



Northern Beaches
DEMENTIA ALLIANCE

HEALTHY, ACTIVE AND CONNECTED EXPO

AGEING SUCCESSFULLY

By Professor Sue Kurrle

Healthy, Active and Connected:

Ageing successfully

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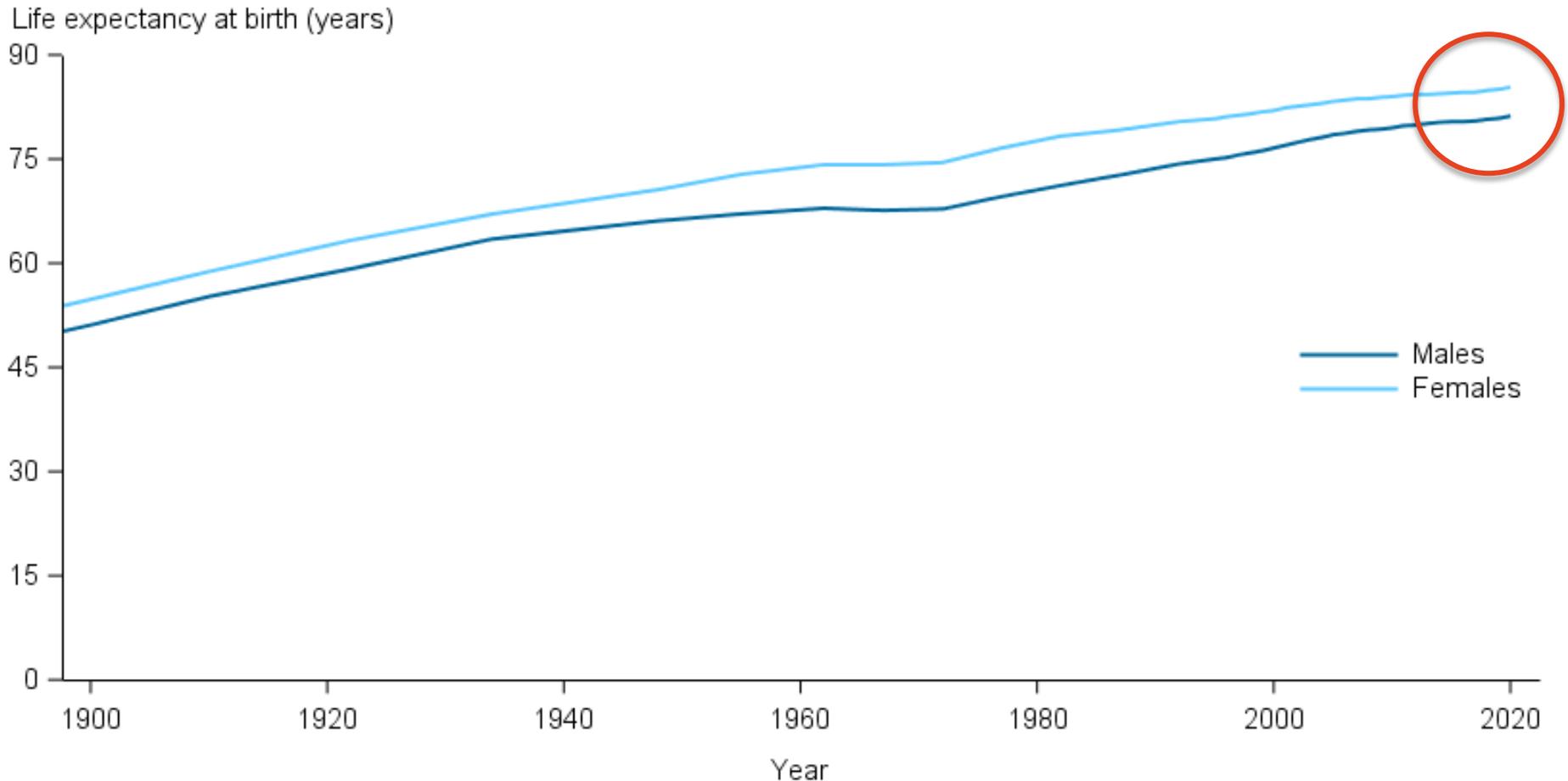


