ACTIVITY PROFESSIONALS WEEK
PLANNING GUIDE

January 22-28, 2017

NAAP.INFO
Ideas to Celebrate
National Activity Professionals Week

As Activity Professionals, we are part of a vitally important profession that helps people live lives that are filled with purpose, meaning and much enjoyment. The holistic and person-centered approach to caring for our elders is truly a site to behold. Each of us, as Activity Professionals, are the heart and spirit of the facility. So, let’s take a minute to acknowledge the great work that we do and give ourselves and staff the credit deserved!

Now as never before, careful attention is being directed concerning care of our elders and disabled citizens and greater attention is being given toward those who provide hands-on-care. National Activity Professionals Week provides a timely opportunity to educate and showcase the wonderful things that Activity Professionals create and do each and every day.

Included in this packet are recognition events and activity programming that can be done with staff and residents. Please check out the Media packet for Mayor Proclamations, news releases, and the ‘Products Page’ for items to help celebrate the week.

NAAP Products now available at http://www.cafepress.com/naap1

Here are just a few of the items you will find to purchase for yourself or your staff!
Use these programs to Remind/Promote/Advertise all the things Activities provide within your facility.

Education:

For Staff:

Teach why working as a team is so important when providing service to residents:

- Story Weaving:
  Explain to the participants they must weave together a story about the chosen topic. You will need a ball of yarn and something to keep time.

Sit participants in a circle. First, give one person a ball of yarn and then give the beginning of the ball to the person sitting directly across from that person. The person with the ball starts a story with a line such as, “My Best Day at Work”.... Each person gets 45 seconds to tell a part of the story. When the person’s 45 seconds is finished, he/she holds onto yarn and throws the ball, leaving a trail to another person across from him/her. Continue holding and throwing the yarn until the story is complete. When the story is complete, show the participants that they not only now have a shared story, but are connected through the woven web they made with the yarn. Take a photo of the woven yarn. Tell them to let go and watch it fall and make a mess of tangled unusable yarn. Explain this also happens when we don’t stay connected and don’t work together. I think you will find many interesting comments during this game.

- Share/teach something you are passionate about. Maybe it’s a craft, a new philosophy or skill.
- Many organizations will come in free of charge to provide education for your staff.
• Ask your staff what they would like to learn more about.

Community Involvement

Get your staff and residents involved in the community by providing ways to volunteer and help others. Some of the best places to look include: local United Way, Lions, Elks & other civic groups; Catholic Charities and other religious organizations; area agencies on aging; and, your State Department of Social Services. Most importantly, look toward your own staff and residents.

• Host a social/open house for the community to show how they can volunteer in your facility.
• Dispel the image of the dark scary nursing home by offering to speak for senior and church groups, community centers, veteran’s groups and other community gatherings.
• Offer exercise classes with technology, such as a bowling tournament.
• Offer to speak to first responders about seniors with dementia.
• Ask a local school to allow you to come in and talk to the children about seniors or arrange for senior to come in and read to the children
• Invite children in for story time at your facility

Fundraising

Raise funds for something special for your department.

• Management at your Service: Raffle hours for management to assist in front-line service areas; nursing, dietary, activities....
• Casserole Sale: Instead of a bake sale ask for volunteers to donate their favorite casserole. Ask them to share the recipe as well!
• Singing telegrams. Staff, family, and residents can send singing telegrams to those in your facility.
What’s New in Activities

Showcase how technology has enhanced your implementation of services.

- **MUSIC:**
  - Music has always been a big part of activities. Individualized music began with mixed tapes, then to burning CD’s, and now we can download almost any song on an iPod or mp3 player.
  - YouTube allows you to show videos of great musicians and singers from past to present. Ask the residents who they would like to see and schedule a virtual concert.
  - Your staff or your residents can become internet stars! Choreograph a song with movements, video, edit and upload to YouTube (remember to stay within copyright issues)

- **Education/Reminiscing:**
  - Surfing the web
  - Search sites like Google, Bing, and Yahoo. Just take a simple item or “keyword” and run it through the google indexes. You will be amazed at the different things you’ll learn.
  - Google Earth: Take your residents on a trip around the world in real-time or take them home. A resident who has not seen his/her home in many years is now able to see it again by using this application. This is one of those great moments we get to share because of technology.
  - Google + has a circle that works like Skype, but several people from different locations can interact at one time so you can hold a family reunion.

- Use virtual reality headsets that work with a smartphone, so residents can explore videos, scenic video, games and more. They will feel like they are right in the middle of things! Additionally, it’s better to use headsets that are a little more expensive than the cheaper ones. And, make sure they have adjustable focus and gyroscope.
- Include wearable technology to allow residents to track their fitness with simple pedometers to fitbits. Create a weeklong competition to see which residents can rack up the most points.
- Finding friends on Facebook can open or renew old friendships.
- Ancestry.com allows you to look up family trees. Through this program a resident could see photos of his/her parents and possibly connect to long-lost relatives.
- Games:
  - Host a virtual Bingo Game with another facility using Skype, Go To Meeting, or other interactive web host.
  - Host a marathon of video games that allow residents to be a part of their favorite game shows. They are available as computer games, DVD games and video games.
    - Use this as an inter-generational program or invite other departments to join the fun.

