



National Community Engagement
Academic Network
सहयोग सहभाग



Ageless Bonds

*Harnessing the Wisdom of Elders
for Fostering Community Engagement*

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National Community Engagement Academic Network

Nurturing the Wellness of Society by Caring for the Aged

Today's Youth for Yesteryear's Youth!



Our senior citizens have lived through times of great change and have contributed to society in countless ways. From raising families and building careers to volunteering and mentoring, their impact is immeasurable.

**National Senior Citizens Day
21st August**

We celebrate the rich history, resilience, and ongoing contributions of our elders.



*"Beautiful young people are accidents of nature, but beautiful old people are works of art."
- Eleanor Roosevelt*

Students and educational institutions can significantly contribute to the well-being of the elderly by engaging in various activities such as community service, inter-generational programmes, health promotion, technology assistance, and creating an elderly-friendly campus environment. These activities foster social responsibility, empathy, and inter-generational connection, benefiting both students and the elderly population. By incorporating these efforts into community engagement, we can create a more inclusive and supportive environment for the elderly.



Every phase of life contributes distinctive strands to the complex tapestry of human experience, enriching the tale of our common voyage. Age becomes a significant and inevitable aspect as we learn to navigate the intricate patterns of development and change. Taking care of the elderly is a big obligation that transcends time and culture, and it is not only a familial duty. We must consider why caring for the elderly is an essential component of humane societies and not merely a job. We gain knowledge of the social advantages, moral obligations, and profound impact that appropriate elder care has on the well-being of our neighborhoods. A community that appreciates its elders and recognizes their enduring significance in the grand scheme of things may be fostered by compassion and obligation.

Celebrating National Senior Citizens Day: Honoring Our Elders

National Senior Citizens Day is celebrated on 21st August to honor and appreciate the contributions of seniors who have shaped our communities through their wisdom, hard work, and dedication. These seniors have lived through significant changes and have contributed to society in various ways, including raising families, building careers, volunteering, and mentoring. Their stories are a testament to perseverance and dedication, and their experiences and lessons are invaluable. Communities around the country are celebrating National Senior Citizens Day with various events and activities.



National Community Engagement Academic Network (NCEAN) is dedicated to promoting knowledge sharing, capacity building, and student engagement among academic institutions. We advocate for community engagement and inclusivity, fostering connections that enhance overall wellbeing.

Community Engagement involves active participation, collaboration, and interaction in decision-making, problem-solving, and collective action. We believe that ***caring for the elderly is crucial, as their wisdom and experiences contribute significantly to the community.***

NCEAN has collaborated with Higher Educational Institutions and conducted activities such as :

- **Meeting the Elderly**
- **Memory Lane**
- **Tech Buddy**
- **Fitness and Wellness**
- **Feed with Care and Affection**
- **Visiting an Old-age Home**

Community engagement with the elderly is crucial for fostering social connections, enhancing the well-being of older adults, and creating a more inclusive society. Communities can create environments where seniors feel valued, connected, and supported, while also enriching the lives of those who engage with them.

Celebrating National Senior Citizens Day: Honoring Our Elders

Getting students involved in the National Senior Citizens Day celebration is a great approach to promote inter-generational relationships and instill in them the value of recognizing and appreciating their elders. NCEAN charted out specific instructions to students to adhere to while conducting the activities with the elderly.

Meeting the Elderly:

- ⇒ Dress in a manner that is respectful and comfortable.
- ⇒ Meet the elderly in the neighbourhood or at home.
- ⇒ Express genuine interest to talk in a very open and honest way.
- ⇒ Share updates about your own life, experiences.
- ⇒ Inquire about their day or week. Encourage the elderly person to share their memories or experiences.
- ⇒ If possible, Tune with Nature
- ⇒ Learn gardening activity where both youth and elderly participants can work together.
- ⇒ Celebrate festival with the elderly.



Promoting students' involvement in caring for the elderly within their educational institution school, family, neighbourhood, and community entails cultivating a culture that values empathy, participation, and social responsibility!