Health
Northern Sydney
Local Health District

Life expectancy in Australia

Men: 81.2 years

Women: 85.2 years



Successful Ageing



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Examples of successful ageing

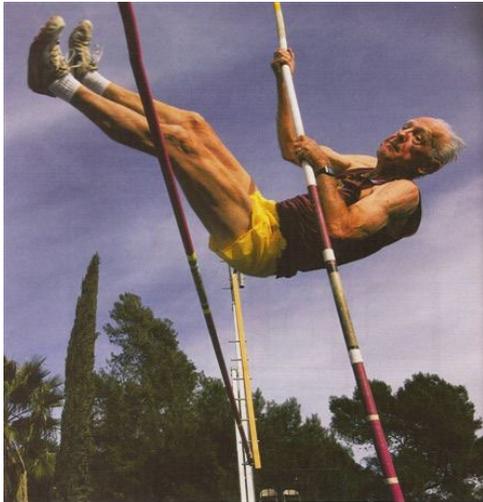


Foto: Karen Kuzmauski. National Geographic image Collection.



What do these people have in common?

- They are all over 85 years of age
- They have all exceeded their life expectancy
- They are all outside and being active and engaged in activities outside “normal” daily activities
- **They have not let age get in the way of doing what they want to do**
- **They are ageing successfully**

Madame Jeanne Calment



- Took up fencing , aged 85
- Rode bicycle till 100
- Lived alone till 110
- Port wine, 2 cigs/ day,
1kg dark chocolate every week
- Gave up smoking at 120
- Poured olive oil on food
and rubbed onto her skin
- Outlived husband, child and
grandchildren
- **Died 122, slightly frail but without
dementia**



Successful ageing: results from centenarian studies

- Have the right genes: health and longevity are hereditary
- Have the right personality:

be a “glass half full” person

Have a positive nature, a sense of humour, and be optimistic and adaptable

- Be physically active
- Be mentally and socially active
- Eat and drink well
- Maintain independence
- Avoid disease

Secrets of successful ageing

- **Keep physically active:**
 - 30 minutes of brisk walking, jogging, cycling, swimming, dancing 5 times a week
 - Resistance training
 - gym program
 - home program of sit to stand and hand weights
- Balance training
 - Stand on one leg
 - Tandem stance and walk
- Exercise is also very important in preventing (and treating) dementia, depression, heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes etc etc etc....





Free!



Take the snacking challenge

The Centenary Institute have developed a range of exercises that can be conducted in the comfort of your own home and with tools and equipment that are easily accessible.



Sign up to receive our free snack book

centenary.org.au/exercise-book

Five minutes of stretching here, 2 minutes of walking there, it all adds up by the end of the day!

How exercise snacking helps with healthy ageing

'Exercise snacking' refers to fitting physical activity into your day by breaking it down into small, bite-sized pieces.

As we age, the barriers to maintaining a healthy exercise program can increase. You may have time, cost or travel constraints that prevent you from attending a gym or exercise program. To overcome some of these barriers, research has examined the benefit of pragmatic and time-efficient exercises, that form part of everyday life. For example, stair climbing, gardening and household chores should count as exercise. Findings show that regular short bouts of physical activity have many beneficial effects. As well as increasing your energy and productivity, short bursts of exercise improve muscle strength and cardiovascular health. Taking these short exercise snacks before meals may also help control blood sugar levels, so this form of exercise can also be particularly effective in preventing diabetes, heart disease and other related conditions.

Just as we engage in regular food snacking to sustain our energy and blood sugar, you can do the same with movement and exercise.

