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Marketing toolkit

Evidence-Based Physical Activity Programs





Lake Havasu, Arizona  
Walk With Ease

Mooresville, North Carolina  
Fit & Strong!

Tualatin, Oregon  
Active Living Every Day

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# About the Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to give you an overview of the three evidenced-based programs offered through NRPA’s Instructor Training grants and what to consider when planning to implement your programs as well as provide you with template marketing and public relations materials to help you promote your involvement in these programs.

For questions or additional tips, please contact Colleen Pittard at [cpittard@nrpa.org](mailto:cpittard@nrpa.org).

# About the Active Living Every Day Program

Active Living Every Day (ALED) is a group-based behavior-change physical activity program developed at the Cooper Institute that focuses on helping sedentary people become and stay physically active.

## Program philosophy:

* **Moderate amounts and intensities of physical activity result in significant health benefit*s*.** Conducting 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity activity, or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity, or a combination of both, pay off big in terms of health benefits.
* **Lifestyle physical activity is an important alternative to more traditional fitness-center based exercise**. Everyone is different; some people prefer a structured exercise program. But when you’re just starting out, lifestyle physical activity gets you moving without special equipment, and you can do it anywhere.
* **People are more likely to become and stay active when taught appropriate lifestyle skills based on their readiness to change.** Wonder why you start a new program, then are right back where you started six months later? You haven’t changed your behavior. This program teaches you how to change.

## How does it work?

Participants — about 20 people in a group — come together for one-hour, weekly sessions for 12 weeks of education and discussion to learn skills (i.e., identifying and overcoming barriers, setting goals, creating an action plan) needed to become more physically active. A variety of moderate and vigorous physical activities are discussed in the program, giving the background for individuals to make their personal decisions for the type and amount of exercise they want to do. Participants do their actual physical activity outside of the group setting. Facilitators (instructors) that teach the course are trained and certified. A participant book is used in conjunction with the course.

## Who can participate?

Anyone interested in becoming physically active.

## Template Press Release (Active Living Every Day)

Following is a template press release for you to customize and distribute to media in your local community. Please send us a copy of the final press release and let us know when and where your release will be distributed. Please contact NRPA if you need further assistance or information about distributing your press release.

DEPARTMENT LETTERHEAD

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Media Contact:

[Contact Name]  
[Agency Name]  
[Phone]  
[E-mail]

**[Department Name] Receives Instructor Training Grant for Physical Activity Program** *Grant funding provided by the National Recreation and Park Association and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

**[City, State Abbr., Date, 2020]** – Professionals working at [Department Name] soon will be equipped with skills necessary to teach adults ages 50+ how to become and remain physically active. Thanks to an instructor training grant from the [National Recreation and Park Association](http://www.nrpa.org/) (NRPA) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov/) (CDC), [Department Name] will offer the [Active Living Every Day](http://www.activeliving.info/) (ALED) program to the [City] community. [City/Department] is one of 16 park and recreation agencies across the country to receive the ALED instructor training grant.

Park and recreation staff at [Department Name] long have been working to incorporate health and wellness into the community. The ALED program, another tool contributing to this work, is based on the discoveries that physical activity need not be strenuous or time consuming to benefit health, and that people are more likely to become and stay physically active when taught the appropriate lifestyle skills. The ALED program’s emphasis on moderate-intensity physical activity and fitting that level of activity in everyday life makes it an appealing alternative to traditional fitness programs. Together, NRPA and the CDC aim to improve the quality of life of older adults living with chronic conditions such as arthritis and diabetes through this trusted and measurable physical activity program administered by local parks and recreation.

“Sixty percent of adults in the United States suffer from one or more chronic conditions, and at least 40 percent do not engage in any form of physical activity—including people who live right here in [City],” said [Department Director]. “This grant from NRPA and the CDC allows us to help the older adults in our community, and adds a new way [City] residents can work to achieve a healthy lifestyle.”

