



## **GASTON COUNTY SENIOR CENTER POLICY ON PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES**

Gaston County Senior Center will offer a broad range of programs, activities, and services at the Center, at other appropriate locations throughout the county, and through linkage with other agencies in the community.

The staff will attempt to respond to older adult needs and interests through a variety of social, educational, cultural, and recreational programs. Activities and services will seek to promote personal growth and independent living, enhancing the self-image of older persons.

Programs will provide opportunities to:

- \* maintain & improve physical conditioning
- \* participate in activities of interest
- \* learn new skills
- \* develop satisfying interpersonal relationships
- \* develop leadership capabilities
- \* develop cultural enrichment
- \* develop creative capabilities
- \* assume responsibilities and increase independence

Efforts will be made to respond to individual differences such as life-style, ethnicity, values, experiences, needs, interests, abilities, skills, age and health status by providing opportunities for a variety of types and levels of involvement, including:

- \* small and large group activities
- \* active and spectator participation
- \* intergenerational programs
- \* involvement in the general community
- \* services to individuals

The program will be flexible and responsive to changes in the needs and interests of individual participants, and to any change in the characteristics of the older adult population of Gaston County.

In addition to intergenerational programs, there will be other times when it is advantageous to allow younger adults to participate in classes and activities with Center clientele. The Director shall have the discretion to permit those under 55 years of age to participate on a case-by-case basis when such participation enhances older adult involvement. Younger adult participation will in no way inhibit or limit access to classes or services by Senior

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adults. This same philosophy will apply to older adults desiring to use the Center who live outside of Gaston County.

Program planning will involve staff, volunteers, members of the Advisory Board and participants. Program planning will be carried out in five steps:

- (1) identification of specific needs and interests of older adults
- (2) determination of priorities
- (3) determination of available resources needed to modify or add programs
- (4) implementation of programs
- (5) monitoring and evaluation

A variety of approaches will be utilized in obtaining information used in the above planning process.

Staff and volunteers working with the Center's programs will encourage participants' personal growth by developing warm, friendly relationships; respecting individual needs, interests, rights and values; encouraging responsible assumption of obligations; assisting with personal problems and coping skills; and supporting involvement in decision making.

In this respect, it is the Center's core philosophy that participants take over leadership roles in the various activities offered at the Center. This also allows staff more opportunities to develop more and newer types of programs. Staff will provide technical services and support for all programs offered through the Center..

Gaston County Senior Center is not responsible for monitoring the activities of any individual visiting and/or participating in services or programs on or off the grounds of the complex.

Under Section 25.1250 (P.(a) (3) (from section 504) of the Americans Disabilities Act (ADA) "a public entity is not required to take any action that would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of its service, program, or activity...(Note: the decision around 'fundamental alteration' must be made by the staff supervisor).

Section 36.303 (g) of the ADA states, "Public accommodations are not required to offer customers, clients, or participants individually prescribed devices... or personal assistance in such things as eating, toileting, or dressing."

Individuals wishing to participate in programs held at the Center should meet the following criteria in order to be considered appropriate for service provision:

- \*able to toilet themselves
- \*feed themselves
- \*be oriented to their current surroundings
- \*behave in a non-aggressive or non-disruptive manner
- \*participate in a program or activity that is appropriate for them
- \*desire to participate in a program or activity

Persons not meeting these criteria are welcome but must be escorted at all times, for their well being, while participating in activities on or off the grounds of the complex. If the person being escorted attends an activity, the escort should be knowledgeable of the activity so that the instructor will not need to individually instruct the escort.