The benefits of exercise snacking

- 1 Giving your brain power a boost**
Research shows that the psychological effects of regular exercise improves cognitive function and an overall feeling of well-being.
- 2 Helping you reach your weight loss goals**
When it comes to weight loss, science shows that it doesn't matter when you get in your workout, it just matters that you do it.
- 3 Reducing your stress levels**
Short bursts of exercise release endorphins, the feel-good hormone, which can lead to reduced levels of anxiety and stress.
- 4 Boosting energy**
Even a quick workout will enhance blood flow and send more nutrients to muscle tissue resulting in an energy boost.
- 5 Minimal impact on your day**
Exercise snacking doesn't have to encroach on your day. You can exercise and still fit in the things you love to do. You often won't sweat when moving about for short bursts, making it easy to exercise in your everyday clothes.

It is never too late to start

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EDITORIALS

Exercise in people over 85

Advanced age is no barrier to the benefits of tailored exercise

Mikel Izquierdo *professor*^{1,2}, John E Morley *professor*³, Alejandro Lucia *professor*^{2,4}

to benefit from it. Generalists should advise all patients, regardless of age, to be as active as possible. Medical schools should teach students that skeletal muscle remains a plastic, adaptable tissue throughout the human lifespan. It is never too late—and you are never too old—to contract muscles.

Other reasons to stay physically active as we age

1. Frailty – physical frailty is age associated decline in function. It can be treated, slowed, or prevented by regular physical exercise including resistance training, and appropriate diet with plenty of protein
2. Osteoporosis – decreased bone mass leading to more fragile bones and increased chance of fractures, especially in the spine, wrist, and hip. It can be slowed by regular weight bearing exercise, and can be treated with medications



Secrets of successful ageing

- **Keep mentally and socially active:**
 - Interpersonal relationships are very important with family and friends
 - **What can we do?**
 - Develop mental activities and social networks
 - Learn a new language, play a musical instrument, play cards, mahjong
 - Join: Mens' sheds, "Stitch and bitch", U3A, Probus
 - Become a volunteer
 - Go to concerts, theatre, galleries



Eat and drink well

- **Consider the Mediterranean diet:**
 - High intake of vegetables, nuts, and legumes (peas, beans, lentils)
 - Use of “good” oils (olive oil) and fish
 - Less dairy and meat
- Ensure adequate intake of protein (2 eggs/day)
- Reduce intake of saturated fats, processed foods, fast foods, packaged foods
- Low to moderate use of alcohol



Dementia



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Diagnosing memory problems: Normal Cognitive Ageing

- Cognitive changes with ageing are normal and inevitable
- Memory – we are slower to acquire memory and slower to retrieve that memory
- Executive functioning – our ability to plan, execute, reason, solve problems, and organise may decrease, and we are not so flexible in our thinking. We may use past experience to assist in solving issues or making judgements
- Decline in ability to remember names, and slight decrease in verbal fluency
- Reasonable maintenance of vocabulary, general knowledge, occupational expertise
- Decline in ability to multi-task, to focus and sustain attention and concentration eg driving ability may decline

Diagnosing memory problems

Mild cognitive impairment

- previously known as:
 - benign senescent forgetfulness
 - age associated memory decline
- subjective complaints of memory loss with evidence of deficits on testing. May be decreased performance in demanding employment and social situations, but **no** significant changes in day to day function
- 10-12% per year go on to develop dementia

Diagnosing memory problems:

Dementia

- **Dementia:** progressive irreversible syndrome of impaired memory, intellectual function, personality and behaviour, **causing significant impairment in function**
- **Mild dementia** – difficulties with a number of areas such as memory, planning, organisation and personal care, but the person can still function with minimal assistance
- **Moderate dementia** – difficulties become more severe and increasing levels of assistance are required to help the person maintain functioning in their home and in the community.
- **Severe or advanced dementia** – almost total dependence on care and supervision by others