The programs provided by [Department Name] will be offered once per week for twelve weeks by certified and trained instructors. The classes are ideally suited for anyone that is interested in learning new ways to become and stay active. The program is scheduled to begin [Time/Date].

For more information, visit [Department website].

###

[Add Department Boiler Plate]

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of more than 60,000 recreation and park professionals and citizens, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit [www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org/). For digital access to NRPA’s flagship publication, Parks & Recreation, visit [www.parksandrecreation.org](http://www.parksandrecreation.org/).

## Website/Ad Template (Active Living Every Day)

### No time for exercise?

Physical activity doesn’t need to be time consuming or strenuous to improve your health. [Department Name] is pleased to offer Active Living Every Day (ALED) classes, designed to help you make simple lifestyle changes to incorporate activity into your everyday life.

If you’ve started and abandoned exercise programs in the past, these classes will give you the tools to:

* Overcome barriers to physical activity
* Set realistic goals
* Stay motivated

Add physical activity to your life and keep it there for a lifetime!

**Active Living Every Day**

[Department name]

Date: [date]

Time: [time]

Location: [location]

Cost: [cost]

For more information or to register, visit [web address].

## Social Media (Active Living Every Day)

Share the great news about the ALED Instructor Training grant with your community on social media platforms such a Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

To share with NRPA, use the @ symbol and the “handle” or name. For example:

* @NationalRecreationandParkAssociation (Facebook)
* @NRPA\_News (Twitter)
* @nrpa (Instagram)

Please use the hashtag **#HealthyAginginParks** in your social posts.

Feel free to use and modify the examples below for your social media accounts.

### Examples for Facebook:

* We are excited to announce that we were chosen for an Active Living Every Day instructor training grant from the @National Recreation and Park Association! The grant will help us provide an evidence-based physical activity program to our adults 50+!
* It is never too later to live a healthy lifestyle! Come join us for a fun hour of skill learning, socializing and refreshments with our Active Living Every Day program! @National Recreation and Park Association
* We are putting our grant from @National Recreation and Park Association to use by providing a low-impact physical activity program to older adults in our community! Join us! [Link to registration information/photo of flyer]

### Examples for Twitter:

* Add physical activity to your life and keep it there! Join us for Active Living Every Day! #**HealthyAginginParks** @NRPA\_News [link for more info]
* How about an exercise class you won’t want to quit? Join us for Active Living Every Day! #**HealthyAginginParks** @NRPA\_News [link for more info/share photo of program or flyer]

### Examples for Instagram:

* Check out our older adults enjoying their Active Living Every Day class! #**HealthyAginginParks** @nrpa (add photo)
* Did you know that 1 in 4 older adults across the country are inactive? Don’t be a statistic! Join our Active Living Every Day program and learn the skills necessary to become and stay physically active. #**HealthyAginginParks** @nrpa (add photo)

# About the Fit & Strong! Program

Fit & Strong! is a physical activity self-management program for older adults or persons with lower extremity osteoarthritis (OA). The program has demonstrated significant functional and physical activity improvements. It combines flexibility, strength training and aerobic walking with health education for sustained behavior change.

## Fit & Strong! helps participants:

* Gain a clear understanding of what osteoarthritis is and how physical activity tailored to the needs of individuals with arthritis can help them manage arthritis symptoms
* Learn to perform safe stretching, balance, aerobic and strengthening exercises, which gradually increase in frequency, duration and intensity over time
* Incorporate physical activity into their lifestyles by exercising three times per week for 1 hour.
* Reduce arthritis symptoms
* Develop individualized, tailored, multiple component physical activity programs that are sustainable after the program ends
* Maintain independent functioning

## How does it work?

Groups meet for either eight weeks, three times per week or two times per week for 12 weeks total of 24 total sessions). Each session lasts 90 minutes. The first 60 minutes are devoted to physical activity, including flexibility, low-impact aerobics, strength training and balance exercises focusing on lower body function. The remaining 30 minutes address health education and problem solving using a structured 24-session curriculum.