Family Involvement

- Start a Family Council. Coordinate with your Social Worker and Ombudsman to start a group. Bring in speakers each month that can provide assistance to family members. Give them time to talk encouraging them to help resolve issues and invite different department managers to come each month.
- Recruit family members to be volunteers. Invite family members to assist with implementing various activities. Let them help prep craft projects or research program items or music at home.
- Ask family members to teach a class or be a speaker by tapping into their knowledge and skills.
- Write an article about the benefits of activity programming. If you don’t have a newsletter, write the article and ask the Business Manager to include the article with the residents’ monthly statements.
Staff Appreciation

- Invite your administrator to have lunch with your staff.
- Ask residents to write thank you notes and send to their home.
- Give your staff a gift.
- As Director, volunteer to do their least favorite task for a day.
- Gather residents, management and co-workers into a flash mob and sing “We are the Champions” changing the “We” to You!
Media Kit

NEWS RELEASES: News releases are used to alert the local media of significant events, issues, services, programs, awards, and other events. Send the release to your local news editors and reporters, especially those who have previously covered your health care community, two days before the event or desired coverage.

MEDIA KITS: A media kit about Activities/Life Enrichment serves as a quick reference or "background" for local reporters who provide coverage during NAP Week. Elements of the kit can include information about your programs, services you offer, your role in the larger community, and a schedule of special activities you are offering in honor of NAP Week. Remember to include a letter of introduction that provides an overview of the media kit and your contact information.

Sample Press Release:

[COMMUNITY LETTERHEAD] For Immediate Release [MONTH, DAY, YEAR]
Contact: [NAME], [PHONE] [COMMUNITY NAME] Accomplishes Big Things at [EVENT NAME]

[COMMUNITY NAME] will be holding [EVENT NAME] [DATE] as a special opportunity to bring together residents, families, employees, volunteers and the surrounding community. [DETAILS ON THE EVENT – Include two to three sentences describing your event, including any special guests, or if the event benefited a larger cause.] The ability to care for our elders mind, body and spirit in [TOWN, CITY OR COUNTY] is an awesome responsibility [COMMUNITY NAME] does not take for granted. This celebration recognizes the bonds built between residents and the Activity Professionals who are committed to providing person-centered care and services. National Activity Professional Week is January 22-28, 2017, to recognize the unique individuals that provide activity services. This year’s theme, “Activities; Big Things to Accomplish” celebrates the countless ways Activity staff nurture the whole resident. The annual observance was created by the National Association of Activity Professionals. (If applicable) Other activities at [COMMUNITY NAME] during the special week include: • [EVENT NAME], [DATE], [TIME] - [SENTENCE DESCRIBING EVENT] • [EVENT NAME], [DATE], [TIME] - [SENTENCE DESCRIBING EVENT] • [EVENT NAME], [DATE], [TIME] - [SENTENCE DESCRIBING EVENT]
PROCLAMATIONS: Proclamations are a great mechanism to have your locally elected officials visit your community. Using the sample proclamation, invite your governor, mayor or city council members to issue the proclamation in honor of NAP Week. You can invite them to visit the community during the week.

Sample Proclamation

WHEREAS, residents of assisted living communities are active members of the larger community, offering their wisdom, life experiences and skills; their past contributions continue to be a vital part of our [CITY'S or STATE'S] rich history; and their future contributions and participation deepens the community life and activity; WHEREAS, the Activity Professional is a vital part of long term care service for the elderly and individuals with disabilities and champions choice, dignity, and independence; Activity Professionals are committed to excellence, innovation and the advancement of person-centered care; WHEREAS, the National Association of Activity Professionals created National Activity Professional Week to demonstrate our nation’s appreciation of the unique individuals that work to deliver care every day; WHEREAS, the theme of 2016 National Activity Professional Week “Activities, Big Things to Accomplish” which celebrates the countless ways Activity Professionals Accomplish Big Things for their residents, their team members and volunteers by sharing their inspiring lives and talents; NOW, THEREFORE, I, [MAYOR/GOVERNOR/ELECTED OFFICIAL’S NAME], do hereby proclaim the week of January 22-28, 2017 National Activity Professional Week in the [CITY OF NAME or STATE OF NAME].

SOCIAL MEDIA: Post items throughout NAP Week on your community’s website and/or social media channels. Share photos and videos of unique events, or highlight stories that show what Activity Professionals do every day. Send photos to www.naap.info (please have each resident’s permission). “Like” NAAP on Facebook to see what others around the country are doing. SPREAD THE WORD!