Dementia in Australia

- **2023:** 400,000 plus people with dementia
- **2050:** 800,000 people with dementia
- approx 1900 new cases per week diagnosed
- at age 65: 1 in 12 people have dementia
- **at age 80: 1 in 4 people have dementia**
- at age 90: 1 in 2 people have dementia
- leading cause of death for women, 2nd highest for men after heart disease
- highest cause of disability in >65 years group

- approx 28,000 people under age 65 with dementia

Causes of dementia

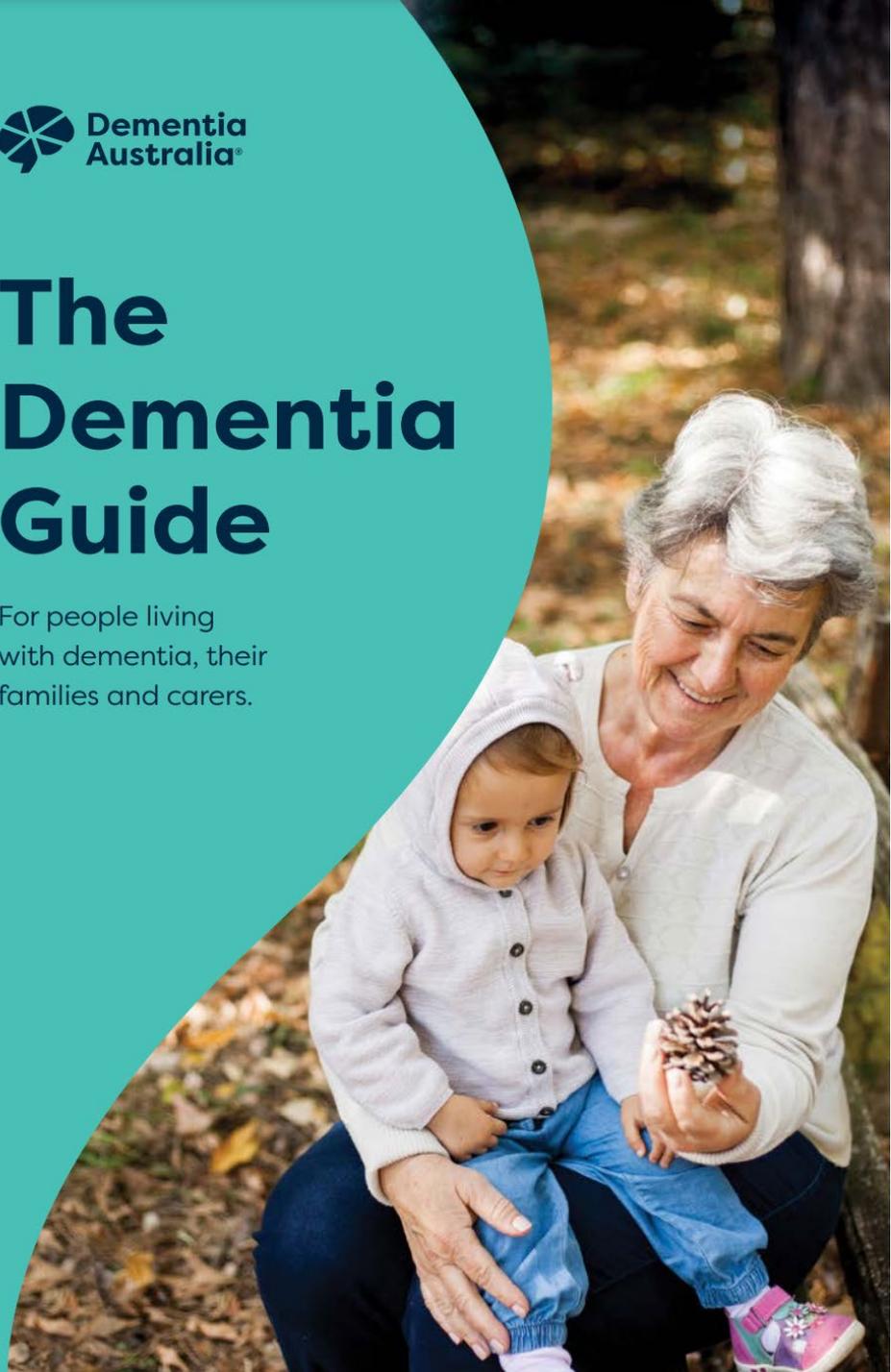
- Alzheimer's Disease
- Vascular Dementia
- “Mixed” Dementia (Alzheimer's Disease and Vascular Dementia)
- Dementia with Lewy Bodies
- Frontotemporal Dementia (aka Frontotemporal Lobar Degeneration)
- Parkinson's Disease with Dementia
- Others – alcohol related brain damage, chronic traumatic encephalopathy (footballers brain), prion disease.....



