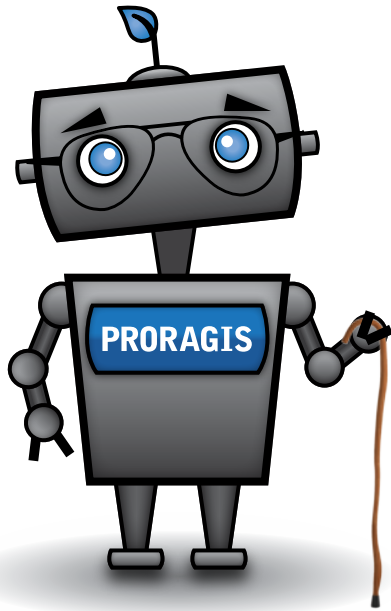


PRORAGIS™

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THE ROLE OF PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES IN PROVIDING IMPORTANT SERVICES AND RESOURCES FOR SENIORS



2013: 39.6 million seniors representing 12.9% of the U.S. population.

2030: 72.1 million seniors representing 20.3% of the U.S. population.

By 2030, there will be more people in the US over the age of 65 than under the age of 13.

Seniors in the future will be less affluent than their predecessors and more reliant on public services such as meal programs.

WHAT DO PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES DO TO HELP?

70% of park and recreation agencies offer programs targeted at seniors.

More than **30%** of these agencies offer senior feeding programs.

The average agency serves more than **160** seniors and serves an average of 10,000 meals annually.

WHAT'S THE IMPACT?

Park and recreation agencies currently provide critical services for millions of seniors and in the future will be relied upon to support this population to an even greater degree.

SENIORS DEPEND ON PARKS AND RECREATION

By Travis Smith, Ph.D., and Rishma Parpia

Seniors are going to take over your agency. Well, not quite — but you're going to see more of them in your parks and facilities.

The 39.6 million seniors (those over age 65) in the United States currently comprise 12.9 percent of the population. By 2030, this number will swell to 72.1 million and more than 20 percent of the population — more than double the number of seniors in the U.S. in the year 2000. In fact, over the next 16 years the proportion of seniors in the U.S. will surpass the number of kids under the age of 13¹. As discussed in an article by Dr. John Crompton in the December 2013 issue of *Parks and Recreation Magazine*, focusing on this senior demographic will impact viability of park and recreation agencies in the near future, and forward-thinking agencies are already adjusting operations to better serve seniors².

Analysis of the data in PRORAGIS™ shows that the relationship between park and recreation agencies and seniors is already very strong. For each year between 2011 and 2013, 70 percent or more of agencies participating in PRORAGIS offered programs targeted at seniors. This indicates that for many seniors, their community park and recreation agency represents part of their day-to-day existence — whether to socialize, learn or engage in physical activity. However, for some seniors, the relationship with their park and recreation agency is even more important. PRORAGIS tells us that, during the same time period, more than 30 percent of these agencies offered programs that fed seniors in their communities, in some cases serving more than 25,000 meals annually.

Unfortunately, examination of population and economic projections indicate that efforts to fight senior hunger will be even more necessary in the coming years. New methods to examine poverty in seniors indicate that in at least 12 states, the actual number of seniors living in poverty is more than twice previous estimates, with all 50 states underestimating senior poverty to some degree³. Additionally, the disparity between the wealthiest and poorest seniors is growing rapidly⁴ — so while some seniors represent potential new revenue for park and recreation agencies due to their affluence, an increasing number of the poorest seniors will look to park and recreation agencies to facilitate necessary services due to their poverty.

What does this mean for your agency and your community? If you already support or provide a senior feeding program through your agency, it's likely that your program may need to expand in the next 15 years. And, if your current offerings don't include programs that support seniors living in poverty, it's an area your agency may be called upon to address as the number of those in need increases.

Go to www.nrpa.org/PRORAGIS and enter your agency's data to help demonstrate the impact of parks and recreation!

¹ US Census Bureau, 2012 National Population Projections www.census.gov/population/projections/data/national/2012/summarytables.html (accessed April 11, 2014).

² Crompton, John L. "Are Your Seniors Moving to Center Stage?" *Parks & Recreation Magazine*. Dec. 2014. Retrieved on Nov. 5, 2014. www.parksandrecreation.org/2013/December/Are-Your-Seniors-Moving-to-Center-Stage.

³ The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation (2013) *A State-by-State Snapshot of Poverty Among Seniors: Findings From Analysis of the Supplemental Poverty Measure*.

⁴ Butrica, Smith and Iams. "This Is Not Your Parents' Retirement: Comparing Retirement Income Across Generations" *Social Security Bulletin*, 72(1), 2012.