiting lists for services, most for in-home or community-based services.



"We don't charge for any of our services in accordance with Older Americans Act guidelines. We do accept donations for services received."

"We have a sliding scale fee when the activity is not covered by our other funding sources."

"Everyone pays their own way to most events."

### Membership and Special Fees

Almost half of the senior center respondents reported they have a general membership fee; nearly two-thirds charge special fees for events such as trips. Rural centers and centers serving middle or high income participants were more likely to charge general membership fees. Suburban centers and those relying mostly on local funds were **less** likely to charge special fees for trips.

### Frequency of Fee Assessment

	Percent
General member fees	43%
Special fees for persons under age 60	18%
Special fees for trips	61%
Other practices (including donations)	29%
Total Number	286

Source: ODA Senior Center Director Survey, 2001

## Community Development

### *Participant Connections to Organizations*

In surveying Ohioans, several new opportunities for partnerships became apparent. First, respondents were asked to name organizations to which they belong. Many of those who have been to a senior center belong to other organizations. Senior center participants were more likely to belong to other organizations than those who do not attend senior centers. More than one in three is active in a religious organization and 20 percent report they volunteer in another organization. A significant number said they belong to fraternal organizations, such as the Lions Club or VFW. Senior centers already welcome members who can open doors to partnerships with other organizations.



### Likelihood of Affiliation with Organizations For Senior Center Participants

Organization	Senior Center Participant
Church or religious organization	36%
Volunteer - other	20%
Fraternal	16%
Family and friends	13%
Professional	11%
Fitness or sports related	9%
General senior	9%
Hobby	7%
Alumni	4%
None	3%
Other	3%
AARP	1%

Source: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000

**Opportunities exist for partnership especially where interest is high but senior center offerings are low.**

### **Services Senior Centers Offer**

Both interest and activity survey respondents and senior center directors were then asked about services desired vs. those offered. Here are the questions asked of both groups:

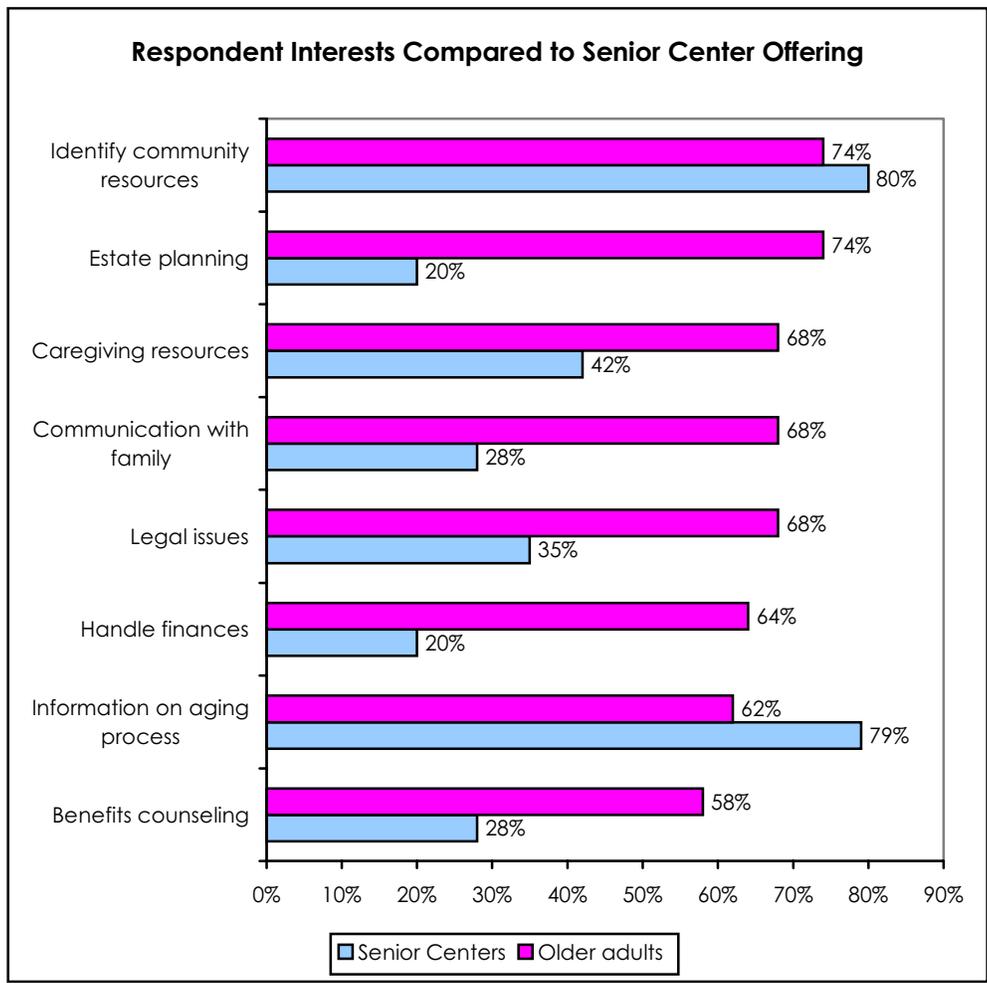
Senior Center Directors	Respondents Age 50-55 and 65-70
<i>What services does your senior center offer? Check all that apply</i>	<i>What would you like to learn more about over the next ten years or so? Check all that apply:</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Financial counseling</li> <li>2. Legal assistance</li> <li>3. Estate planning</li> <li>4. Benefits counseling</li> <li>5. Information on the aging process and changes in health</li> <li>6. Communication or relationship skills with family and friends, including grandchildren</li> <li>7. Caregiving resources, training and/or support excluding respite services</li> <li>8. Information and referral services</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Handle my finances better</li> <li>2. Handle legal issues, for example, power of attorney</li> <li>3. Do estate planning</li> <li>4. Access information about benefits eligibility</li> <li>5. Better understand the aging process and what changes to expect in my health</li> <li>6. Better communicate or interact with family and friends, including grandchildren</li> <li>7. Be a good caregiver to an ailing parent, spouse, sibling, friend</li> <li>8. Identify and access community resources, if necessary (for example, meals on wheels)</li> </ol>

Sources: ODA Senior Center Director Survey, 2001, and ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000

Opportunities exist for partnership especially where interest is high but senior center offerings are low. Many subjects that interest older adults are not offered by senior centers. A senior center perceived as the home of experts on aging can take advantage of this to look for new ways to partner with others to bring services to their community.

