



A-Z of Activities

Social activities

Almost every activity can be an opportunity to socialise. There have been high profile projects bringing pre-school aged children into care homes. But you could think on a smaller scale – invite groups of people of different ages to social events, host projects and create an environment that encourages families to take part in the life of the home.

See the checklist for social activities.

What the activity can do for the residents	What do you need?	What to be aware of
<p>Movement – this will vary depending on the context of the social activity but can range from minimal (listening to music) to very active (dancing).</p> <p>Sensory – can include all or any of the following: smell, awareness of body movement, touch, sight, hearing, taste.</p> <p>Emotional – instils a sense of personal identity, feeling part of a group.</p> <p>Cognitive – memory, concentration, sequencing, reminiscence, orientation.</p> <p>Social – interaction and communication – verbal and non-verbal, smiling, laughing, practising social skills and behaviour.</p>	<p>Facilities This will vary depending on the activity.</p> <p>Position furniture so it's easy for residents to communicate with each other.</p> <p>Arrange chairs so that residents can make eye contact and are near enough for people to be able to hear each other.</p> <p>Reduce background noise (television, radio, kitchen clatter) to a minimum.</p> <p>Staff/skills The number of staff required depends on how many residents go and their level of dependency and care needs. Include staff and volunteers with a relevant interest or skill that they can share.</p>	<p>Know what level of social interaction people have been used to and currently enjoy. If someone has always been a loner, then being thrown into a group may be far from enjoyable. Sadly, many residents may actually feel quite lonely, despite being surrounded by others. So they might really enjoy being with others, but may need help to do so.</p> <p>Always introduce people to each other at the beginning of activities.</p> <p>Consider who you will invite to sit next to each other.</p> <p>Avoid bringing together people who 'clash', either verbally or physically. It could be stressful for them and may make others feel uncomfortable.</p>



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- Celebrations (for example, birthdays or national sporting achievements).
- Music.
- Dancing (for example, tea dances).
- Afternoon tea.
- Babies and young children – encourage staff and visitors to bring their young children into the home or host a parent and baby group.
- Pub evenings.
- Film afternoons or nights.
- Watching national events (for example, world football, royal weddings).
- Calendar events (for example, Christmas, Diwali).
- Summer fetes.
- Open House and coffee mornings.
- Hosting events to raise money for a charity – such as a clothes sale or quiz evening.