## Template Press Release (Fit & Strong!)

Following is a template press release for you to customize and distribute to media in your local community. **Please send us a copy of the final press release and let us know when and where your release will be distributed**. Please contact NRPA if you need further assistance or information about distributing your press release.

DEPARTMENT LETTERHEAD

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Media Contact:

[Contact Name]  
[Agency Name]  
[Phone]  
[E-mail]

**[Department Name] Receives Fit & Strong! Training Grant for Physical Activity Program** *Grant funding provided by the National Recreation and Park Association and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

**[City, State Abbr., Date, 2020] –** [Department Name] staff soon will be offering a new physical activity program for adults ages 50+. Thanks to a grant from the [National Recreation and Park Association](http://www.nrpa.org/) (NRPA) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov/) (CDC) [Department Name] will offer the [Fit & Strong!](http://www.arthritis.org/living-with-arthritis/tools-resources/walk-with-ease/) program to the [City] community. [City/Department] is one of 7 park and recreation agencies across the country to receive the Fit & Strong! Instructor training grant.   
   
Park and recreation professionals at [Department Name] have long been working to improve local health and wellness. The Fit and Strong! program, developed by the Center for Research on Health and Aging at the University of Illinois at Chicago, becomes another tool for these professionals to help those in their community. Recent studies show that multiple component programs like Fit and Strong! can improve functional and physical activity. Together, NRPA and the CDC aim to reach more people suffering from lower extremity mobility issues due to chronic diseases such as arthritis in efforts to improve their physical activity levels and quality of life through this trusted and measurable program administered by local parks and recreation.

“More than 40 percent of U.S. adults are physically inactive — including people who live right here in [City],” said [Department Director]. “This grant from NRPA and the CDC allows us to help the older adults in our community increase their participation in physical activity, and adds a new way [City] residents can work to achieve a healthy lifestyle.”

The programs provided by [Department Name] will be offered [three times per week for eight weeks OR two times per week for 12 weeks] by certified and trained instructors. The classes are ideally suited for anyone with mobility issues looking for a regular, low-impact exercise program in their local community. The program is scheduled to begin [Time/Date].

For more information, visit [Department website].

[Add Department Boiler Plate]

**About The National Recreation and Park Association**The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that all Americans have access to parks and recreation for health, conservation and social equity. Through its network of nearly 60,000 recreation and park professionals and advocates, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit [www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org/). For digital access to NRPA’s flagship publication, *Parks & Recreation*, visit [www.parksandrecreation.org](http://www.parksandrecreation.org/).

###

## Social Media (Fit & Strong!)

Share the great news about the Fit & Strong! grant with your community on social media platforms such a Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

To share with NRPA, use the @ symbol and the “handle” or name. For example:

* @NationalRecreationandParkAssociation (Facebook)
* @NRPA\_News (Twitter)
* @nrpa (Instagram)

Please use the hashtag **#HealthyAginginParks** in your social posts.

Feel free to use and modify the examples below for your social media accounts.

### Examples for Facebook:

* We are excited to announce that we were chosen for a Fit & Strong! grant from the @National Recreation and Park Association! The grant will help us provide an evidence-based physical activity program to our adults 50+.
* Who says older adults can’t have fun and be physically active at the same time? Come join us for our Fit & Strong! program! @National Recreation and Park Association
* We are putting our grant from @National Recreation and Park Association to use by providing older adults in our community ways to reduce arthritis symptoms! Join us! [Link to registration information/photo of flyer]

### Examples for Twitter:

* Looking to increase your flexibility and strength? Join us for Fit & Strong! #**HealthyAginginParks** @NRPA\_News [link for more info]
* Join us and stay active (and socialize) during the winter months! #**HealthyAginginParks** @NRPA\_News [link for more info/share photo pf program or flyer]

### Examples for Instagram:

* Check out our older adults enjoying Fit & Strong! #**HealthyAginginParks** @nrpa (add photo)
* Did you know that 1 in 4 older adults across the country are inactive? Don’t be a statistic! Join our Fit & Strong! program and engage in a fun physical activity program. #**HealthyAginginParks** @nrpa (add photo)

# About the Walk With Ease Program

The Arthritis Foundation’s Walk With Ease (WWE) program was developed to help people with or without arthritis form walking groups whose goals are safety and success. The program’s three major objectives are to provide participants with:

* Education about successful physical activity for people with arthritis
* Education about arthritis management
* Opportunity to begin and develop an ongoing aerobic fitness program.

