



St. Clair County BRIC Initiative

Plant Pals Continuity Binder

January 2022



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PURPOSE

Plant Pals is an intergenerational program aimed at reducing social isolation and loneliness among seniors, developed through the ALMA (Addressing Loneliness with Movement and Art) group. Plant Pals' implementation must meet curriculum standards per the program's training and user handbook. Additionally, this continuity binder provides guidance and protocols for the program's implementation under AgeSmart's auspices in southwest Illinois.

The ALMA Plant Pals Curriculum was made possible through the Building Resilient and Inclusive Communities (BRIC) grant with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Illinois Public Health Institute.

PLANNING YOUR PROGRAM

1. Identify community need for a program that addresses social isolation and/or loneliness among senior citizens.
2. Identify appropriate/available program participants, including:
 - Program Facilitators
 - Senior Citizens
 - Youth
 - Community Partners
3. Identify available host facility
4. Develop/coordinate the program plan for the 5 sessions
5. Develop marketing materials (per curriculum/contract approved graphics/messaging)
6. Submit program proposal (including marketing materials) to Chris Fulton/AgeSmart by 6 weeks prior to intended program start date. Once approved, move on to steps 7-13
7. Finalize agreements/Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) for facility and community partners
8. Gather documentation and supplies to be used for session administration and activities
 - Contact senior citizens and youth coordinator to confirm session dates
9. Meet with your facilitation team 1-2 weeks prior to your start date
10. Begin your Plant Pals program
11. Senior participants complete UCLA Loneliness Survey at first and last sessions
12. Complete After-Action Review after each session
13. Submit/Upload session administrative paperwork to Chris Fulton/AgeSmart
14. At conclusion of your program, submit *Lessons Learned*, initial and final UCLA Loneliness Surveys

TIMELINE

TASK	BEFORE SESSION START						Day Of	+1 week
	8+ weeks	6-8 weeks	4-6 weeks	2-4 weeks	10-14 days	1 week		
Identify senior and youth participants								
Identify location of interest								
Develop program plan								
Develop marketing materials								
Draft applicable agreements/MOUs								
Submit proposal (including marketing materials) to AgeSmart								
Finalize agreements/MOUs								
Disseminate marketing materials								
Gather session documents and supplies								
Meet with your facilitation team								
Contact any confirmed senior participants								
Contact youth coordinator for projected number of youth participants								
Senior participants complete UCLA Loneliness Survey								
Facilitator(s) complete After Action Review, Upload/Send to AgeSmart								
All participants receive 'swag'	///// AT FINAL SESSION /////							

At conclusion of program, schedule roundtable with community partners and facilitators to discuss entirety of program. What went well, what could be done better? Please submit this information to C. Fulton at AgeSmart. **doc for appendix?*

CHECKLISTS

1. Finding a Facility

- ☐ Space for 30-35 people
- ☐ Tables and chairs are available on site
- ☐ Location is accessible for both senior citizens and youth
- ☐ Confirm usage stipulations (i.e. masks required, offsite beverages/food allowed, parking, opening/closing procedures)

2. Community Partners

- ☐ Roles and responsibilities clearly articulated
- ☐ Should be able to support Plant Pals within the spirit of its curriculum
- ☐ Agreements or MOUs in writing

3. Facilitators

- ☐ At least one program facilitator must have completed BOTH the online and live Zoom training with ALMA
- ☐ Adhere to the program plan for each session (make adjustments as necessary)
- ☐ Maintain communication among all involved parties (including community partners, AgeSmart, facility staff, youth coordinator, etc.)
- ☐ Ensure all documents and supplies are brought to program sessions

4. Program Sessions

- ☐ Sign In Sheet
- ☐ Loneliness Surveys (first and last sessions only)
- ☐ Pens/Pencils
- ☐ Device that can play music
- ☐ Supplies for hands-on activity
- ☐ Water/Snacks (not required)
- ☐ Hand Sanitizer
- ☐ Name Tags

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

1. Plant Pals must be administered in accordance with the instructional guidelines set by ALMA. The Plant Pals manual may be accessed on the *Plant Pals Google drive*. To review training curriculum, visit: <https://alma-school.thinkific.com/courses/alma-basic-training>.
2. A connection to nature is at the heart of the Plant Pals curriculum, and must be honored in programs. However, programs must be intrinsically connected with the community you are serving. Please choose themes, movement, music, discussion, and activities that both honor the connection to nature and your communities' interests.