Celebrating National Senior Citizens Day: Honoring Our Elders

Memory Lane Activity:

- ⇒ Encourage residents, especially the elderly, to share their stories and photographs
- ⇒ Collect with your smart phone photographs, documents, artifacts, and any other historical materials
- ⇒ Conduct interviews. Use audio or video recording equipment.
- ⇒ Arrange storytelling sessions
- ⇒ Host community *Rangoli* sessions to involve residents in the creative process.



Tech Buddy Activity:

- ⇒ Identify the specific technology-related needs of the elderly participants. This could include using smart phones, tablets, computers, or specific applications.
- ⇒ Pair each tech-savvy youth with an elderly individual
- ⇒ Conduct an orientation session for both tech-savvy youth and elderly participants.
- ⇒ Start with basics like navigating the device, understanding icons, and gradually progress to more advanced tasks.



Fitness and Wellness Activity

- ⇒ Identify the fitness and wellness needs of the community by surveying residents or conducting discussions.
- ⇒ Find a suitable venue that accommodates the planned activities, considering factors like space, flooring, and accessibility.
- ⇒ Collaborate with certified fitness instructors or wellness experts to lead a fitness or wellness classes or workshops. Ensure they have experience working gently with diverse age groups.
- ⇒ Ensure safety standards are met during all activities. This includes proper supervision, first aid readiness, and adherence to any relevant health guidelines.



Celebrating National Senior Citizens Day: Honoring Our Elders

Feed with Care and Affection Activity:

- ⇒ Take into account any dietary restrictions or health conditions the elderly person may have. Consult with healthcare professionals if necessary.
- ⇒ Set up a pleasant and comfortable dining area.
- ⇒ Modify the texture of the food if needed, especially if the person has difficulty chewing or swallowing. This might involve pureeing or softening certain foods.
- ⇒ Be mindful of portion sizes, taking into account the individual's appetite and nutritional requirements. Avoid overwhelming them with large portions.



Visiting an Old-age Home:

- ⇒ Research local old-age homes or senior day care facilities.
- ⇒ You can do this through online searches, recommendations, or by contacting community organizations. Reach out to the chosen day care facility in advance.
- ⇒ Ask the staff about any specific rules or guidelines for visitors.
- ⇒ Plan what you would like to do during your visit.
- ⇒ Smile, introduce yourself, and be open to engaging in conversations with the residents.
- ⇒ If there are group activities or events happening, consider participating.
- ⇒ Be a good listener.



Celebrating National Senior Citizens Day: Honoring Our Elders

Engaging with and supporting senior citizens is crucial for building compassionate and cohesive communities. Seniors hold a significant and multifaceted role in society, contributing to various aspects of social, cultural, and economic life. They are custodians of wisdom and experience, offering insights that can guide younger generations. They also have a historical perspective, providing valuable context and understanding of societal changes.

Seniors often act as keepers of cultural traditions, customs, and languages, ensuring that these important aspects of identity are passed down and preserved. Through sharing stories and anecdotes, they keep family and community histories alive, fostering a sense of belonging and continuity. Community engagement is another important aspect of senior citizens' lives, with many actively volunteering their time and skills to support various community services such as libraries, hospitals, schools, and non-profit organizations.

Economic contributions are also essential for seniors, with some continuing to work beyond traditional retirement age, bringing experience and stability to the workforce. They also contribute significantly to the economy, supporting businesses and industries. Entrepreneurship is another way seniors can drive innovation and economic growth.

Caring for senior citizens is not only a moral imperative but also essential for maintaining healthy and inclusive societies. Addressing their needs ensures that they continue to live dignified, fulfilling lives while remaining active members of the community. This includes addressing health and well-being, such as physical health, mental health, safety and security, social inclusion, respect and dignity, intergenerational solidarity, economic and practical support, and transportation and mobility.

Students play a pivotal role in supporting senior citizens through various forms of engagement, support, and advocacy. These interactions are mutually beneficial, providing learning and growth opportunities for students while improving the well-being of seniors. Examples of these interactions include volunteering and service, organizing events, offering educational and skill-sharing programs, and promoting inter-generational projects.