Walk With Easeis based on research and tested programs in exercise science, behavior change and arthritis management. Sponsored by the Arthritis Foundation and based on work done at Stanford University’s Center for Research in Disease Prevention, the Thurston Arthritis Research Center and Institute on Aging of the University of North Carolina have developed Walk With Ease as a program with proven benefits!

## How does it work?

Groups meet for six weeks, three times per week. Each session lasts about one hour. The length of each session depends on how long the group decides to walk. At the start, some people may only be able to walk 5 to 15 minutes, but the program will help participants gradually build up to at least 30 minutes of walking three times a week. The program can be modified to meet the interests and needs of participants, who walk at their own pace.

Each session begins with a brief discussion on a topic important to successful walking or arthritis management. After the discussion, the group will warm up, stretch, walk, cool down and stretch one last time. Walking with a group is fun, and groups often spend additional time socializing.

## Who can participate?

The Walk With Easeprogram is designed for people with arthritis — adults 18 years or older, male and female, of varying fitness levels. It is also suitable for people without arthritis who would like to begin a regular walking program to gain the benefits of regular aerobic exercise.

## Template Press Release (Walk With Ease)

Following is a template press release for you to customize and distribute to media in your local community. **Please send us a copy of the final press release and let us know when and where your release will be distributed**. Please contact NRPA if you need further assistance or information about distributing your press release.

DEPARTMENT LETTERHEAD

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Media Contact:

[Contact Name]  
[Agency Name]  
[Phone]  
[E-mail]

**[Department Name] Receives Instructor Training Grant for Physical Activity Program** *Grant funding provided by the National Recreation and Park Association and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

**[City, State Abbr., Date, 2020] –** [Department Name] staff soon will be offering adults ages 50+ a new way to stay fit. Thanks to an instructor training grant from the [National Recreation and Park Association](http://www.nrpa.org/) (NRPA) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov/) (CDC), [Department Name] will offer the [Walk With Ease](http://www.arthritis.org/living-with-arthritis/tools-resources/walk-with-ease/) (WWE) program to the [City] community. [City/Department] is one of 22 park and recreation agencies across the country to receive the WWE instructor training grant.   
   
Park and recreation professionals at [Department Name] have long been working to improve health and wellness in the community. The WWE program, developed by the Arthritis Foundation, becomes another tool these professionals can use to help residents. The program is scientifically proven to help reduce pain and stiffness associated with arthritis, but offer benefits for people managing other chronic conditions. Studies by the Thurston Arthritis Research Center and the Institute on Aging at the University of North Carolina have shown that WWE contributes to reduced pain, increased balance and strength, increased levels of physical activity and improved overall health. Together, NRPA and the CDC aim to reach more people living with arthritis and other chronic conditions to improve their levels of physical activity and quality of life through this trusted and measurable program administered by local parks and recreation.

“Sixty percent of adults in the United States suffer from one or more chronic conditions — including people who live right here in [City],” said [Department Director]. “This grant from NRPA and the CDC allows us to help the older adults in our community, and adds a new way [City] residents can work to achieve a healthy lifestyle.”

The programs provided by [Department Name] will be offered three times per week for six weeks by certified and trained instructors. The classes are ideally suited for anyone that is interested in a low-impact exercise program in their local community, especially those looking to manage their chronic condition. The program is scheduled to begin [Time/Date].

For more information, visit [Department website].

