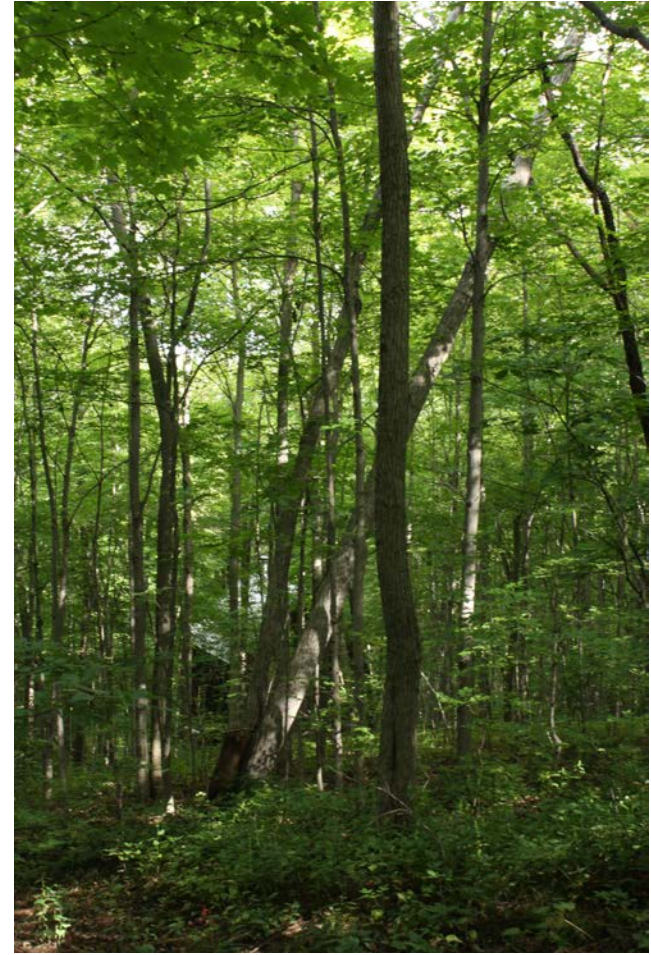




“It’s not just about the money”: Social Capital’s Contribution to Age- Friendly Communities

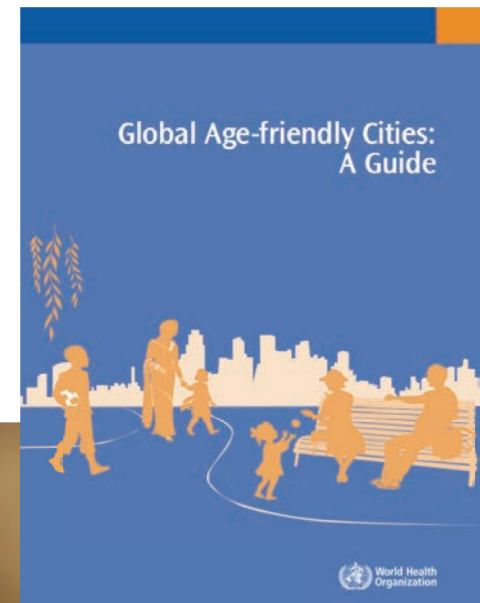
Outline

- Age-friendly communities & social capital
- Research findings
- Implications



Age-Friendly Communities and Social Capital

- Aging in **rural communities** and **small towns**
- Age-Friendly Communities
- Social capital
- This project



Findings

1. Higher income per capita = lower sense of community
2. Outmigration = lower sense of community
3. Strong social capital = more successful programming



General Impacts

I believe this has been a tremendous asset for the town that continues to provide benefits and partnerships... I think it's really brought awareness to issues that maybe wouldn't have gotten the same attention. It's been certainly a very positive exercise.

Health Impacts

I mean we did everything from curling, swimming, bowling, we go bowling once a month...we have people who when they first came to us, did nothing but sit around the table and they could barely walk from the car to here, and in a few months they were out on hikes with us.

Social Impacts

The social aspect is critical. Very important. Getting people out of their houses who never would have left.

I think it's a place to go and not be alone.

Volunteer Burnout

When we met to plan for our volunteer week, the same people are in all the same organizations and they're a little burned out.

Community Champions and Partnerships

Rob is what's keeping us together. You've got to have that person, you know, keeping the group together.

This would not be possible if the College didn't provide free access, free computers, free books printed for you there, all I have to do is buy the binders, the College provides the paper for us and the employees print them for us. The rest of our volunteers...we just couldn't operate without all the volunteers, and I especially want to point out our high school students...they are a great help and they really enjoy helping our seniors.

Not Just About the Money

I think for success, you just got to be excited about it. If you're just doing it just because "Oh well, here's a chance for some money," it's never going to work. I think you have to be really really on board with wanting to see these things happen in your community, and then, just do what you have to do to make it work.

Implications

Successful, sustainable AFC programming **must include:**

1. Community champions
2. Capacity building
3. Regional partnerships



Why is this research tough?

- Working with others: A team effort
 - Other academics
 - Provincial/federal policies, employees, & elected officials
 - Municipal policies, employees, & elected officials
 - Local businesses, institutions, organizations
 - Health care providers
 - Volunteers
 - Seniors



Why is this research important?

- Barriers:
 - ▣ Rural seniors and municipalities
 - ▣ Vulnerable seniors' populations
- Potential solutions:
 - ▣ Sustainable AFCs through capacity building



Discussion



please get in touch...

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