

Supporting Healthy Aging Through Parks and Recreation (SHAPR)

AAEBI Program Tool

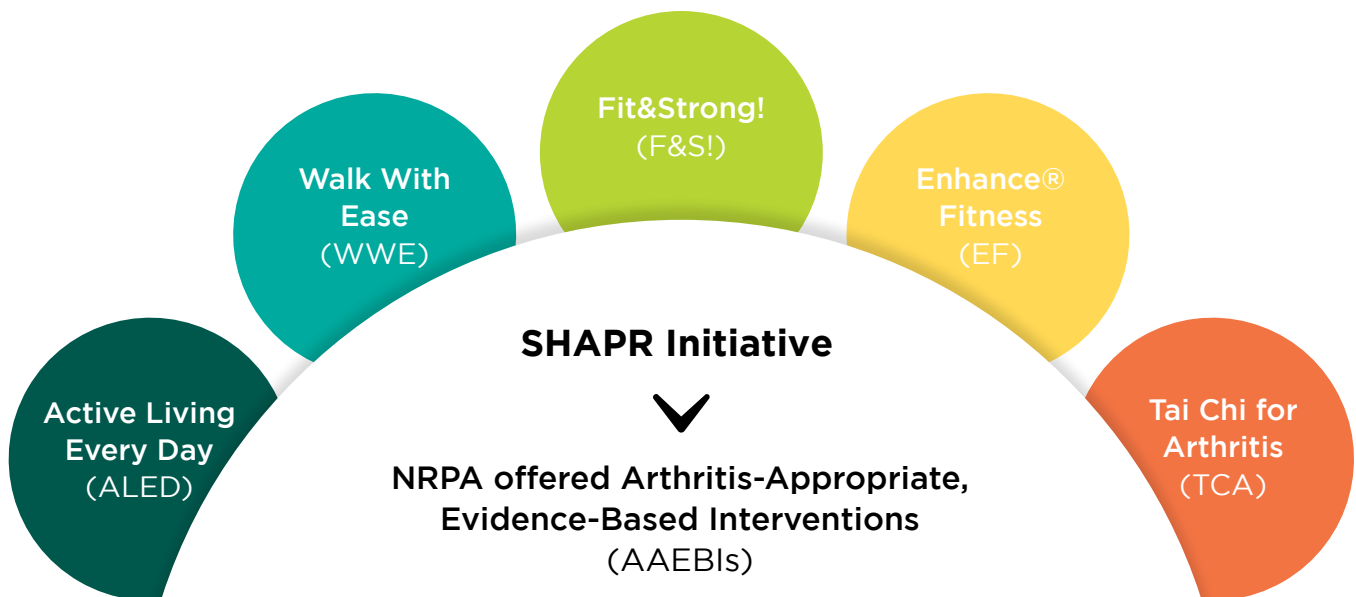
The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), with funding support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is partnering with local park and recreation agencies across the United States to increase access, availability, participation and reach of evidence-based physical activity programs for older adults through NRPA's Supporting Healthy Aging Through Parks and Recreation (SHAPR) initiative.

The SHAPR initiative offers instructor trainings and participant materials for five of the 23 Arthritis-Appropriate, Evidence-Based Interventions (AAEBIs) programs that have been shown to improve arthritis symptoms such as pain or limitations in function. These programs have met a [list of criteria](#) that was initially created by the CDC's Arthritis Program and are now adapted and upheld by the Osteoarthritis Action Alliance (OAAA). Check out the [current list](#) of all the approved AAEBIs.

The five AAEBI programs offered through the SHAPR initiative are **Walk With Ease, Active Living Every Day, Fit & Strong!, Enhance® Fitness and Tai Chi for Arthritis**. These programs improve physical activity, engagement and the quality of life for older adults to help them age in place.

How to Use the Tool

This program assessment tool is intended to provide information about the five AAEBI programs offered through NRPA's SHAPR initiative and to provide guidance to park and recreation agencies in selecting the program that best fits the needs of the older adults in their communities. The tool also provides some testimonials from staff and participants to better understand the potential impacts of these interventions.



Program Impacts

Active Living Every Day (ALED): ALED is a behavior change classroom-based program with a unique approach to address the root cause of those physically less active by teaching the skills necessary to overcome barriers to physical activity.

“For me, the program has changed everything. I was experiencing a lot of joint pain and more limited mobility. When I saw the curriculum, I thought this might be very helpful for me, and it certainly has been. With the difference between where I started and where I am now, I would encourage anyone to take the class. It changed everything for me.”

- ALED Participant, City of Tualatin (Oregon) Park and Recreation



Participants learn how to overcome barriers to physical activity through ALED. Photo courtesy of City of Tualatin (Oregon) Parks and Recreation.