LESSONS LEARNED

****This will get filled in with information shared from the post-program meeting, at which community partners and facilitators meet to determine what, *overall*, went well, what might be improved, and what advice future program developers should consider****

REFERENCES

Agreements/MOUs- Any agreements or Memorandum of Understanding should be documented in your Program file. An example may be found in Appendix B.

Community Partners- Confirm what role(s) they will play in the sessions, whether these partners expect payment for their participation, and understand the curriculum's process and intent.

Documentation- At each session, a Sign-In Log, with every participants name/signature is required. At the first and last sessions, the UCLA Loneliness Survey must be administered. The survey may be found in Appendix E. After the session is complete, one of the facilitators should complete a short After Action Review. Samples of both are available in Appendices D and F, respectively.

Facilitators- only those who have completed formal training through ALMA, may be in a facilitator role. Individuals who have not completed training but would like to assist may do so in other capacities. A list of trained facilitators is included in Appendix A.

Facilities- You may have a great facility in mind. Be sure senior citizens are able to get to and from the facility with as little difficulty as possible. Is it by a bus stop? Is there ample parking? Is it in a safe location? Your chosen facility must also be accessible for children. How will they get to and from? Is it in a safe location?

Marketing Materials- Marketing content must be in accordance with ALMA's contractually designated stipulations. Graphics and verbiage must meet these standards. Please contact AgeSmart with any questions.

Program- For the purposes in this binder, *program* refers to the entire 5 session set, during which intergenerational activities take place with seniors and youth at the designated facility.

Program Plan- Each session will have a coordinated theme, for which movement, discussion, and hands-on activity take place for all participants; this will be organized into a session agenda. The agendas for all 5 of the program's sessions comprises the Program Plan. A sample agenda is included in Appendix C.

Senior Citizen- Participating senior citizens should be over the age of 60, and who are at risk of social isolation and/or loneliness.

Youth- Youth participants should ideally be in 5th grade, but must be no younger than 3rd grade, and no older than 6th grade.

MISCELLANEOUS

Previous Program Info?

APPENDIX A

Facilitators and Contacts

Facilitators

Carla Bosewell**

Erica Carroll**

Tiffany Davis**

April Hausman**

Mark Peters**

Charles Rogers**

Tameka Stalley**

Cassandra Williams**

Paula Wills**

Sharon Young**

(*online training complete, **online AND live Zoom training complete)

Additional Contacts

Chris Fulton- primary AgeSmart POC

Joy Paeth – CEO, AgeSmart

APPENDIX B

Sample Memorandum of Understanding

MTC Community outreach and its coalition partners; Eastside Health District of East St. Louis, Healthier Together, and Make Health Happen are executing a grant issued by the Illinois Public Health Institute. The grant is entitled; “BRIC”, which stands for Building Resilient, Inclusive Communities. The grant has three elements: Nutrition Security, Physical Activity, and Social Connectedness.

The use of the Avant Elementary School is in conjunction with the **Social Connectedness** element. An outcome-based curriculum entitled “Plant Pals” will be used to facilitate intergenerational, socialization between fifth grade students and seniors, to help mitigate adult loneliness. Pre-program and Post-program surveys will be conducted to measure effectiveness and inform program modifications.

The program will begin the first week of October, on the first and third Thursday nights, from 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m., through November. In December the program will transition to the “Alive Together” curriculum, which will encompass group counseling sessions led by a trained facilitator, with oversight provided by a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. The LCSW workers will be compensated at an agreed upon rate. Compensation for use of the facility will also be provided at an agreed upon rate.

There will be approximately 5-7 volunteers, with approximately 20-30 maximum participants. The program will adhere to all school and CDC guidelines with regard to proof of vaccinations, temperature checks, required masks and social distancing.