In urban and suburban areas, the number of older adults interested in estate planning, family communication skills, legal assistance, and financial counseling is double the number of centers that offer them.

**In urban and suburban areas, the number of older adults interested in estate planning, .....is double the number of centers that offer them.**



Sources: ODA Interest and Activity Survey, 2000, and ODA Senior Center Director Survey, 2001

### Senior Centers Give Back to the Community



"We make quilts for hospitalized children, nursing home residents, and homeless shelters."

"We are the community hub for the ongoing blood drive every eight weeks, and we provide a free country and western concert for the community every Friday night."

"Our seniors call shut-ins and make bedrolls for the homeless."

"We are starting a food bank here at the center to assist the community."

"We are providing new volunteer opportunities that work with city projects to benefit the community: Arts festival, community egg hunt, Boo on Broadway Community Halloween Bash, etc."

"Our cafeteria is open to the public."

"Our center responded to a tornado crisis with free services to victims, we are planning to build a tornado shelter (safe room) which will provide downtown emergency shelter."

### Partnership Successes and Challenges

Senior center directors were asked who they felt their competition is and will be in the future. While 17 percent of respondents do not believe they have competition today, most respondents were well aware of who else serves older adults in their communities. While not worded to suggest partnering with their "competition," the question elicited many responses suggesting the competition was friendly, and that in some cases partnerships are already happening.

Churches were considered the primary competition now, but considered less so in the future. Older Ohioans spend significant amount of time dining out, attending movies, fulfilling commitments in the home which is a real concern for senior center directors eager to attract more people to their centers.

### Future Strategies

Because of static Older Americans Act dollars and diminishing Senior Facility Program funds, many centers are taking steps to increase their funding base. When senior center directors were asked "*What are you doing now to prepare for your center's future?*" their top three answers were: improving funding strategies, adding more and varied programs, and building new or better facilities. Some have established endowment funds or planned giving programs.

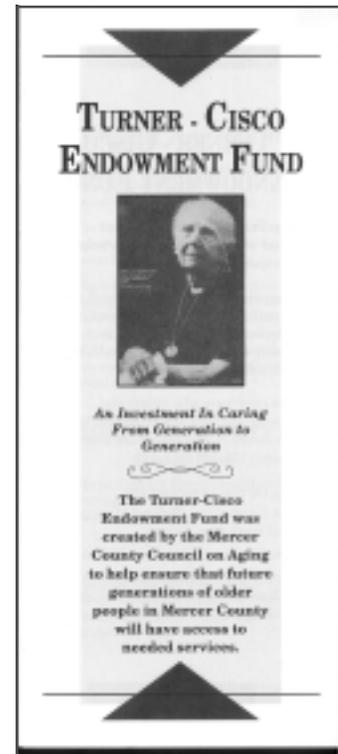


## Resource Development Successes

A number of senior centers across Ohio have encouraged planned giving to their centers. Mercer County began the Turner-Cisco endowment fund in 1988, and developed a tastefully worded brochure encouraging residents to consider the senior center in their wills. The O'Neill Senior Center in Marietta produced a similar brochure.

The Hithergreen Senior Center which serves Centerville/Washington Township also encourages gifts. They created a plaque with the outline of a tree, and added names of those who had made planned gifts to branches of the tree. Hithergreen professionals emphasized that recognition is important to many people so they place their plaque prominently near the front of their center. In the Hithergreen newsletter they also recognize "supporting" and "sustaining" members, and special contributions made by friends and groups. Hithergreen reports that 129 different community organizations provide financial support to their center.

Hithergreen is notable in creating opportunities for residents and members to contribute to their senior center. Hithergreen's newsletter also lists contributions made to a memorial fund, encouraging senior center members to donate money in remembrance of an anniversary, a birthday, a memorial, special occasion, or as a get well wish for a fellow member.





## Community Development Successes

As do many transportation coordination groups across the state, Cleveland's Transportation Consortium Coordinating Committee, known as TC3, offers door-to-door transportation to more than 800 frail older adults and persons with disabilities. TC3 is coordinated through the Jewish Community Center. They participate in a working group that discusses senior transportation challenges and how to strategically plan services for current and future senior citizens. Twelve organizations participate, including the Cuyahoga County Department of Senior and Adult Services, the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission, the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, the Northeast Ohio Area-wide Coordinating Agency, the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging (AAA 10A), and the City of Cleveland. The working group applied to the Mt. Sinai Foundation for funding to develop a strategic plan.



When clients register for TC3 service, they are asked what help they need while using transportation services. If needed, an attendant will accompany the client free of charge. Each van's driver is specially trained and has a cell phone. Clients call TC3 dispatchers at the Jewish Community Center who use specialized transportation software to schedule their trips. The computers track vans and document trip destinations and frequency of trips. Destinations include medical appointments, social events, shopping, work, volunteering, exercise or rehabilitation, beauty shop, religious services, funerals, and prescription pick-up.

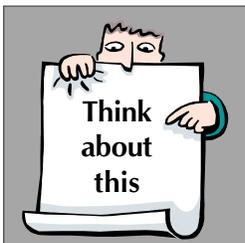
Other counties and urban areas have similar coordination groups that have made efforts to coordinate human services transportation. Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio, Inc. (AAA 4) collaborates with the United Way, the Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority, the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), and Senior Centers, Inc., on cooperative transportation.

