

Evidence-Based Programs for Older Adults and People with Disabilities

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1. Evidence-based programs

Evidence-based programs are proven programs that work. In order to be considered “evidence-based,” programs must be evaluated using a control or comparison group, with documented and published outcomes.

Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) are required to use their federal health promotion Older Americans Act funds to support programs that are evidence-based. The Administration for Community Living defines evidence-based programs (<https://acl.gov/programs/health-wellness/disease-prevention>) as

- a. Programs recognized as evidence-based by a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (including Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Administration for Community Living, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration), or
- b. A program that has demonstrated through evaluation to be effective for improving the health and wellbeing or reducing disease, disability and/or injury among older adults, and meets the following requirements:
 - Proven effective with older adult population, using experimental or quasi-experimental design; *and*
 - Research results published in a peer-review journal; *and*
 - Fully translated and carried out in one or more community site(s); *and*
 - Includes developed dissemination products available to the public.

2. Resources to help select programs

These two online lists of evidence-based programs for older adults and people with disabilities provide key information on program format, required training, program costs, outcomes, and program contact information:

- a. National Council on Aging list of **evidence-based health promotion programs** that is updated periodically: <https://www.ncoa.org/resources/ebpchart/>
- b. The Best Practice Caregiving site lists **evidence-based dementia programs for family caregivers**: <https://bpc.caregiver.org>

3. **Oregon evidence-based program resources**

The following section provides Oregon-specific resources for some of the programs included on the NCOA and Family Caregiver Alliance list under #2 above.

- **Chronic Disease Self-Management Programs** (*also known in Oregon as Living Well with Chronic Conditions*)
www.healthoregon.org/livingwell
- **Matter of Balance**
Contact Kayt Zundell, OHSU's ThinkFirst Program, at 503-494-5353 or zundel@ohsu.edu.
- **National Diabetes Prevention Program**
<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/HPA/dsi-tc/Pages/Diabetes-Prevention-Program.aspx>
- **Otago Exercise Program**
<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/PREVENTIONWELLNESS/SAFELIVING/ALLPREVENTION/Pages/Otago.aspx>
- **Powerful Tools for Caregivers**
www.powerfultoolsforcaregivers.org/
- **Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance** (*also known as Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance or YMCA Moving for Better Balance*)
www.ori.org or 541-484-2123
- **Walk with Ease**
<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/fch/walk-with-ease>

4. **Additional Oregon programs**

The following programs are recognized as evidence-based by Oregon DHS Aging & People with Disabilities, but have not yet been recognized or added to the lists under #2 above. (These programs will be removed from this section as they are added to the two national lists in #2 above.)

- **Aging Mastery Program:** This 10-session group program developed by the National Council on Aging uses a trained facilitator and outside speakers to address topics including exercise, nutrition, finances, advance care planning, community engagement, and healthy relationships. A 12-session version specifically for caregivers is also available. www.ncoa.org/healthy-aging/aging-mastery-program/
- **Better Bones & Balance:** Based on research at Oregon State University's Bone Research Laboratory, this strength and stepping exercise class is designed to reduce the risk of osteoporosis-related fractures. Outcomes include improved strength, balance and mobility, and reduced bone loss. <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/physicalactivity/bbb>
- **Buried in Treasures:** A 16-session workshop for individuals who identify as having problems with excessive hoarding. A trained peer or professional facilitator leads group discussions, with use of a book and weekly homework assignments. www.mutual-support.com/the_buried_in_treasures_workshop
- **Healthy Lifestyles:** A 3-day health promotion workshop for people with disabilities, available in English and Spanish developed by the Oregon Office on Disability and Health at Oregon Health & Science University. Healthy Lifestyles uses an integrated wellness and empowerment approach and provides participants with knowledge and skills to adopt healthy behaviors. www.ohsu.edu/oregon-office-on-disability-and-health/healthy-lifestyles
- **Healing Pathways:** A peer-implemented group mental health program for women with physical disabilities who are dealing with depression, this 14-week program was developed by researchers at OHSU and evaluated in partnership with several Oregon Centers for Independent Living.
- **Tai Chi:** Research indicates that, more important than the style of Tai Chi, is the cumulative length of time that this type of exercise is practiced. While AAAs are strongly encouraged to support one of the Tai Chi programs from the National Council on Aging list in #2 above, Oregon follows guidance provided by the CDC in 2013 in allowing AAAs to use Older Americans Act Title III D funds to support other Tai Chi classes that meet these requirements:

- a. Instructors are experienced in teaching Tai Chi, and in working with older adults.
 - b. Classes are offered at least twice a week, for a total of 48 hours or more. Ideally classes will be held for the full 48-50 hours (twice a week for 6 months or three times a week for 4 months). However, it is also possible to offer Tai Chi as two 12-week series; in this case, the two 12-week classes should be offered consecutively and participants should be actively encouraged to continue on for the full 48 hours of classes.
 - c. The Tai Chi forms are appropriate for older adults.
- **WISE** (Wellness Initiative for Senior Education): A six-week group program delivered by two trained facilitators, WISE helps older adult participants in medication use and misuse, stress management, the aging process, depression, alcohol and prescription drug abuse, and early signs of depression. Programs are held two hours/week for six weeks, for 8-15 participants, and are designed for any interested older adult (not based on any specific health needs or screening). <https://www.njpn.org/wise>