[Add Department Boiler Plate]

**The National Recreation and Park Association** is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of more than 60,000 recreation and park professionals and citizens, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit [www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org/). For digital access to NRPA’s flagship publication, *Parks & Recreation*, visit [www.parksandrecreation.org](http://www.parksandrecreation.org/).

###

## Social Media (Walk With Ease)

Share the great news about the WWE Instructor Training grant with your community on social media platforms such a Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

To share with NRPA, use the @ symbol and the “handle” or name. For example:

* @NationalRecreationandParkAssociation (Facebook)
* @NRPA\_News (Twitter)
* @nrpa (Instagram)

Please use the hashtag **#HealthyAginginParks** in your social posts.

Feel free to use and modify the examples below for your social media accounts.

### Examples for Facebook:

* We are excited to announce that we were chosen for a Walk With Ease instructor training grant from the @National Recreation and Park Association! The grant will help us provide an evidence-based physical activity program to our adults 50+!
* Who says older adults can’t have fun and be physically active at the same time? Come join us for a fun hour of walking, socializing and refreshments with our Walk With Ease program! @National Recreation and Park Association
* We are putting our grant from @National Recreation and Park Association to use by providing a low-impact walking program to older adults in our community! Join us! [Link to registration information/photo of flyer]

### Examples for Twitter:

* Looking to increase your flexibility and strength! Join us for Walk With Ease! #**HealthyAginginParks** @NRPA\_News [link for more info]
* Walking is a great way to stay active (and socialize) during the winter months! Join us! #**HealthyAginginParks** @NRPA\_News [link for more info/share photo pf program or flyer]

### Examples for Instagram:

* Check out our older adults enjoying their walking group! #**HealthyAginginParks** @nrpa (add photo)
* Did you know that 1 in 4 older adults across the country are inactive? Don’t be a statistic! Join our Walk With Ease program and engage in a fun physical activity program. #**HealthyAginginParks** @nrpa (add photo)

# Program Logos

For Active Living Every Day:

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For Walk With Ease:



For Fit & Strong!:



# Marketing Strategies: What to Consider When Planning to Offer a Program

## Participants: Who will be recruited to participate?

The first step to offering a new program is understanding the intended audience’s wants and needs from a program. Will the audience be both new and veteran patrons?

1. Assess/survey your intended audience (for example, older adults with diabetes, arthritis, heart disease, etc. or sedentary adults with an interest in physical activity, etc.) and identify their level of interest in the program.
2. Ask the questions below and plan the program promotion and implementation activities based on the responses:
   * What motivates them to become active?
   * How can we motivate them to become and remain active?
   * What are their expectations when joining a new program?
   * What are their anticipated barriers to participation?
     + Will they worry about pain or injury from exercising?
     + Will they not be able to commit to the length of the program?
     + Will there be transportation issues?
     + How far are they willing to travel?
   * What are the plans for **retaining** (maintain participation) and **recovering** (restore interest and participation in the program after absence) the participants?

## Product: What will participants get?

It is important to understand the program you are offering so that you can accurately relay the benefits to the potential participants, and these benefits must be listed on all marketing materials.

1. Participants will want to know:
   * What is in it for me?
   * What are the benefits?
   * What is unique about the program being offered?

## Price: What will this cost the participants?

Consideration for price should include money, time, effort and physical input.

1. What will the program cost the participants?
   * It is affordable?
   * Can the price be reduced based on income?
   * Are scholarships available?
   * Can the program be offered for free?
   * Will participants be willing to pay?

## Commitment: What is the effort and commitment for the participants?

1. How much time and effort will need to go into participation? Can the participant commit to:
   * 1 session per week for 60 minutes for 12 weeks for the ALED program (total 12 hours)
   * 2 or 3 sessions per week for 90 minutes per session for 8 or 12 weeks for the Fit & Strong! program (total 36 hours)
   * 3 sessions per week for 60 minutes per session for 6 weeks for the Walk With Ease Program (total 18 hours)

If not, what are acceptable alternatives that maintain the **fidelity** of the program (i.e., ensure the program is delivered per the manual to achieve the intended outcomes)? Will the participants think the benefits of the program exceed the inputs?