For rural counties, ODOT's Office of Public Transit seeks to enhance and expand transportation in Ohio's rural counties where there are no public transportation systems by fostering local coordination programs among human service transportation payers and providers. Each year, ODOT funds local coordination planning and other activities. From 1989 through 1997, 26 projects received more than \$2.1 million. Of these, five are now

**Success  
Story**

rural transit systems. One is a newly formed regional transit authority (Butler), and the remaining counties continue to coordinate efforts to meet the needs of residents.

Coordination includes payers and providers. Payers include Ohio Departments of Job and Family Services, Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, and Aging, County Commissioners, and private sources. This year the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) is targeting counties without public transit which have not previously sought funding from the coordination grant program. Regional meetings introduce the concept of transportation coordination, identify potential interested agencies in each county, and provide technical assistance. Six counties targeted by ODOT are in Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio, Inc.'s (AAA 4) service area: Defiance, Fulton, Henry, Paulding, Van Wert, and Williams. Area agency support is vital to gain the cooperation and enthusiasm of local providers.



## Implications for Senior Centers

Every senior center across Ohio has its own unique funding strategy. The variety of funding sources, size of budgets, and type of local funds used vary significantly from center to center. However there are some general conclusions to be drawn from surveys, each with important implications for senior centers. They include:

- Many senior centers rely heavily on limited sources for funds. Over-reliance on just a few sources leaves centers vulnerable to political changes. Centers should work to diversify their funding base if possible.
- Reliance on state and federal dollars was not as significant as expected. While many senior centers receive Older American's Act (OAA) and PASSPORT funds, these funding streams coming into senior centers have been stagnant in the last five years. Increasing services with these dollars could lead to new collaborative efforts within communities.
- With PASSPORT, senior centers play a smaller role than they do with services funded through OAA. This is true even with identical services across the two systems. For example, when transportation is considered, senior centers account for 76 percent of units in OAA, but only 11 percent in PASSPORT. The Ohio Department of Aging and AAAs can examine the discrepancy between the two systems, and consider better ways to integrate disparate funding sources.
- Nearly all senior centers use local funds to a significant degree, with almost one-third relying entirely on local sources. Local money for senior centers is critical and demonstrates the commitment communities have made to senior centers. Senior centers will need to continue to seek local funds to support their efforts, including support from those who regularly attend senior centers. According to the Butler county survey, nearly 60 percent of the respondents aged 50-70 believe that a yearly membership fee is appropriate.

Senior center participants are active in other organizations as well. As "ambassadors" they can collaborate and expand the role senior centers play in a community. By determining which other organizations senior center participants join, new doors may open for classes, speaking engagements, service coordination, and recruiting.

## Methodology

To create the report, we researched the literature, conducted three surveys, held focus groups, and visited senior centers to gather in-depth information. Ohio Department of Aging staff also examined information from the PASSPORT, Older Americans Act, and Senior Facilities (also known as H.B. 1084) projects databases.

*Focus Groups:* Groups were conducted in Defiance, Hamilton, Meigs, and Stark counties. Three of eight focus groups were comprised of mostly adults who do not attend senior centers. Group size ranged from seven to fourteen. Persons from rural, urban and suburban areas, as well as those from different cultural backgrounds participated. Knowledge gained from focus groups helped shape questions for the first survey.

- Defiance County, two convened by senior centers
- Hamilton County, three convened by senior centers
- Meigs County, two convened by senior center
- Stark County, one convened by AARP chapter member

*Interest and Activities Survey:* In the fall of 2000, a survey was sent out to Ohioans age 50 - 55 and those 65 - 70 (see Appendix B for the survey). Its purpose was to learn more about interests and activities of middle-aged and older adults. Questions about their membership in organizations, knowledge and experience with senior centers, and what they seek when joining an organization were included. Basic demographics were also collected.

Names of survey recipients were randomly chosen from a list provided by the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles. People who do not have current Ohio driver's licenses were not eligible. From this list, every address was coded as urban, suburban, or rural, and populations were defined as follows:

**Urban:** Any city larger than 40,000 was considered urban, with the following exception: within urban counties, any community over 40,000 **other than** the central city was classified suburban. For example, in Cuyahoga County Cleveland is the central city and Parma, a city of larger than 40,000, was identified as a suburb. There were 17 urban cities in our sample.

**Suburban:** Any city within Franklin, Lucas, Hamilton, Cuyahoga, or Summit counties (other than the central city). Smaller communities in surrounding counties were included. Thus Eastlake and Willoughby, in Lake County were labeled suburbs. Using this definition, 267 communities were identified as suburbs in Ohio.

**Rural:** Any community smaller than 40,000 (not near a metropolitan area). For example, Millersburg in Holmes County, and Georgetown in Brown County were labeled rural. There were 771 cities, villages and townships in the sample.

Within each age group, 740 surveys were sent to individuals in urban, suburban and rural areas. A follow-up mailing encouraged a greater response rate.

	50-55 year old respondents			65-70 year old respondents		
	Sent	Returned	Adjusted Rate*	Sent	Returned	Adjusted Rate*
Rural	740	211	31%	740	301	43%
Suburban	740	216	32%	740	274	40%
Urban	740	229	33%	740	278	40%
Total	2,220	656	32%	2,220	853	41%

\*Rate adjusted for surveys returned with wrong address. 7% (311) of addresses were incorrect.

Survey results were analyzed based on:

- age of the respondent,
- whether rural, urban, or suburban dweller,
- gender,
- whether respondent currently works,
- whether respondent currently visits a senior center,
- whether respondent lives alone, and
- whether respondent reported belonging to **any** organization.