In summary

- The program will begin the first Thursday of October through the third Thursday in December
- Time will be from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Number of volunteers: 5-7
- Number of participants: 20-30
- Compensation to be provided for LCSW workers and facility
- All school and CDC guidelines will be observed

APPENDIX C

Sample Agenda

Plant Pals, Intergenerational Program Agenda for: October 28, 2021, 4 p.m.-6 p.m.

Avant Elementary School

1915 N 55th St, East St Louis, IL 62204

For more information Call: 314-410-0483 (Pastor Rogers)

Approx. Time	Group Flow	Facilitator(s)
15 min.	MOVEMENT WARM UP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breathing Movement to music Isolating body parts (All participants are seated in a circle)	Sunshine Cultural Arts
5 min.	INTRO OF THEME AND QUESTION OF THE DAY	Cassandra Williams, Derissa Davis Erica Carroll
30 min.	GROUP MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS, SHARING: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name Answer to question/theme A movement/gesture to represent answer or theme Group mirrors movement 	Cassandra Williams, Derissa Davis Erica Carroll
10 min.	PLANTPAL PARTNERING-TRANSITION INTO ART <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Music is played while staff sets up e.g. rearranges tables as necessary 	staff
45 min.	NATURE INSPIRED VISUAL ART <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant Pal pairs/groups create art and connect 	Cassandra Williams, Derissa Davis Erica Carroll
10 min.	PARTNER SHARES/GROUP REFLECTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refreshments 	Cassandra Williams, Derissa Davis Erica Carroll
5 min.	CLOSING SONG & FREE DANCE	Sunshine Cultural Arts
Total 120 min.		

APPENDIX D

PLANT PALS SIGN IN SHEET

DATE: _____

[illegible]

APPENDIX E

UCLA Loneliness Assessment

Date:

Name:

DOB:

1. How often do you feel that you lack companionship?
____ Hardly ever (1) ____ Some of the time (2) ____ Often (3)

2. How often do you feel left out?
____ Hardly ever (1) ____ Some of the time (2) ____ Often (3)

3. How often do you feel isolated from others?
____ Hardly ever (1) ____ Some of the time (2) ____ Often (3)

Total Score: _____

The client is considered “lonely” if the total score is 6 – 9.

* This assessment is based on UCLA 3-item Questionnaire.

APPENDIX F

Sample After Action Report

Event:	Plant Pals Session #5
Location	Avant School
Date:	12/16/2021
Primary Coordinator	Erica Carroll
Lead Facilitator	Erica Carroll
Co-Facilitator(s)	Pastor Rogers
Total # Participants	20
# Senior citizen participants (not including Event staff)	1
# Youth participants	16
Community Partners Present	MTCCO, Avant School, Healthier Together, Sunshine Cultural Arts Center
Individual(s) Completing AAR	Erica Carroll

Event Objective	Event was intended to generate social connectedness and foster intergenerational skill development.
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What Happened?	Students and senior citizens came together for a session that focused on traditions, including those that are most important to us and those we want to share with those around us and cultivate for future generations. Our session started off with movement segment, in which children and seniors took part simultaneously, our senior while seated and the children interspersed, standing around the senior. Students then had a short break for school dinner and came back to work on the hand on activity, planting a “traditions” garden in the backyard of gingerbread house setups, which everyone then decorated. Each participant was given a candy and told it represented a tradition they treasure; the participants then one by one placed their candy in the garden bed to symbolize their commitment to cultivating the tradition by sharing with others and continuing to nurture it in whatever personal ways they felt were important to keep it alive. Afterward, participants were organized into 4 groups, each of which worked together to decorate a gingerbread house.
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What Can We Learn From Event?	Participants often have similar traditions they appreciate, though very personal meanings are attached.
	The opportunity to have a hands-on activity that was only partially structured allowed both younger and older participants to be creative. It also fostered teamwork.
	After 4 previous sessions together, participants were very comfortable sharing and interacting with one another.

What Can/Should We Do Differently?	Consideration should be given to capping the number of student participants so the ratio of seniors to children is more appropriate/flexible.
	Reaching out to seniors to learn about their participation plans would provide meaningful communication and help us identify potential barriers, including transportation, schedule conflicts, etc.