

Six-lesson Curriculum at a Glance



Lesson One: Understanding the Changes Associated with Aging

Expected Outcomes

- ♦ Better understanding of the facts and myths of aging
- ♦ Greater familiarity with the top ten causes of death in America
- ♦ Enhanced knowledge of what places individuals at risk for premature death and how to avoid these risks
- ♦ Heightened awareness of the risk of depression among seniors

Lesson Two: Aging Sensitivity

Expected Outcomes

- ♦ Better understanding of the biological changes associated with aging
- ♦ Greater insight into our own feelings about aging
- ♦ Heightened awareness of the advantages of growing older

Lesson Three: Valuing Cultural and Generational Diversity

Expected Outcomes

- ♦ Expanded understanding of the concepts of culture and diversity
- ♦ Improved ability to name our own cultural identifications, how they impact our values and the ways we interact with others
- ♦ Better understanding of the diversity of senior citizens and the unique needs of different types of seniors
- ♦ Heightened awareness of the assumptions people commonly make about various cultural groups and how they affect social interaction

Lesson Four: Medication and the Older Adult

Expected Outcomes

- ♦ Increased awareness of the prevalence of medication use among older adults
- ♦ Improved ability to identify the behaviors that lead to medication misuse
- ♦ Expanded knowledge of how to manage medication use
- ♦ Greater familiarity with drugs commonly used by older adults, typical adverse reactions to drugs, and age-related changes in how drugs are metabolized
- ♦ Improved ability to relate critical information to health care providers and ask important questions relevant to medication use

Lesson Five: Substance Misuse, Addiction, and Older Adults

Expected Outcomes

- ♦ Increased understanding of addiction as a disease
- ♦ Improved ability to identify the signs of alcohol misuse and problem gambling among seniors
- ♦ Expanded knowledge of the effects of substance misuse
- ♦ Greater familiarity with the health risks and treatment options for addiction
- ♦ Improved ability to identify factors that place older adults at risk for substance misuse and protective factors that can help prevent it

Lesson Six: An Enhanced Quality of Life

Expected Outcomes

- ♦ Greater familiarity with strategies for maintaining a healthy lifestyle
- ♦ Increased awareness of our personal “stress triggers”
- ♦ Heightened awareness of our personal values and how they influence the way we think and act

Key Findings of Independent Program Evaluation

- WISE Program participants increased their knowledge regarding how their bodies age, how the aging process affects their ability to metabolize alcohol and medications, and how to recognize the early signs and symptoms of depression.
- WISE participants were more likely to improve health behaviors related to lifestyle choices, health care empowerment, and use of prescription and over-the-counter medications.
- WISE participants who completed the WISE Program reported greater increases in social support over time.