**Senior Center Director Survey:** Another survey, sent out in early 2001, gathered information from senior center directors (see Appendix B). Director surveys included some of the same questions from the initial Interest and Activity Survey to enable comparison of responses between senior centers visitors and staff. Other questions were specific to senior centers. Additional questions asked about programs, operations and plans for the future. Using the same methodology, senior centers were classified urban, suburban or rural. Surveys were also sent to facilities that provide many of the same services but which do not identify themselves as senior centers.

	Total Number Sent	Number of Responses	Response Rate
All facilities	516	281	58%
Those identified as SC's	325	213	68%

Two follow up letters were sent to non-responders, and a number of centers were telephoned.

Survey results were analyzed

- as rural, urban, or suburban ,
- by income status of senior center participants,
- as to whether the center offers in-home services ,
- as non-profit vs. city/county senior centers,
- by primary funding sources, and
- those identified as senior centers compared to facilities with similar services. Because the responses were so similar, these two groups were treated as one in the analysis.

**Senior Levy Survey:** In the fall of 2001 we surveyed all entities in Ohio responsible for putting senior levies on the ballot. Many of these are senior centers. The purpose was to learn more about resources provided to the aging network by local sources, and to provide this information to others in Ohio that may wish to seek levies in future. Questions included about amount of levy, services paid for through levy, and successful strategies used to convince voters to support levies (see Appendix B). Of the fifty-three surveys, forty-eight were returned (83%). Telephone follow-up completed the levy information found in chapter 8 that includes November 2001 election results.

**Senior Center Visits:** Ohio Department of Aging professionals visited seven senior centers. The sites were chosen from those that responded to the Senior Center Director Survey. We selected urban, rural and suburban centers with a variety of programs. These visits enabled us to gather in-depth information. Centers visited included:

- Clifton Senior MultiserviceCenter, Cincinnati, Ohio
- Elderly United of Springfield and Clark Co., Inc., Springfield, Ohio
- Hispanic Senior Center, Cleveland, Ohio
- Hithergreen Senior Center, Dayton, Ohio
- Jewish Community Center, Cleveland Heights, Ohio
- Senior Services, Inc., Cortland, Ohio 44410
- Strongsville Senior Center, Strongsville, Ohio

**Database Analyses:** From the list of centers that received a survey, ODA looked at comparable lists of providers in the PASSPORT and Older Americans Act databases. When the name or the address matched in the databases, providers were considered to be senior centers. Data were taken from 1994 and 1999. These were then compared to all providers without matching names or addresses. The result enabled us to compare senior center providers to non-senior center providers for major services funded through the Ohio Department of Aging. This selection method may however inflate dollars and services provided by some senior centers, since in some cases a center may share an address with a parent organization

*Review of Senior Facilities Program:* The Senior Facilities Program provides funds to senior centers for capital improvement or renovation projects. Since 1978 it has provided more than \$25 million dollars for construction and renovation of senior facilities. Funded projects and their locations were analyzed for this report.

*Literature Review:* Numerous sources were reviewed to assure we were comparing our results to the most current research on senior centers.

## Senior Center Director Survey

### Part I: About Your Senior Center

1. In what year was your Senior Center established? 19\_\_\_\_
2. Which of the following best describes your Senior Center?  
 \_\_\_\_ A not-for-profit agency  
 \_\_\_\_ A division of city or county government  
 \_\_\_\_ Other, please describe\_\_\_\_\_
3. Are you an organization that operates one or more satellites where senior services are available?  
 \_\_\_\_ Yes (Please attach a list of your satellite sites to this survey.)  
 \_\_\_\_ No
4. Are you a senior service(s) program operating *within* a larger organization? If yes, please name the parent organization and ✓ which category best describes the parent organization:

____ Yes ____ No	Name of parent organization: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> neighborhood house <input type="checkbox"/> recreation department <input type="checkbox"/> community center <input type="checkbox"/> community action agency <input type="checkbox"/> senior housing <input type="checkbox"/> other, please describe_____
---------------------	--

5. If questions 3 and/or 4 do not apply, please briefly characterize your agency:
6. What services does your Senior Center offer? Check all that apply:
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Social/recreational activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Health and safety education
<input type="checkbox"/> Congregate and/or home-delivered meals	<input type="checkbox"/> Employment counseling and services
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal assistance
<input type="checkbox"/> Adult day care/services	<input type="checkbox"/> Benefits counseling
<input type="checkbox"/> Information/referral services	<input type="checkbox"/> Estate planning
<input type="checkbox"/> In-home services, e.g., personal care	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial counseling
<input type="checkbox"/> Health screening and assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please describe:_____

7. For a typical week, describe the hours your center is open to older adults (i.e., open – 8am, close – 5pm):

	Open	Close
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		

	Open	Close
Saturday		
Sunday		
Comments:		

**Senior Center Director Survey (continued)**

8. What was your total annual operating budget in 1999 for senior-related services? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
9. Please estimate the percentage of each of the following funding sources in your center's operational budget.

Source	Current Percentages	Ideal split for future growth and/or stability
Older Americans Act/ Sr. Community Block Grant		
Local Senior Services Levy		
Fund raising		
United Way		
Membership dues/Special fees		
Local Government		
PASSPORT		
Other		
Total	100%	100%

10. Which of the following best describes your center's practices regarding fees? Check all that apply:

- General membership fees for all participants
- Special fees for persons under 60 years of age
- Special fees for trips or special programs
- Other: please describe \_\_\_\_\_

11. Is your center seeking accreditation from the National Institute of Senior Centers?

- Already accredited
- In the process of being accredited
- Undecided
- Unlikely to pursue accreditation; please describe your reason(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**Part II: Issues for Older Persons**

12. In our 1995 Senior Center Survey, the issues identified as being most important to older adults were ranked as listed in the left column below. Please indicate in the right column how you project the rankings will change over the next 5 to 10 years. You may use issues other than those listed below in your rankings.