The Dementia Guide

For people living
with dementia, their
families and carers.

[dementia.org.au/
the-dementia-
guide](https://dementia.org.au/the-dementia-guide)



A couple of questions

- **When should I worry about my memory and seek help?**
- When your memory problems are starting to affect your day to day function eg difficulty using a computer or mobile phone, getting lost driving, having trouble paying bills

- **Should I see a geriatrician or a neurologist?**
- Either can make the diagnosis of dementia and look at the possible cause, with suggestions for medication. Some aged care psychiatrists will also be able to make the diagnosis.
- The most important thing is to be linked in to post diagnostic care. Do this by calling the **National Dementia Helpline** on **1800 100 500**

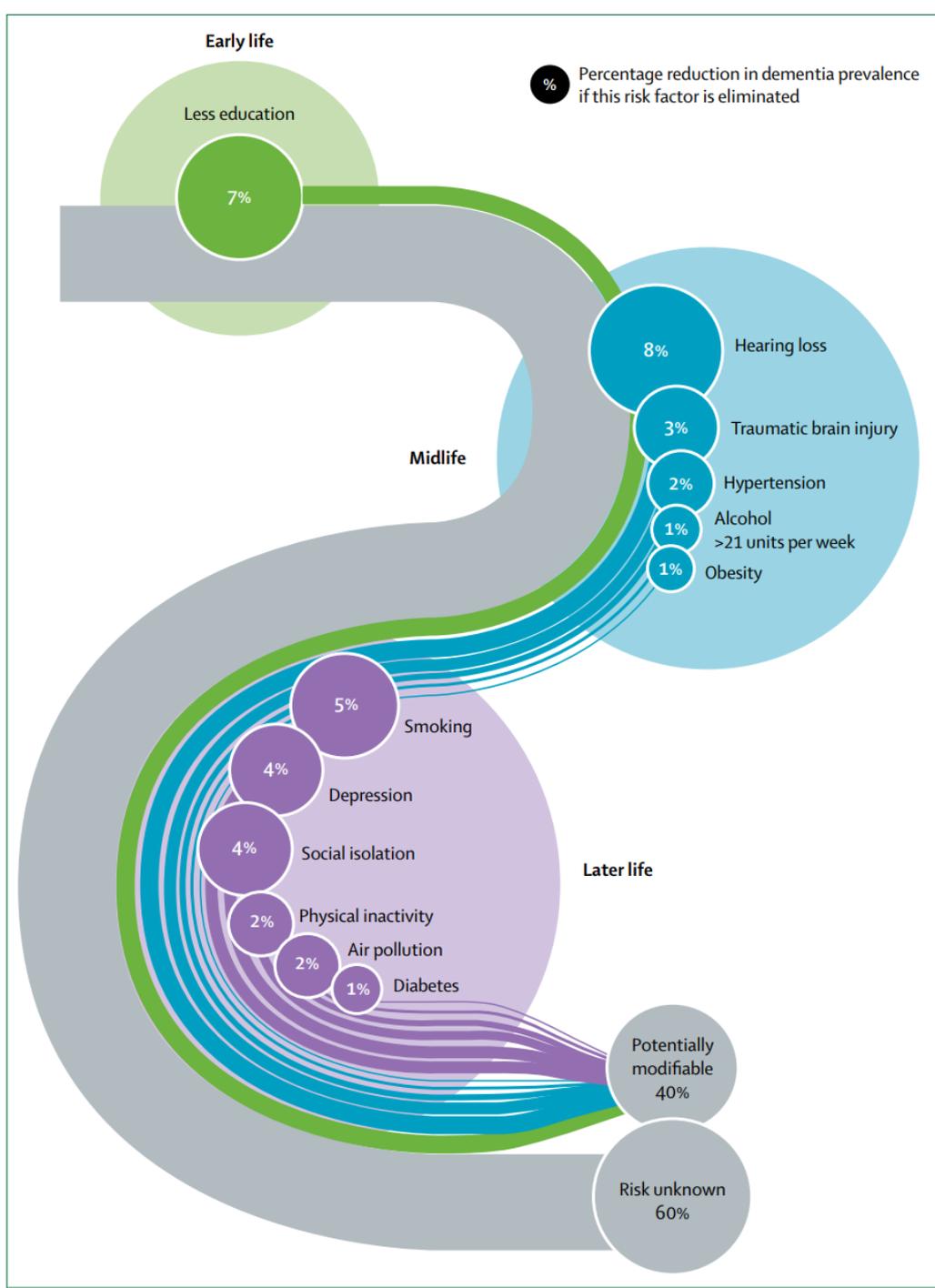
Dementia Prevention:

