

The Role of Social Capital in Aging Well

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Aging Well

- *“Aging well is most likely to occur when people can take advantage of all the possibilities available to them” (Adams & Blieszner, 1995, p. 213).*

Aging Well



- Physical and cognitive health

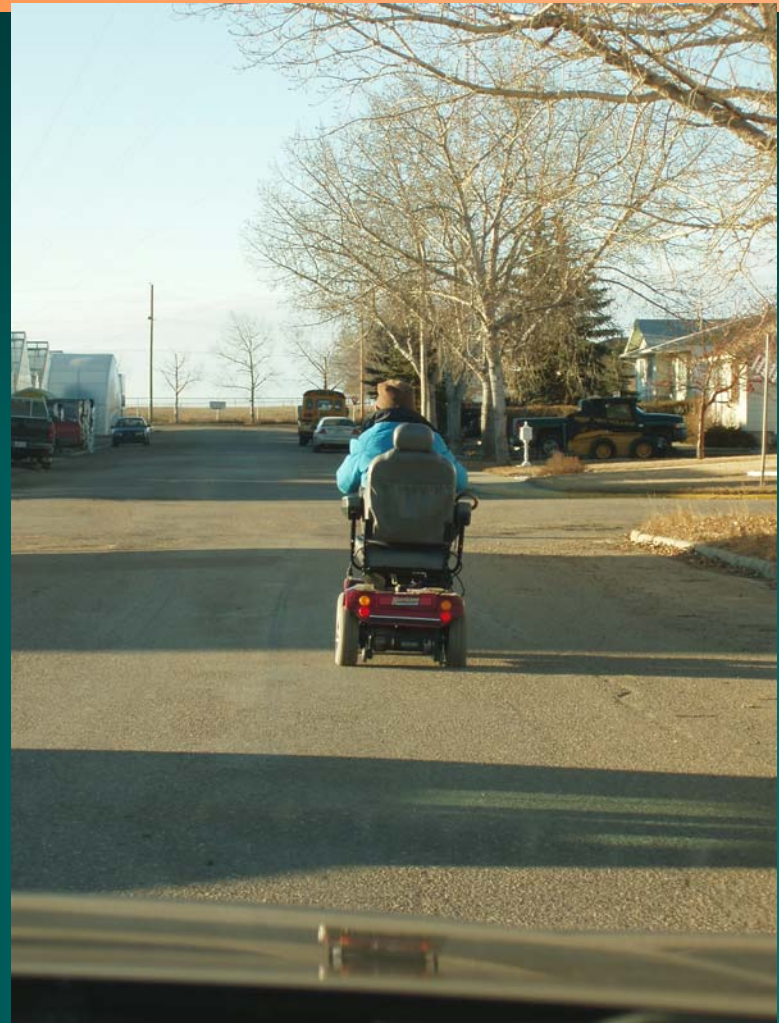
Aging Well

👉 Engagement



Aging Well

➤ Person-environment 'fit'



Networks of older adults

➤ Social network
➤ The warm bodies

➤ Support network
➤ The helpful connections

➤ Care network
➤ The devoted few

“The sources of social capital lie in the structure of social relations developed over time” (Policy Research Initiative, 2003b, p. 16).

Networks and Aging Well

- Physical and cognitive health
 - Social networks and positive health outcomes
 - Care networks and poor health outcome
- Engagement
 - Support networks and narrow vs. broad engagement
 - Community networks and engagement
- Person-environment 'fit'
 - Care networks and choice
 - Support networks and bridging to resources



Programs and Initiatives...

The Social Capital Lens, and Aging Well

- Social capital, however, is neither a panacea for public health nor a concept that can be easily translated into a recipe for successful aging. In fact, “building” social capital has both positive and negative aspects.

(Cannuscio, Block & Kawachi, 2003, p396)



Programs and Initiatives...

The Social Capital Lens, and Aging Well

Programs to support close ties to others

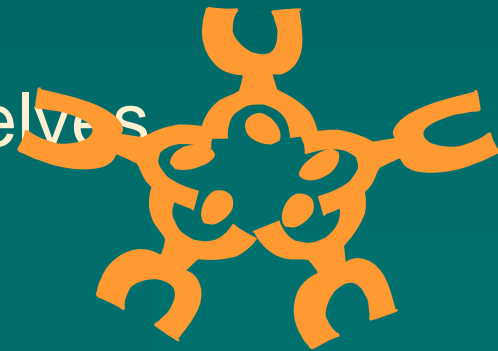
- Providing direct support to frail older adults

 - Home Care

- Supporting the networks themselves

 - Respite

 - Compassionate Care Leave



Programs and Initiatives...

The Social Capital Lens, and Aging Well

Programs that enhance engagement

- Encouraging civic participation

 - New Horizons for Seniors

- Fostering linkages to resources

 - Collaborative Seniors' Portal



Programs and Initiatives...

The Social Capital Lens, and Aging Well

Programs that enhance connections among networks

- Linking national organizations
 - Canadian Caregivers coalition



Strategic Policy Research and Program Development

A network lens to better understand

- weak ties
- community linkages
- care networks and aging well;
- families and aging well;
- programs and aging well goals

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