1995 priority rankings	2005-2010 projected rankings
1. Health	1.
2. Living on a fixed income	2.
3. Transportation	3.
4. Living independently	4.
5. Housing	5.
6. Loneliness, isolation	6.
7. Remaining active	7.
8. Accessing services	8.

### Senior Center Director Survey (continued)

13. What do you think are important concerns/issues for older people when they consider participation in an organization? **Check the three most important responses** that you believe older adults would choose:

I ( the older adult) would go to a place that offers opportunities to:

- be with people much like myself  
 be with people different than myself  
 relax in a friendly, comfortable environment  
 express my faith  
 challenge myself to keep growing, learning  
 have my accomplishments recognized  
 take on a leadership role  
 use skills I've developed in my paid employment  
 belong to an organization that has a good reputation in the community  
 provide service to my community  
 other, please describe \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Part III. About the People Who Use Your Center***

14. About what percent of participants routinely use the following modes of transportation to get to your Senior Center?

- % drive themselves  
 % ride in the car of another person  
 % take public transportation  
 % walk or bike  
 % use transportation provided by the Senior Center  
 % other: please describe \_\_\_\_\_  
 100 % Total

15. Please estimate the percent of male participants at your center: \_\_\_\_\_ % males

16. Please estimate the percent of participants who are currently employed:

- % employed full-time  
 % employed part-time  
 % not employed/retired  
 100 % Total

17. How would you generally characterize the income levels of the people who participate in activities at your center? Provide percentages for each of the categories below that apply:

- % below poverty level  
 % low income  
 % middle income  
 % above middle income  
 100 % Total

**Senior Center Directors Survey (continued)**

**Part IV: Activities and Opportunities**

18. We want to compare current Senior Centers’ practices with what we learned from the surveys sent to persons aged 50-55 and 65-70. Please check all activities or opportunities from the following list that are available through your Senior Center and add any relevant comments.

Activities or opportunities made available through your Senior Center	Typically offered (✓)	Comments/Concerns/ Future Plans
Travel: for example, films, tours, day trips		
Reading, library services		
Gardening		
Volunteering		
Spectator sports		
Participatory sports		
Fitness activities: aerobics, treadmill, walking, etc.		
Access to cultural events: theatre, museums, etc.		
Ways for members to assume community leadership roles		
Religious/spiritual pursuits		
Computers, Internet		
Adult/continuing education classes		
Hobbies: creative arts, crafts, antiques, etc.		
Eating out		
Movies, television, radio		
Shopping		
Relaxing, listening to music		
Singing, playing musical instruments		
Games: bridge, billiards, etc.		
Support groups		
Communication/relationship skills with family and friends, including grandchildren		
Intergenerational activities		
Information on the aging process and changes in health		
Caregiving resources, training and/or support (excluding respite services)		
Other: please describe:		

**Senior Center Directors Survey (continued)**

19. What activities/resources/programs does your center currently provide for people younger than 60 years?

Check all that apply:

Pre-retirement planning classes

Caregiving classes/resources

Volunteer opportunities with senior services

Services for persons with disabilities (e.g., physical, developmental, mental)

Other: please describe \_\_\_\_\_

None of the above

***Part V. Looking to the Future***

20. In a sentence or two, describe your vision of your Senior Center in the future.

21. In your opinion what are the three most common barriers that keep older adults from going to a Senior Center?

22. Looking to the future, what changes in hours of operation and physical facilities do you anticipate will be necessary over the next 5 to 10 years?

23. In your community, what are the most significant sources of competition for your center for the time and attention of older adults at this time?

24. What do you think will be the major sources of competition in the next 5 to 10 years?

**Senior Center Director Survey** (continued)

25. What two things are you doing now to prepare for your Senior Center's future?
26. What two things could the Ohio Department of Aging and/or your local Area Agency on Aging do to help prepare for the future of organizations like yours who serve older adults?

**Part VI: Innovative Practices**

27. Describe up to three of your center's most innovative practices implemented within the last 2 years.

**Part VII: For our Records**

Name of Senior Center: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of the Director: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address of Senior Center: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mailing address (if different): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax number: \_\_\_\_\_ Website address: \_\_\_\_\_

- Please consider my center as a place for ODA staff to visit.**

*Thank you for filling out this survey. Please return your completed survey in the enclosed envelope by February 1, 2001.*

## Interest and Activity Survey I

Part I: The first questions are about your interests, their importance in your life now and in the future.

- We'd like to know about your interests and what keeps you from being as involved as you would like to be. Place checks in the middle two columns to indicate if the activity is important to you and if you are involved with it. The last column is for comments.**

Activities and Interests	Check if important to you	Check if involved currently	What keeps you from being as involved as you would like to be?
Travel			
Reading			
Gardening			
Volunteering			
Spectator sports			
Participation in sports: bowling, golf, softball, etc.			
Fitness activities: aerobics, treadmill, walking, etc.			
Cultural events: theater, museums, etc.			
Community leadership			
Religious/spiritual pursuits			
Computers, Internet			
Adult/continuing education classes			
Hobbies: creative arts, crafts, antiques, etc.			
Eating out			
Movies, television, radio			
Shopping			
Relaxing, listening to music			
Singing, playing a musical instrument			
Games: bridge, billiards, etc.			
Other, please describe:			

*Survey to 50 – 55 year olds*

### Interest and Activity Survey I (continued)

2. Are you more likely to participate in the activities listed in question 1 by yourself, with a few others, or as part of a larger group or organization? Please rank your participation style as follows: write (3) in front of your most frequent style; (2) for the next most frequent; and (1) for the one you least often use.