“During one of the most chaotic summers our department had ever experienced, I was tasked with co-leading the Active Living Every Day program. Amidst the challenges of staffing summer camps, dealing with COVID outbreaks, and juggling my usual responsibilities, I initially wondered how we could pull it off. Surprisingly, we not only managed to do so, but also turned it into one of the most rewarding experiences I’ve ever been a part of. Engaging with our elderly participants, meeting them on their terms, and helping them progress has been incredibly fulfilling on a personal level. It also shed light on the struggles this demographic faces in our fast-paced and ever-changing society.”

- Staff member, Calvert County (Maryland) Department of Parks and Recreation

Walk With Ease: WWE is a multi-component, low-impact walking program to teach people how to safely and comfortably incorporate physical activity into their everyday lifestyle.

“Our participants expressed feeling better about themselves mentally, socially and emotionally. They took ownership of their Walk With Ease community and leaned on each other for care and support. The social benefits gave the participants a place to belong and feel valued. The participants were able to share their stories with each other, on NRPA Connect and in the Mooresville community. We celebrated their accomplishments with luncheons, videos and certificates.”

- Staff member at the Town of Mooresville (North Carolina) Park and Recreation



WWE participants warm up by stretching. Photo courtesy of Town of Mooresville (North Carolina).

“The Walk With Ease program has tremendously changed my life. Not only has it made me a healthy person, but it has also given me the power to endure. Walk With Ease is a program that all seniors should participate in. It gives you a sense of pride and hope, and it also is a place where you can get together with people around your age to talk, laugh, smile, cry, hug and love on each other, and listen to things that people have on their minds.”

- WWE Participant, Town of Mooresville (North Carolina)

Fit&Strong! (F&S!): F&S! is a multi-component physical activity and behavior-change program that teaches inactive adults with joint pain and stiffness how to engage in safe and effective exercise and provides motivational tools for physical activity maintenance.

“We learned Fit & Strong is an effective program. Our participants all have improved physically and have shared they are feeling better overall due to the program. Our participants have also shared that they are feeling stronger, have improved balance & flexibility, and have more stamina!”

- Staff member, Prince George’s County (Maryland) Parks and Recreation



F&S! participants do seated exercises. Photo courtesy of City of Lake Elsinore (California).

“I have arthritis in my lower back and my knees and I used to walk three times a week but felt like I needed more. I joined the Fit&Strong program at Lake Elsinore Senior Center and I noticed that my knees and back were feeling so much better. I also learned from our instructor Julie how to not overdue it during the class.”

- F&S! Participant, Lake Elsinore (California) Parks and Recreation

Enhance®Fitness (EF): EF focuses on dynamic cardiovascular exercise, strength training, balance and flexibility.

“This class has helped me improve my balance immensely! And I always leave class joyful.”
- EF Participant, City of Lake Oswego (Oregon) Parks and Recreation



F&S! participants do strength training. Photo courtesy of City of Lake Elsinore (California).

“Very good advice on how to do exercises right and how each works and what muscles you are working.”
- EF Participant, City of Lake Oswego (Oregon) Parks and Recreation

Tai Chi for Arthritis (TCA): TCA is adaptable for almost anyone with specific conditions — people with arthritis or other chronic conditions and those who are inactive or want to improve their activity levels, physical function and wellness of body and mind.

“Tai Chi is not only a connection within yourself because of the serenity through the movements but also to the community. It opens doors to meeting new people, new opportunities and calmness for the participants.”

- Tai Chi for Arthritis Participant, Martin County (Florida) Parks and Recreation



City of Kerman (California) doing Tai Chi for Arthritis in a park.

AAEBI Program Chart Information

Active Living Every Day (ALED)	Program Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ALED is a behavior change classroom-based program with a unique approach to address the root cause of those physically less active by teaching the skills necessary to overcome barriers to physical activity. Sessions are conducted in a classroom-based group discussion and a physical activity component is not part of the curriculum; it is done outside of the classroom. The 12-week program (12 total classes) is led by an ALED certified instructor. One-hour classes are offered one time per week. The recommended class size is 8-15 (max of 20 participants per instructor).
	Recommended Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults who are physically inactive with or without chronic diseases and are interested in becoming more physically active Adults who may be hesitant or need motivation to become more physically active
	Instructor Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-paced asynchronous training with an online exam Estimated 4-6 hours to complete Cost: \$400 (includes instructor manual and one participant book) No recertification required
	Implementation Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructor training: \$400* per instructor (plus shipping) Required participant book: \$50* each (plus shipping)
	Languages Offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructor training and participant books are available in English.

Walk With Ease (WWE)	Program Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WWE is a multi-component, low-impact walking program designed to teach people how to safely and comfortably incorporate physical activity into their everyday lifestyle. The program curriculum has health education, stretching and strengthening exercises and 10-40 minutes of walking. Total class time is one hour. The six-week program (18 total classes) is led by a WWE certified instructor. A one-hour class is offered three times per week. The recommended class size is 12-15 participants per instructor.
	Recommended Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults with arthritis and other chronic conditions Those interested in improving physical activity levels through a walking program Participants who can stand or walk a minimum of 10 minutes
	Instructor Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online instructor training Estimated 3-4 hours to complete Cost is \$89 (includes instructor manual) CPR certification is required First Aid certification recommended but not required No recertification required
	Implementation Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructor training (online): \$89* per instructor Required participant book: \$11.95* each (plus shipping)
	Languages Offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructor training is only offered in English. Participant books are available in English and Spanish.

