

Assisted Living INNOVATIONS in Quality Award



SIT AND BOX

VINTAGE SIMI HILLS

RESIDENT ACTIVITY PROGRAM

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Seniors with mobility issues are often perceived as incapable of participating in physical exercise or activity, yet cardiovascular health is necessary to maintain quality of life and longevity. *Sit and Box* dispels that perception and allows residents, including those who have difficulties standing, to engage in exercise. The program was developed and implemented by Flo Trapani, Activities Director. Jim Carper, Director of Development from Southeast Ventura County YMCAs, further enhanced the program.

GOALS

The goals of the program are to:

- ▶ provide a means for residents to engage in fun, physical activity, including those typically seen as unable to participate in such activities
- ▶ teach basic boxing and kickboxing skills from a standing or sitting position and within each resident's physical capabilities
- ▶ help less active residents realize they can engage in exercise

BENEFITS

- ▶ improved cardiovascular health, mobility and strength
- ▶ increased self-esteem and social engagement
- ▶ increased sense of purpose through helping others
- ▶ changing the image of seniors who live in senior care
- ▶ providing a worthy example to others via an exercise DVD

OUTCOMES

Outcomes have exceeded expectations. In addition to improved mobility and a greater sense of well-being, participants report having less pain and discomfort. Residents previously not involved in exercise are now among regular participants. Family members also report a positive attitude shift. Growth in participation has been consistent. Additionally, the program caught the attention of the local media, to the benefit of Vintage Simi Hills.

ADVICE TO THOSE WANTING TO INCORPORATE A SIMILAR PROGRAM

- ▶ Do a demonstration class first, including all necessary equipment, before actually beginning regularly scheduled classes.
- ▶ Be prepared to fully explain to residents and families the many benefits of the program.
- ▶ Make sure only qualified instructors conduct the classes.

"Boxing has been excellent for my shoulders and my upper body. We are able to demonstrate to others that us old people can work out with *Sit & Box*, whether we are in a wheelchair or not. When we get to pick our favorite exercise during other exercise classes, I always pick the boxing movements!"

Chris, age 91

"It makes exercise a lot more interesting, we are not just stretching. We get a better workout, especially with the bags at the end."

Ynys, age 87

"It is a very good class; we use different body parts when we go around and hit the bag. We showed our class to the YMCA, and they were happy to see that older people can exercise and have fun!"

Shirley, age 86