- \_\_\_ by yourself  
 \_\_\_ with a few close friends or family  
 \_\_\_ with some type of organization/group

3. How do you think your activities and interests will change over the next 5 to 10 years?

Part II: The next set of questions are about organizations; a general question is followed by several about Senior Centers.

4. List some of the organizations that you are currently involved with:

5. When you're deciding whether or not to join an organization, what do you look for? Check the three (3) that are most important to you:

6. A place that offers opportunities to:

- \_\_\_ be with people much like myself  
 \_\_\_ be with people different than myself  
 \_\_\_ relax in a friendly, comfortable environment  
 \_\_\_ express my faith  
 \_\_\_ challenge myself to keep growing, learning  
 \_\_\_ have my accomplishments recognized  
 \_\_\_ take on a leadership role  
 \_\_\_ use the skills I've developed in my paid employment  
 \_\_\_ belong to an organization that has a good reputation in the community  
 \_\_\_ provide service to my community  
 \_\_\_ other, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

*Survey to 50 – 55 year olds*

**Interest and Activity Survey I (continued)**

- 7. Many communities have centers where people aged 60 years and older of all incomes can participate in a wide variety of educational, health-related and recreational activities. Are there any such centers, frequently referred to as “senior centers,” in your area?**

Yes  
 No  
 Don't know

- 8. Has anyone you know or someone in your family ever attended, or currently attends a senior center? Check all that apply:**

parent, parent-in-law  
 grandparent, parent-in-law  
 older friend, neighbor  
 other relative (other than a parent or grandparent)  
 no one that I am aware of

- 9. Based on your current impressions of senior centers, what is the likelihood that you will participate in a senior center in the future? Check one:**

likely will go, when eligible  
 may go, when eligible  
 not sure  
 probably not  
 definitely not

- 10. Looking into the future, what could a senior center offer to attract you?**

- 11. What do you think would keep you from using a senior center when you are older?**

*Survey to 50 – 55 year olds*

### Interest and Activity Survey I (continued)

Part III: These final four questions tell us something about you and will help us better describe survey respondents.

**12. On average, how many hours per week do you work for a salary or hourly wage?**

\_\_\_\_\_ hours

**13. How long do you expect to continue to engage in paid employment?**

\_\_\_\_\_ years

**14. Please indicate who lives with you in your household. Check all those that apply:**

- older relative, including in-laws
- child/children
- grandchild/children
- spouse/partner/significant other/companion
- non-relative (for example, room mate)
- live alone

**15. What would you like to learn more about over the next ten years or so? Check all that apply:**

**16. Learning how to:**

- handle my finances better
- handle legal issues, for example, power of attorney
- do estate planning
- access information about benefits eligibility
- better understand the aging process and what changes to expect in my health
- better communicate/interact with family and friends, including grandchildren
- be a good caregiver to an ailing parent, spouse, sibling, friend
- identify and access community resources, if necessary (for example, meals on wheels)
- continue to make my life have meaning and purpose
- other, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**This is the end of this survey. Thank you!**

Please mail it as soon as possible in the envelope that came with this survey to:

Ohio Department of Aging  
 Planning, Development & Evaluation Unit  
 50 W. Broad St., 9<sup>th</sup> Fl.  
 Columbus, OH 43215-3363

*Survey to 50 – 55 year olds*

## Interest and Activities Survey 2

Part I: The first questions are about your interests, their importance in your life now and in the future.

- We'd like to know about your interests and what keeps you from being as involved as you would like to be. Place checks in the middle two columns to indicate if the activity is important to you and if you are involved with it. The last column is for comments.**

Activities and Interests	Check if important to you	Check if involved currently	What keeps you from being as involved as you would like to be?
Travel			
Reading			
Gardening			
Volunteering			
Spectator sports			
Participation in sports: bowling, golf, softball, etc.			
Fitness activities: aerobics, treadmill, walking, etc.			
Cultural events: theater, museums, etc.			
Community leadership			
Religious/spiritual pursuits			
Computers, Internet			
Adult/continuing education classes			
Hobbies: creative arts, crafts, antiques, etc.			
Eating out			
Movies, television, radio			
Shopping			
Relaxing, listening to music			
Singing, playing a musical instrument			
Games: bridge, billiards, etc.			
Other, please describe:			

*Survey to 65 – 70 year olds*

### Interest and Activity Survey 2 (continued)

2. Are you more likely to participate in the activities listed in question one by yourself, with a few others, or as part of a larger group or organization? Please rank your participation style as follows: write (1) in front of your most frequent style; (2) for the next most frequent; and (3) for the one you least often use.

by yourself  
 with a few close friends or family  
 with some type of organization/group

3. How do you think your activities and interests have changed over the past 5 to 10 years?

4. How do you think your activities and interests will change over the next 5 to 10 years?

Part II: The next set of questions are about organizations; a general question is followed by several about Senior Centers.

5. List some of the organizations that you are currently involved with:

6. When you're deciding whether or not to join an organization, what do you look for? Check the three (3) that are most important to you:

**A place that offers opportunities to:**

be with people much like myself  
 be with people different than myself  
 relax in a friendly, comfortable environment  
 express my faith  
 challenge myself to keep growing, learning  
 have my accomplishments recognized  
 take on a leadership role  
 use the skills I've developed in my paid employment  
 belong to an organization that has a good reputation in the community  
 provide service to my community  
 other, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

*Survey to 65 – 70 year olds*

**Interest and Activity Survey 2 (continued)**

7. **Many communities have centers where people aged 60 years and older of all incomes can participate in a wide variety of educational, health-related and recreational activities. Have you ever been to one of these senior centers?**

yes  
 no; but I know where a center is located  
 no; I am not sure if there is a senior center in my community

8. **Have you or anyone you know ever attended, or currently attend a senior center? Check all that apply:**

Myself  
 Spouse  
 Parent, parent-in-law  
 Older relative, friend or neighbor  
 No one that I am aware of