Advocacy and awareness are also essential for supporting senior citizens. Students can organize campaigns and events to highlight issues affecting seniors, engage in dialogues and advocacy efforts to influence policies that benefit the elderly population, and initiate fundraisers to support programs and services for seniors. Emotional and psychological support can be provided through active listening, support groups, and creative therapies.

Internship and professional development are also essential for seniors. Healthcare interns provide students with practical skills and contribute to better service delivery. Social work experience can be gained by participating in programs focused on elderly care. Research opportunities can inform better practices and policies for senior care.

The engagement between senior citizens and students is a cornerstone of a compassionate and dynamic society. Recognizing and valuing the roles that seniors play enriches communities and ensures that their contributions continue to have a lasting impact. By actively participating in the support and care of the elderly, students not only enhance the lives of seniors but also gain invaluable experiences, lessons, and personal growth. Fostering intergenerational relationships promotes empathy, understanding, and solidarity, building stronger and more inclusive communities for all.

"A society that doesn't value its older people denies its roots and endangers its future."

— Nelson Mandela





Dealing with Dementia in the Elderly



Understanding Dementia

- Dementia is a general term for cognitive impairments affecting memory, thinking, behavior, and daily activities.
- Common forms include Alzheimer's disease.

Symptoms of Dementia

- Memory loss: Forgetting recent events, names, and places.
- Confusion: Difficulty understanding time, place, or familiar faces.
- Communication problems: Struggling to find the right words or follow conversations.
- Behavioral Changes: Increased anxiety, depression, aggression, or apathy.
- Difficulty with routine tasks: Challenges with tasks such as cooking, dressing, or managing finances.

Impact on Daily Life

- Dementia affects every aspect of a person's life and requires ongoing care and support.

Caring for Elders with Dementia

- Create a safe and supportive environment: Reduce hazards, simplify routines, use visual cues, and provide emotional and psychological support.
- Promote physical and cognitive health: Encourage light exercises, mental stimulation, and a balanced diet.
- Manage behavioral changes: Stay calm, establish a consistent routine, seek professional help, and involve loved ones in the care process.

Role of Students in Supporting Elders with Dementia

- Volunteering and Engagement: Volunteer to visit dementia care facilities or nursing homes, assist in memory aid activities, and provide technology assistance.
- Awareness and Advocacy: Organize awareness campaigns, fundraise, and teach younger students or peers about dementia.
- Research and Learning: Contribute to dementia care and treatment research, gain hands-on experience through internships and volunteering.
- Emotional Support: Companionship and creative therapies can provide joy and connection.

Role of Society in Supporting Elders with Dementia

- Providing Accessible Healthcare and Services: Ensure affordable and comprehensive healthcare, support services, and training for caregivers.
- Creating Dementia-Friendly Communities: Promote public awareness, design inclusive spaces, and develop community programs.
- Legal and Financial Support: Advocate for laws protecting the rights of individuals with dementia, provide financial support, and facilitate advance care planning.
- Supporting Caregivers: Establish and promote support groups, provide respite services, and encourage workplace flexibility.
- Investing in Research and Innovation: Increase funding for dementia research and support the development of new technologies and approaches.

Dementia Helplines in India

Alzheimer's and Related Disorders Society of India (ARDSI)

Helpline: +91 99629 41554

Website: ardsi.org

Description: ARDSI provides support, counseling, and information about dementia and Alzheimer's disease across India. They also offer resources and support groups for caregivers.

National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS)

Helpline: 080-46110007

Website: nimhans.ac.in

Description: NIMHANS offers a helpline that provides mental health support, including assistance for those affected by dementia and their families.

Dementia India Strategy

Helpline: +91 78921 58661

Website: dementiaindia.org

Description: An initiative focused on improving dementia care and support in India, offering resources and guidance for caregivers.

Nightingales Medical Trust

Helpline: +91 888444 0646 (Bangalore) / +91 988600 4140 (Hyderabad)

Website: nightingaleseldercare.com

Description: Nightingales offers a helpline specifically for dementia-related support and runs memory clinics and elder care services.

