



Celebrate the Senior Nutrition Program

[ACL.GOV/SNP/CELEBRATE](https://acl.gov/snp/celebrate)

ACTIVITY IDEAS & EVENT TIPS

Activity Ideas

Each of these suggestions can be tailored to suit your community. Make the ideas your own and don't forget to promote your activities through check-in phone calls, flyers delivered with meals, social media, or any other way you're connected to your community.

STORIES

Stories build community. They can connect us even when we can't be physically together. They are also a great way to look back on how far your program or community has come — whether it's over the last 2 years or 20. If you're interested in celebrating through stories, try these ideas.

- Interview seniors, partners, staff, volunteers, or other people in your community who can speak about the value and impact of your program. Everyone has a story. Interviews can be shared as written pieces, videos, or even social media posts and quotes.
- Host a storytelling party. Select a theme or question to focus the content. Give each person about five minutes to tell a story that relates to that topic. For those who may not want to speak in public, encourage them to write down their story and submit it for someone else to read.

SOCIAL MEDIA

More and more, technology is a part of our lives — and part of our communities. Online spaces allow us new ways to continue the activities we used to do primarily in person, like sharing information and building relationships.

- Ask your followers to share their wisdom or tips online, either using a unique hashtag or by posting to a forum you manage. Provide guidance like length or word limits, what you'd most like to hear, and a contact person for questions. When choosing a theme or question to guide responses, be sure it's easy and fun to answer (e.g., the best healthy thing you've ever eaten). It's all about generating connections and promoting — even indirectly — your program. Lots of activity under your hashtag means lots of attention in general!
- Organize a selfie challenge. Create a theme phrase, such as "I love my senior nutrition program because..." or "[Program] matters because..." and a related hashtag (e.g., #SeniorNutritionProgram). Ask community members to fill in the blank, take a photo holding a paper with the sentence, and then post it using your hashtag. You can even create a simple template with the phrase that can be printed out to make it easier for those who want to join in. Here are some other accommodations that can help:
 - » Offer an email address where someone who is not on (or not comfortable with) social media can submit a photo. Then share it — anonymously, unless otherwise requested — on their behalf.
 - » Anyone who does not want their photo used can take a picture of the sign by itself or write in their response via email or comment on social media.
 - » For those who can't print a sign, have them write the sentence on any kind of paper or record a video.

Events

A community event is a great way to celebrate and promote your program. There are countless approaches to this kind of activity, and all can be done virtually. Here are some examples.

Idea 1: Invite community members to a special event celebrating the anniversary. This could be a parking lot event, a virtual group meal, or a special program like storytelling. Invite a keynote speaker to give remarks. Consider contests, awards, raffles, games, and themes (like 1972!) to make the event fun and festive.

 Tip: Check out these [Senior Nutrition Program Activity Guides](#) for ideas.

Idea 2: Host an event focused on starting something new. This could be a brainstorming session where seniors and others contribute (or react to) ideas for programming features like new menu items or activities. Break into teams to develop ideas and then vote for a favorite.

Alternatively, an event could address a specific issue, like finding imaginative ways to get vital nutrients at each meal. Consider a game or moderated chat format to keep it light.

Idea 3: Coordinate a class or workshop related to nutrition, socialization, or well-being. This event could range from a fun, motivational session on nutrition tips to a physical activity session focused on balance and strength.

For something more relaxed, consider an activity around self-expression, like painting, that allows everyone an unconventional way to share what the program – or community – means to them in an inspired way. This is a great way to produce something to showcase, either in person or online.

5 "Ps" for Event Success


PLAN

Set clear goals. Identify people who can help, including volunteers and vendors. Communicate regularly with your team and track major decisions. Select your event date and time early in the planning process. Create an agenda as one of the first steps and be sure that speakers, special guests, and key stakeholders have the time reserved.

 Tip: Before making decisions about the event format and agenda, finalize a budget.


PARTNER

Join forces with others in your community who can provide in-kind services, volunteers, or materials. They may also have connections to speakers or entertainers. Local businesses, like restaurants, may agree to provide game prizes like gift cards. Partners can also help draw attention to your activities online, reaching a wider audience.

 Tip: Contact existing *and* would-be collaborators – events are a great way to create new relationships.

PROMOTE

Develop a publicity plan to promote your event. Use traditional newspaper ads and community board flyers, as well as your website, blog, and/or social media. You might also consider contacting a local reporter. See [quick tips for working with the media](#). Conduct registration online via any of the free options available. If you have an existing email distribution list, use it. Virtual invitations can make your email stand out.

 Tip: Not ready to open registration? Send a save-the-date first.

PRODUCE

Virtual: Choose a platform that fits your budget. Free or low-cost options may work for smaller events of up to 100 people. Make sure the platform is accessible for participants and includes any special features you need (e.g., recording, whiteboard, breakout rooms). Conduct a dry run well in advance to refine logistics and troubleshoot technical issues. Remember, attention spans are shorter online. Aim for an hour-long event that's interactive.

Assign at least one moderator to answer questions, engage participants, and keep time. Interact as much as possible, engaging people with nutrition-related games, polls, and/or Q&A segments.

In person: Safety must come first. Always follow [local health department](#) and [state health department](#) guidance. You may wish to offer hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, and masks for those who wish to use them.

Beyond safety, think about other logistics – is the location accessible? Is there ample parking? Do you need to rent any equipment or furniture?


Bring plenty of supplies and other resources. Consider these standard event items:

- Refreshments (consider asking a local business to donate snacks).
- Public address (PA) system/microphone.
- Other audio/visual equipment, such as a laptop and projector for slideshows.
- Pens and notepads.
- Welcome/registration table materials such as name badges.
- Handouts, brochures, and similar material.
- Decorations and giveaways.
- Transportation or related information for participants.
- Inclement weather plan for events outdoors.
- Photo release forms to gain permission to use images after the event ([sample release](#)).

 Tip: Ask coordinators and volunteers to wear matching shirts or dress in the same color.

PUBLISH

Post a summary of the event on your website and highlight key aspects on social media. Make sure to tag the accounts of any partners who helped you and include [#SeniorNutritionProgram](#). Include photos or graphics to gain traction for your posts. If possible, gather feedback on what participants liked/disliked, so you can use it to inform future events.

 Tip: Include a call to action. Promote upcoming activities, drive traffic to your website, or ask for something else.