9. **What is the likelihood that you will participate in a senior center? Check one:**

already go  
 not sure  
 probably not  
 definitely not

10. **For those who participate in senior centers, why do you like to spend time there?**

11. **What is it about a senior center that keeps you from going there? If you do participate in senior center activities, tell us what you think keeps people from going.**

*Survey to 65 – 70 year olds*

### Interest and Activity Survey 2 (continued)

Part III: These final four questions tell us something about you and will help us better describe survey respondents

**12. On average, how many hours per week do you work for a salary or hourly wage?**

\_\_\_\_\_ hours

**13. How long do you expect to continue to engage in paid employment?**

\_\_\_\_\_ years

**14. Please indicate who lives with you in your household. Check all that apply:**

- older relative including in-laws
- child/children
- grandchild/children
- spouse/partner/significant other/companion
- non-relative (for example, room mate)
- live alone

**15. What would you like to learn more about over the next ten years or so? Check all that apply:**

**Learning how to:**

- handle my finances better
- handle legal issues, for example, power of attorney
- do estate planning
- access information about benefits eligibility
- better understand the aging process and what changes to expect in my health
- better communicate/interact with family and friends, including grandchildren
- be a good caregiver to an ailing parent, spouse, sibling, friend
- identify and access community resources if necessary, for example, meals on wheels
- continue to make my life have meaning and purpose
- other, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**This is the end of this survey. Thank you!**

Please mail it as soon as possible in the envelope that came with this survey to:

Ohio Department of Aging  
Planning, Development & Evaluation Unit  
50 W. Broad St., 9<sup>th</sup> Fl.  
Columbus, OH 43215-3363

*Survey to 65 – 70 year olds*

Ohio Department of Aging  
**Annual Senior Service Levy Survey - Summer 2001**

Please complete each question as fully as possible, and with boxes or circles, make sure they are completely filled in. For questions with a line and circled numbers, please write the response and fill in the corresponding circles below the written numbers. For an example see the box to the right. *Please complete one survey for each dedicated property tax levy that supports senior services.*

**Basic Information**

County/ Municipality for which the levy was passed: \_\_\_\_\_

Person/Title Completing Survey: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address, City, State, Zip : \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Website Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Information about Initial Levy**

1. Month and the first year the levy was passed: Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Millage amount of the first levy: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Total annual dollar amount the first levy generated: \_\_\_\_\_

**Information about Current Levy**

1. Month and year current levy passed: Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Is the current levy:
- First term
  - Renewal
  - Replacement
  - Combination (renewal and replacement)

3. Length of the current levy:

<b>From:</b>		<b>To :</b>	
Month	Year	Month	Year
_____		_____	

4. Millage amount of current levy: \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual Senior Services Levy Survey (continued)**

5. Total annual dollar amount generated by current levy: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Significant events that have affected revenue level of the current levy (e.g. plant closures):

**D. Information about services and those receiving the services**

1. What type of services are provided for in the levy? Please check all that apply:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home Delivered Meals    | <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Protective Services                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Congregate meals        | <input type="checkbox"/> Escort- Asst. Transportation                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation          | <input type="checkbox"/> Chore  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homemaker               | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Assessment:                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Care           | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction or acquisition of senior facilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Day Care          | <input type="checkbox"/> Rehabilitation of senior facilities              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supportive Services     | <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance of senior facilities                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home Maintenance        | <input type="checkbox"/> Case management                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation              | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior center operations and management          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information & Referrals |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Assistance        |   |

2. How many unduplicated clients in they year 2000 received services funded by the levy?

3. Are there waiting lists for services funded by the current levy?  Yes  No

If yes, what type of services?

4. Are services funded by the current levy provided through case management or care management?

Yes

No

If yes, what organization provides the case/care managers?

5. What does the typical care plan cost per month? \_\_\_\_\_

6. How many providers in your county receive levy funds? \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual Senior Services Levy Survey (continued)****E. Future Plans:**

1. When do you plan to go back to the voters:  Spring  Fall
2. Reason going back to the voters:
  - Renewal
  - Replacement
  - Combination (Renewal and Replacement)
  - Millage increase
  - Same millage
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
3. Which year will you be going back to the voters: \_\_\_\_\_

**F. Your Levy Campaign:**

1. How long before the election for your current levy did you begin your campaign?
2. What was the total campaign budget?
3. What government and private organizations gave the campaign committee assistance and in what capacity? (cash, materials etc.)
4. What campaign techniques were most successful and will be expanded to your next campaign?
5. What campaign techniques were least successful and will not be continued in your next campaign?
6. What recommendations do you have for others wanting to accomplish a senior service levy?
7. In what ways can ODA and/or Area Agencies on Aging better support local senior services levy programs?

***Again, thank you very much for completing this survey. Please send this completed survey by August 24<sup>th</sup> 2001 in the enclosed envelope to Craig Martin, PDE Evaluation Supervisor, Ohio Department of Aging, 50 W. Broad St. 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215.***