In the face of dementia, patience is not a virtue but a necessity. It is the gentle touch that helps navigate the fog of forgetfulness. Understanding dementia means recognizing that the person may not remember your words, but they will remember how you made them feel.

"Volunteering After Retirement: Giving Back to the Community"

These are some motivational tales of elderly Indians who volunteered and gave back to their communities during their retirement years:

Mr. D. Prakash Rao: *The Tea Seller Who Turned Into An Education Champion*

D. Prakash Rao, a modest tea vendor from Cuttack, dedicated his life to teaching the less fortunate kids in his neighborhood. Rao opened a school for underprivileged kids in the slums with his small retirement income, offering them free education and food. He devoted his life to providing these kids with a brighter future because he thought that education was the key to ending the cycle of poverty. Rao received the esteemed Padma Shri award in 2019 as a result of his contributions.



Dr. Kiran Seth—The founder of SPIC MACAY (Society for the Promotion of Indian Classical Music and Culture Among Youth) Dr. Kiran Seth, is credited for continuing to promote Indian classical arts even after retiring.



The organization is located across India. The younger generation's exposure to Indian classical music, dance, and culture has been greatly aided by SPIC MACAY. Seth's commitment to protecting and advancing India's rich cultural legacy has had a long-lasting effect, and his initiatives have encouraged many students to value and engage with the arts.

Retirement is not the end, but rather a fresh start for giving back; their commitment to helping others and their enthusiasm for changing the world are very motivating.



Mrs. Sudha Murthy: *An Entire Life of Giving*

The Infosys Foundation's chairman, Sudha Murthy, has been an inspiration to philanthropy in India. She continued to concentrate on her social work after retiring, making contributions to rural development, healthcare, and education. She has constructed schools, hospitals, and libraries via the Infosys Foundation and has provided funding

for a number of other projects that attempt to enhance the lives of the impoverished. Her unceasing efforts have had a big influence all throughout India.

Drs. Prakash and Mandakini Amte: *A Lifetime of Service to Tribal Communities*

For the sake of the tribal populations of Maharashtra, Drs. Prakash and Mandakini Amte have devoted their life to their profession. Prakash's father, Baba Amte, established the Lok Biradari Prakalp, where the pair continued to labor even after Prakash retired. The Madia Gond tribe now has better access to social services, healthcare, and education, which has improved their standard of living. They have received several honors for their work, including the Magsaysay Award.



Mr. Shyam Saran Negi (Late): *The First Voter in India and Advocate for Civic Engagement*

After becoming well-known as the country's first voter in 1951, Shyam Saran Negi dedicated his retirement years to inspiring others to use their



right to vote. Negi enthusiastically participated in every election far into his 100s and rose to prominence in his community as a spokesperson for voter education. Many others have found encouragement in his dedication to democracy and civic involvement, demonstrating that it is never too late to make a difference.

Wundavalli Foundation Trust is a registered Trust promoting community engagement through National Community Engagement Academic Network (NCEAN). The National Community Engagement Academic Network promotes knowledge sharing, capacity building, and student engagement among academic institutions. It strengthens connections, advocates for community engagement, and encourages collaboration, raising public awareness, and inclusivity.

The Trust aims to meet the growing needs of the elderly, providing medical and psychosocial care based on Bharatiya Cultural Values. It plans and executes comprehensive strategies to make the elderly live a meaningful life, offering services for healthcare, recreational activities, meaningful occupations, and attitudinal revision. The Trust aims to ensure that the elderly live with respect and dignity in a secure, compassionate, and congenial environment. The Trust works with educational institutions harnessing the power of students by establishing a community engagement platform where society learns family and cultural values from the elderly. It also exercises social responsibility by providing companionship and feeling of inclusion for the elderly. The Trust also uses festivals, key dates, and cultural avenues to propagate family values and the need for taking care of the elderly. The Trust proposes to trigger curricular changes in academic courses, to include care for the elderly as part of Corporate Social Responsibility, and develop teams of volunteers in educational institutions.

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