

Keeping Busy

Activities for Older Adults

Engaging Residents in Meaningful Activity

The Montessori Way to Help People With Dementia

Changing realities of long-term care

“The pleasant, mildly confused senior citizen with one or two easily managed chronic conditions is atypical of long term care residents. The resident profile today is dominated by persons with complex health conditions, including advanced dementia, who require assistance and direction with feeding, toileting, social interaction and mobility.”

Dr. Cameron Camp said:

“While residents may not have specifically recalled doing an activity from one time to the next, their performance did improve with repetition, a phenomenon attributed to “procedural” or “non-declarative” memory. As a result of their success, the residents grew more confident in their abilities.”

“Montessori”

Definition:

Description:

The Montessori approach uses activities that are engaging, challenging and age appropriate. We use repetition to increase targeted skills, and the activities are designed to provide immediate feedback and a high probability of success.

When we call it “Montessori”, we mean...

- Use everyday materials
- Modify tasks to meet the needs of the individual
- Focus on process rather than on outcome

Engaging residents ...

- If the activity is presented in the same way every time, then the more they do it, the better they get at it
- Associate a positive emotion with the activity and the resident will want to repeat the experience
- Take advantage of opportunities to engage residents when they need it – even 10 minutes

Presenting Activities

- Prepare the environment
- The Invitation – “would” not “could”
- Demonstrate don’t explain, action rather than words
- Encourage them to do it on their own and put the activity away
- End with Congratulations – “Good Job!, Thank you”, then ask “Would you like to do it again some time?”

Conclusions

- Goal is engaging residents in meaningful activity
- Result is improved quality of life and reduction in responsive behaviours

Once the residents are “trained” your efforts will be rewarded many times over.

Remember

- Encourage independence, provide choice and prepare them for success
- Demonstrate, don't explain
- The Invitation "Would" not "Could"
- End saying "Thank you" and "Would you like to do this again some time?"