## Ohio Senior Services Levies

County	Organization	Current Millage	Length of Levy	First Passed	Latest Passage	Current Dollar
Allen	Allen County Council on Aging	0.3, 0.5	5 years	'89	'95,'96,'99,'01	\$1,270,000
Ashtabula	City of Ashtabula	0.3	5 years	'01	N/A	n/a
Ashtabula	Ashtabula Jobs and Family Services	1.00	5 years	'00	N/A	\$1,260,000
Athens	Athens County Commissioners and Hands for Seniors/United Seniors of Athens County	0.5	5 years	'87	'92,'97	\$270,000
Auglaize	Auglaize County Council on Aging, Inc.	0.5	5 years	'88	'92,'97,'01	\$317,000
Belmont	Belmont County Committee on Aging	0.5, 1.0, 0.5	5 years	'84	'95,'96,'97,'99,'01	\$1,200,000
Butler	Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio	1.0, 0.3	5 years	'96	'01	\$5,200,000
Carroll	Carroll County Council on Aging	0.5	5 years	'94	'98	\$713,279
Cuyahoga	City of Berea	0.1	5 years	n/a	n/a	n/a
Champaign	Urbana/Champaign County Senior Center	0.2	5 years	'86	'91,'95,'00	\$119,000
Clark	Elderly United of Spfld and Clark Co. OH, Inc.	0.6	5 years	'89	'94,'99	\$1,130,000
Clermont	Clermont Senior Services, Inc.	1.10	5 years	'82	'87,'91,'96,'00	\$3,375,000
Clinton	Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio, Inc.	1.0	5 years	'97	N/A	\$589,000
Coshocton	Kno-Ho-Co Coshocton Sr. Ctr.	0.25	5 years	'00	N/A	\$160,000
Crawford	Crawford County Council on Aging, Inc.	0.6	5 years	'95	'00	\$329,000
Defiance	Defiance County Senior Services	1.2	5 years	'96	'00	\$739,000
Delaware	Council for Older Adults	0.7	5 years	'94	'99	\$1,900,000
Eire	Serving Our Seniors	0.5	5 years	'96	'00	\$800,000
Franklin*	Franklin County Office on Aging	0.85	5 years	'92	'97	\$16,200,000
Fulton	Fulton County Senior Center	0.9	5 years	'86	'90,'96,'00	\$695,214
Geauga	Geauga Department on Aging	1.0	5 years	'95	'00	\$1,700,000
Greene	Greene County Council on Aging	0.8	5 years	'99	N/A	\$1,900,000
Guernsey	Guernsey County Senior Citizens Center, Inc.	1.0	5 years	'95	'00	\$427,777
Hamilton	Council On Aging of the Cincinnati Area, Inc.	1.0	5 years	'92	'97	\$15,000,000
Hamilton	The MariElders, Inc.	1.0	5 years	'78	'83,'88,'93,'98	\$66,900
Hamilton*	N. College Hill	0.5	5 years	'79	'90,'94,'96	\$29,000
Hardin	Hardin County Council on Aging	1.0	5 years	'87	'93,'98	\$329,000
Hocking	Scenic Hills Senior Center	0.5	5 years	'89	'94,'98	\$175,000
Huron	Services for Aging, Inc.	0.4	5 years	'94	'98	\$312,000
Jackson	Jackson County Board on Aging	0.5	5 years	'88	'93,'98	\$148,000

**C**

**Senior Services Levies**

**Ohio Senior Services Levies (continued)**

County	Organization	Current Millage	Length of Levy	First Passed	Latest Passage	Current Dollar
Lake	Lake County Council on Aging	0.3	5 years	'92	'96,'01	\$1,335,000
Licking	Licking County Aging Program, Inc.	0.7	3 years	'85	'88,'91,'94,'97,'00	\$1,570,000
Lucas	Senior Citizens Committee, Inc.	0.45	5 years	'91	'94,'99	\$2,900,000
Madison	Madison County Senior Center	0.8	5 years	'87	'96	\$402,356
Meigs	Meigs County Council on Aging, Inc.	1.0	5 years	'93	'98	\$225,000
Mercer	Mercer County Council on Aging	0.35	5 years	'89	'93,'98	\$199,450
Monroe*	Monroe County Project for Older Americans	.02	5 years	'98	N/A	not available
Montgomery	German Township	1.0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Morgan	Morgan County Office on Aging	0.3	5 years	'89	'94,'00	\$58,900
Muskingum	Muskingum County Center for Seniors	0.5	5 years	'97	N/A	\$463,000
Noble	GMN Tri-County CAC, Inc.	0.4	5 years	'86	'92,'96,'01	\$42,000
Paulding	Paulding County Senior Center/NWOCAC	0.5	5 years	'89	'94,'99	\$95,800
Perry	Perry County Senior Citizens Center	0.5	5 years	'84	'89,'95,'99	\$144,000
Pickaway	Pickaway County Senior Center	0.5	5 years	'91	'96,'01	\$300,000
Preble	Preble County Council on Aging	0.5,1.0	5 years	'91	'96,'97,'98,'01	\$760,000
Portage	City of Streetsboro	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Putnam	Putnam County Council on Aging, Inc.	0.4	5 years	'86	'93,'97	\$175,000
Ross	Ross County Commission for Elderly	0.3	5 years	'78	'89,'94,'98	\$233,642
Sandusky*	WSOS Sandusky County Senior Programs	0.1	5 years	'87	'92,'97	\$68,000
Scioto	United Scioto Senior Activities	0.2,0.3	5 years	'86	'91,'95,'96,'99,'01	\$260,000
Seneca	Seneca County Commission on Aging, Inc.	0.1	3 years	'85	'88,'91,'94,'96,'99	\$180,000
Tuscarawas	Tuscarawas County Committee on Aging, Inc.	0.6	5 years	'96	N/A	\$618,146
Van Wert	Van Wert County Council on Aging	0.2, 0.2	5 years	'97	'01	\$101,000
Vinton	Vinton County Senior Citizens	0.1	3 years	'88	'91,'94,'96,'98	\$9,000
Washington	O'Neill Senior Center	0.85	5 years	'01	N/A	\$818,000
Williams	Williams County Department of Aging	0.3, 1.0	5 years	'88	'93,'97,'99	\$676,690
Wood	Wood County Committee on Aging	0.4	5 years	'86	'91,'94,'98	\$754,966
Wyandot	Wyandot County Council on Aging, Inc.	0.4	5 years	'96	'00	\$104,000

\* Data included for this county is from the 1998 COAAA survey.

**Estimated Levy Funds (2001)** \$68,848,120  
**Estimated Levy Funds (1998)** \$56,039,136