Fit and Strong! (F&S!)	Program Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> F&S! is a multi-component physical activity and behavior-change program that teaches inactive adults with joint pain and stiffness how to engage in safe and effective exercise and provides motivational tools for physical activity maintenance. Each session is 90 minutes; the first 60 focuses minutes on flexibility, low-impact aerobics and strength training to improve lower body function. The remaining 30 minutes consists of health education. An eight or 12-week program (24 total classes) is led by a F&S! certified instructor. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The eight-week program is 90 minutes three times per week. The 12-week program is 90 minutes two times per week. The recommended class size is 20-25 participants per instructor. Larger class sizes require an additional instructor.
	Recommended Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People with arthritis or other chronic conditions with mobility challenges Inactive adults who want to be more physically active but have lower extremity limitations and/or mobility challenges
	Instructor Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online instructor training Estimated 8-10 hours to complete Cost: \$400 (includes copy of instructor and participant manual) CPR certification a plus Fitness instructor OR experience leading other evidence-based programs required
	Implementation Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructor training: \$400* per instructor (includes access to print instructor and required participant books) Resistance bands: -\$6 each Adjustable ankle cuff weights: -\$27* per participant License fee: \$400*
	Languages Offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructor training is available in English. Participant materials are available in English, Spanish and Portuguese.

Enhance[®] Fitness (EF)	Program Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EF focuses on dynamic cardiovascular exercise, strength training, balance and flexibility. Participants' progress is tracked with fitness checks completed at the time the individual joins EF, again after four months and then as often as needed. The 16-week program (48 total classes) is led by an EF certified instructor and is offered in person or remotely. A one-hour class is offered three times per week. The recommended class size is limited to 25 for in-person classes and 12 for remote classes.
	Recommended Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults at all levels of fitness — frail to fit Adults who want to become more active, energized and empowered to live independently
	Instructor Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted by an EF Master Trainer, in person or remotely Estimated 8-12 hours to complete Cost per instructor: \$250 CPR certification required
	Implementation Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructor training: \$250* per instructor Adjustable ankle cuff weights: \$27* per participant Initial license fee: \$500* Access to data management system: \$200* EF developers require each agency to sign Master Service Agreement (MSA) Yearly license fee after first year: \$50** (required) Access to data management system after first year: \$200/year** (recommended, not required) Recertification of \$250** only required if instructor has a lapse in teaching >6 months
Languages Offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructor and participant materials are available in English and Mandarin. Classes are offered in 16 languages (languages spoken by Master Trainers and participants in class, not the language of class materials). 	

Tai Chi for Arthritis (TCA)	Program Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TCA is adaptable for almost anyone with specific conditions, people with arthritis or other chronic conditions, people who are inactive or want to improve their activity levels, physical function and wellness of body and mind. • TCA helps build muscle strength, flexibility and cardiovascular fitness while helping people relax and feel better. • An eight or 16-week program (16 total classes) is led by a TCA certified instructor. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The eight-week program is 60 minutes two times per week. o The 16-week program is 60 minutes one time per week. o Participants are encouraged to practice movements most days for 15-30 minutes outside of the classroom. • The recommended class size is 1-20 participants per instructor.
	Recommended Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults with or without arthritis looking to reduce pain and/or improve quality of life • People with mild, moderate and severe joint and back pain • Adults who have a higher risk of falling
	Instructor Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training is conducted by a TCA Master Trainer in two phases: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-paced Instructor Preparation Package (SIPP) online portion (estimated completion time is about 20-40+ hours) 2. Once SIPP is completed, a 7-hour interactive and live (in-person or remote) training with a TCA Master Trainer • Estimated 27-47+ hours to complete • Cost: \$490 per instructor (discount rate of \$4,300 for 10 trainings plus \$400 each additional training)
	Implementation Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live Instructor training: \$380* per instructor • Self-paced Instructor Preparation Package (SIPP): \$56* • Instructor Manual: \$27* • One-year required membership to Tai Chi Health Institute: \$28* • Recertification of instructors every 2 years: \$200** • NO Participant materials required
	Languages Offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SIPP is available (online portion) in English. • TCA Master Trainer (live portion) is available in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - English, - Spanish, - Korean, - Indian and - Chinese. <p>(For languages other than English, the training may be in that country's time zone and could be challenging for those training in the United States.)</p>

*These costs are paid by NRPA as part of the Supporting Healthy Aging Through Parks and Recreation (SHAPR) grants.

**These costs are additional costs outside of SHAPR grant offerings.

This publication was supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (CDC/HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$460,007 with 100 percent funded by CDC/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CDC/HHS or the U.S. Government. Please contact **Colleen Pittard**, NRPA's partnership manager, at cpittard@nrpa.org with any questions or comments.