40% of dementia is preventable



Risk factors that can be modified to reduce dementia risk

Lancet 2020



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Dementia prevention – reduce these risk factors



12 dementia risk factors



Source: Livingston et al. A, et al. Dementia prevention, intervention, and care: 2020 report of the Lancet Commission

www.alzint.org

Loneliness



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Loneliness and getting older

- 45% of older people in Australia (1.7 million) live alone
- Loneliness is the emotion and feeling of being alone, whether or not you have social contact
- Humans are pack animals, we like to be part of a group, part of a family, part of a community. We need to belong and we need to stay connected
- Being lonely puts your health at risk, particularly for heart disease, stroke, depression, and dementia
- **Loneliness has a similar impact to smoking on health**





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Addressing loneliness with 4 Year Olds running the show

- In **'Old People's Home for 4 Year Olds' Series 1**, 11 lonely or isolated older people living in a retirement village or supported accommodation and 10 4 year olds came together for 7 weeks of physical, mental, and social activities
- There were significant improvements in physical performance, including balance and walking speed, and in depressive symptoms in the older adults, and improved confidence and communication in the children
- Those benefits were sustained, and the relationships between older people and the children continue



Benefits of physical activity and social interaction

- In Series 2 of 'Old People's Home for 4 Year Olds', 11 socially isolated older people **living at home** met with 10 4 year olds in a pre-school for 6 weeks
- Once again there were significant improvements in physical performance, and in depressive symptoms, but most importantly in **quality of life**, in the older adults. These improvements have been sustained, and relationships which began during the series have continued with increased social connections and reduction in loneliness



ABC Old People's Home for Teenagers

- Study of 10 frail and non frail older people living alone in the community in early 2022
- Intervention over 6 weeks was interaction with 9 teenagers
- Outcomes showed improvement for most older participants in QoL, Loneliness Scale, and Geriatric Depression Scale. No change in memory measures
- Attitudes towards teenagers also changed from “lost, angry, resentful, stubborn...” to “smart, caring, loving, open, honest...”
- Interactions between older people and teenagers continue



2022 AACTA Awards – Wed 7th Dec



How can I be involved with research?



<https://www.stepupforageingresearch.org.au/>



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Thank you



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