

# Take On Life Challenge!



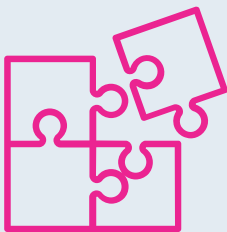
## PARTICIPANT INSTRUCTIONS & ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS

Thank you for starting a fundraiser and participating in the Take On Life Challenge! For the month of June, you will participate in our calendar list of activities that are commonly held in Long-Term Care Homes in Ontario with our beloved seniors. We have spread these activities out throughout the month, but you can do them in any order you like and on whichever date is most convenient for you.

Remember to print out your Activities Calendar and get started! Also remember to post a picture of yourself doing the activity with the hashtag #TakeOnLife. All registrants who participate in the challenge and fundraise a minimum of \$50 will be entered to win 2 tickets to a Toronto Blue Jays Game or one of two \$25 Indigo gift cards. Fundraise over \$100 and you'll get a bonus entry!

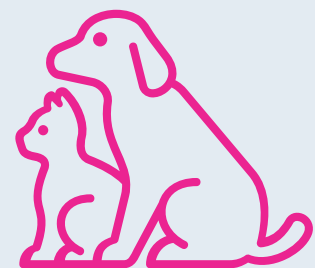
Here is a list of all the activities with information and links to special resources you might need.

### Jigsaw Puzzles



Seniors and people of all ages, love doing jigsaw puzzles. Doing a puzzle exercises the area of the brain that stores memories. Puzzlers have to remember pieces they've seen before when putting a puzzle together. Strengthening and exercising short-term memory is especially important for older adults. If you don't have a jigsaw puzzle and need to buy one, consider visiting your local thrift store where you can always find fantastic used puzzles at a great price!

### Pet Therapy



Pet therapy can reduce loneliness in seniors by providing a source of support and comfort. They also can improve mental stimulation and provide meaning. Petting, brushing, feeding, and talking to a pet can help seniors feel needed and engaged. But as we all know, pet therapy is great for any age. Most pets brought into Long-Term Care Homes are specially trained dogs, but you can spend some time with any pet that you like. If you don't have a pet, find a friend who will let you walk their dog or visit with their hamster!



@concernedfriends\_on  
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## Music Time



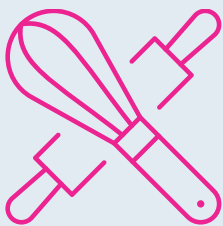
Music is a powerful way to evoke fond memories, lift one's mood, and decrease anxiety and depression for seniors. We know that most everyone listens to music, so for this activity, choose a playlist from the 1940's or 1950's - relevant eras for the average age of seniors in Ontario Long-Term Care Homes at the moment.

Game night is great for all of us and gets us off of our screens! For older adults in particular, board games provide meaningful ways to connect with others and offer some unique mental and physical health benefits such as encouraging social interaction and improving cognitive function. Pick out a board game, grab some friends or family members and have fun!

## Game Night



## Baking Time



Baking is amazing for seniors—it can help to bring back memories, stimulate the senses, improve appetite (which can encourage a better relationship with food) and it's great for keeping the brain active, as it involves weighing and measuring. Pick out your favourite cake, cookie or bread recipe and make something homemade. Here's a link to some popular cookies of the 1950s: <https://antiquealterego.com/2014/06/27>

Word search puzzles are very popular with seniors. While they may not seem like the most stimulating activities, they do a lot of good for aging brains. Because the process for solving a word search is to look at the "clue" of a few letters to find a word, this activity can help seniors sharpen their reasoning skills. Here's a list of free printable word search puzzles to choose from for your next challenge activity: <https://thewordsearch.com/printable/>

## Word Search

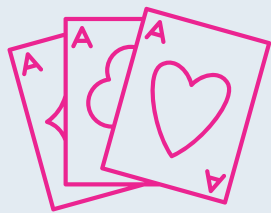
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## Gardening Time



Gardening is amazing for everyone, but older adults really benefit from spending time in a garden as it lowers blood pressure, provides exercise, improves motor skills, and relieves stress. Because of the many health benefits of gardening, many Long-Term Care homes have some form of community gardens and ensure that residents spend time there. So for today, get outside and stick your hands in the earth! Pull some weeds, plant some flowers. If you live in a condo, head out to your local shop and buy yourself a new plant to care for.

## Card Night



Playing cards can help seniors socialize, challenge their minds, and increase their hand and finger dexterity. Tonight, gather a couple of friends or family and play a game of Euchre, Crazy 8's or Old Maid—or whatever card game you like! Here's a link to some classic card games:

<https://bicyclecards.com/how-to-play>

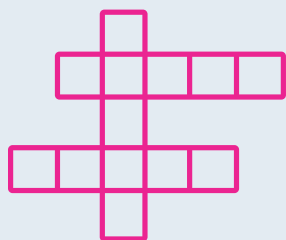
Chair yoga allows seniors and those with mobility issues or disabilities to stay active and improve their muscle strength and flexibility without the risk of strain or injury. The gentle slow progression of chair yoga sequences is ideal for those with a limited range of motion. Try out a class and see for yourself!

<https://youtu.be/1DYH5ud3zHo>

## Chair Yoga



## Crosswords



Working on a crossword puzzle reinforces connections between brain cells, improves mental speed and is an effective way to improve short-term memory. Research has found that regularly attempting a crossword may help slow decline in some people with mild cognitive impairment, an early stage of faltering memory that can sometimes progress to dementia. Here's a link to a free puzzle you can print or choose your favourite puzzle book!

<https://concernedfriends.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/crossword.pdf>

Chicken Soup for the Soul is a well-known media company that started in 1993 by founders Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen. They are best known for their many published books that include short inspirational stories about ordinary people having extraordinary experiences. Many Long-Term Care Homes use these books to hold reading time with residents. Take some time to relax for a few minutes and read one of these heartwarming stories:

<https://www.chickensoup.com/stories>

## Chicken Soup Stories



## Comedy Hour



We all know that laughter is the best medicine, so comedy hour is a common activity in nursing homes. Research shows that laughter improves the immune system, helps lower blood pressure, and can help with the release of "feel good" endorphins that also act as a natural painkiller. Add to that the benefit of watching some classic comedy like I Love Lucy which sparks happy memories for all. For an hour or so today, find some classic episodes to watch. You can find I Love Lucy on Youtube, PlutoTV or many other streaming platforms. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SzLSuJNQZg>