

Community Engagement & Resident Boredom Busters

The ideas and suggestions contained in this document were shared by Service Coordinators and Case Managers from across the State and are being presented by PHFA, Housing Services Department

Activities & Events For Families with Children

1. **High School Graduation (or any big accomplishment) recognition.** Decorate your window/porch/door to show off your loved one's accomplishment and send a picture to the office to be featured in the newsletter.
2. **Family Scavenger Hunt-** Give a list of common things to find either in the house or within the community. Offer a prize for anyone who finds all items.
3. **Costume Contests-** Develop a theme and have a costume contest. You can have people email pictures and have the community vote!
4. **Outdoor Cookouts/Concerts-** During the nice weather enjoy cookouts while maintaining social distancing. You can have concerts, karaoke, talent shows, etc. while also maintaining social distancing. Also encourages creativity and the arts. Make use of the greenspace on your property and also locally as well.
5. **Continue to encourage wellness with families-** You can still hold flu shots, etc. as companies have made adaptations. But you can also start walking clubs and do stair walking competitions, push up challenges, etc. And post to social media or submit #s via email to the Service coordinator. Remember relaxation and mindfulness is also part of wellness so maybe having residents call in to the service coordinator to talk about favorite memories, etc. can help with relaxation.
6. **Develop your own Ice cream truck "cart"-** Service coordinator can get ice cream sandwiches or some other individually wrapped treat and deliver them to the doors or have a space outside to hand them out (of course while keeping social distance). Have a theme each month and dress up to make it even more fun!
7. **Balloon Days-** Each household/door gets a balloon with a number on it. At the end of the day pick a number and whichever household has the number gets a small prize.
8. **Create a resident storybook-** Have the residents pick a topic, then submit a story/picture on that topic and put it together for a community storybook!

Activities & Events For Individuals

Appropriate for residents who are not aged 55 forward but may be living alone

1. Activities for residents who may not be 55 forward but living alone
2. Telephone Games (such as 20 questions or Would You Rather) Residents would call SC and play the game with them. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the residents and also vice versa. Residents were encouraged to play with other residents (that are willing) not just SC.
3. Friendship bags-A large bag (or use a cart, etc) with a bunch of smaller baggies filled with a small prize (knick knack or sweet treat) was delivered to door 1. Door 1 would take 1 small baggie, pass to door 2 and mark off their name so the bag didn't come back to them.
4. Themed Questionnaires- Pass around fun questions about different topics (summer activities, football, favorite vacation spots/memories, etc.) and then posted answers in newsletters or on community bulletin boards
5. Hand written Cards- The staff can hand write cards and deliver them (or mail them) to each residents. Encourage residents to continue the trend to each other.
6. Virtual Engagement- You can do virtual Happy Hours, Football Game get together, soup and chill days, etc. Just about anything that was done in person can be done virtually.
7. Travel Series- I used a program on National Park Services and we "travelled" to each destination. Most of my residents didn't have their own computers so I would use the community room, which meant I had to limit it to 10 people, make them wear masks (which they had to agree to) and maintain social distancing. But it was a fun way to learn about new areas and still socialize a bit.
8. Painting Classes- This can be done in person (wearing masks and people can be spaced 6 feet or more apart and limited to 10 people or less). Have them trace a picture onto the canvas (or paper) and then outline in permanent marker and then paint.

Activities & Events For Seniors

Appropriate for residents aged 55 forward

Remember: Seniors live on family properties too!

1. Craft DIY Door Bags- Made individual DIY craft bags to be left on doors. Could also have these set up in a community space for people to take one as they please.
2. Cart Visits- Designed to remind residents of carnival days. SC can make a small lunch and put into individual brown bags then delivered to each door. Could also do this for snacks/crafts/etc. Added bonus could be to dress up when you deliver the items.
3. Alternate Bingo Ideas: At home Bingo, Telephone Bingo, Mailbox Bingo.
4. Door Decorating Contests- Pick a theme and have them decorate their door. One rule that can help make this “more fair” is that the residents can only use items that are already in their apartments!
5. Raffles- You can do many different sorts of raffles. Ask for donations from local businesses and even coupon from local shops! Get creative like reverse raffles or guess the # of M&M’s in a jar!
6. Outdoor Meditation- Partner with Life Pittsburgh and able to do mediation outside keeping appropriate social distances.
7. Iron Chef Competition- Using the ingredients from the food box come up with your best recipe. Since we can’t get together have them submit the recipe and a picture and then you can make a cookbook as well.
8. Rewarding Reuse- Pick an item...cans, plastic bags, etc. and have people submit ideas on how to reuse the items!
9. Care About You Bags- Give each resident a bag with paper towels, mask, cleaner, etc. with a card telling them how much they mean to the staff and include a fun activity
10. Tree of Gratitude or other holiday themed ideas- The tree of gratitude: put a tree up on a community wall/bulletin board and then each resident was given 2 leaves to write what they are thankful for and were encouraged to add to the tree.
11. Chat Chains- Have residents sign up to be part of a chat chain (onsite at the property) or have them connect with an organization already doing this.
12. Number Hunts- I would hide numbers around the property and they would have to find them. Nothing would need to be moved to find the number but I would find creative places to hide them like flagpoles, under the water fountain, etc..
13. Doorway Happy Hours- Residents hang out in their doorways with their own food and drink. Some get so into it, they put music on and dance in their doorways as well!
14. Tune in Tuesdays- We have a nurse call system in all of our apartments that allows us to call the entire building at once. We would have a subject like “favorite childhood memory” and we would talk about that. We would treat it like a radio station. We even had a “Phrase that Pays” that we announced to them and then we pulled apartment numbers and called their apartments. If they knew the phrase that pays, they won a little goodie bag filled with toilet paper, hand sanitizer, and a few treats. We asked them to share stories and we read them on air and they also gave us topics that they wanted us to talk about. It really was a wonderful way to connect with them and make them feel less alone, plus they enjoyed getting to know our staff a little better