1. Are the potential participants able to meet the minimum physical input for the program?
   * For example, is the potential Walk With Ease participant able to walk for 10 minutes comfortably?

## Place and Time: Is the location accessible? Is the time convenient?

Choosing program times that are convenient and locations that are accessible for the target audience are important strategies.

### Place

1. How many locations will offer the program?
2. Is the location frequently visited by the target audience?
   * Is it easy to get to the class using public transportation?
     + Can transportation be arranged?
3. Is it possible for the class to be offered at a non-park and recreation setting? For example, an unaffiliated senior center, public library or assisted living facility.
4. Does the location have enough space and room for participants to move around comfortably?
5. Are there provisions in place for various weather conditions?
   * Perhaps an indoor walking track for walks during winter months?

### Time

1. What is the best time to offer the program?
   1. Will the scheduled times conflict with other personal responsibilities (for example child care) or other popular programs?
   2. Is the time appropriate for the weather conditions? For example, participants are not likely to show up if the class is offered at noon during the summer months.
2. How can be program be offered in relation to other services offered to the target audience that may maximize attendance?
   1. Can be program be offered immediately before or after the daily meal program?

## Promotion: How do we promote the program?

Strategies to promote the program are critical to the recruitment of program participants, and it is important to know how and where the target population seeks their information.

1. How do we best frame the message so it captures the appeal and value of the program?
2. How can we best reach the intended audience?
   * **Print** — flyers, local newspapers and press releases, brochures, posters, host facility newsletters/catalogues and calendars
   * **Broadcast** — local television announcement
   * **Social Media** — post program information to P&R agency website and Facebook
   * **Face-to-Face Recruitment** — talk to people at promotional/informational events, health and wellness fairs, community centers, senior centers, assisted living facilities, local churches and community businesses, such as medical facilities, physicians’ offices, community libraries and supermarkets.
     + To aid in face-face recruitment, the<<Insert NRPA’s video>> can be shown to demonstrate the expectations and benefits of each program.
3. Is the language of materials appropriate for the intended audience?
4. Is the contact information clear?
5. Is pre-registration required?
6. Are incentives included?
   * What incentives would encourage participation for new and veteran patrons?
7. What partnerships can help spread the word to the intended audience?

## Partnerships: Who will you partner with?

It is important to establish partnerships with other organizations that can help generate support for the program and enhance community outreach.

1. How do we engage new and current partners?
   * Partners can include local community businesses and organizations for sponsorship, outreach and referrals such as local health department and other healthcare facilities, churches, public libraries, etc.
   * For example, programs can be marketed to healthcare organizations to facilitate referrals. See the CDC’s [1.2.3 Approach to Provider Outreach](https://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/marketing-support/1-2-3-approach/index.html) for strategies on how approach and establish partnerships with healthcare organizations.

## Tips

* Assess/survey the intended audience to understand their expectations for the program and any anticipated barriers.
* Seek target audience input regarding place and time.
* Utilize multiple communication channels to reach the target audience.
* Conduct face-to-face informational events in locations frequently visited by the target audience.
* Advertise the program in multiple languages to attract people from various races/ethnicities.
* Recruit participants through partnerships with a variety of entities, such as community social services, hospitals/medical facilities, the local housing authority, Area Agencies on Aging, churches, etc.
* Offer attractive incentives to join and encourage/reward participants to recruit friends and family members to join them.
* Seek donations from local businesses and organizations that could be used as incentives.
* Provide classes in multiple locations, particularly in places where the target audience congregates or lives, such as public libraries, senior centers, churches, assisted living facilities and meal sites.
* Offer the program at a price that is affordable for the target audience.
* Offer a free trial of the program where participant attends the first class without a commitment.
* Offer transportation support, if available, or partner with an organization that does offer this support.

For additional tips and questions, please contact Colleen Pittard at [cpittard@nrpa.org](mailto:cpittard@nrpa.org).