

Project FIT

Mission:

This year we worked alongside two community partners, Susan S. Bailis Assisted Living Community and ABCD Parker Hill Fenway Senior Day Center. Our curriculum seeks to promote physical activity and a wider range of mobility for the participants. We look to strengthen their bodies and promote a healthier lifestyle while incorporating a social component to promote social connections among participants and the students.

"Social fitness is the answer to happier and healthier aging"



Partners:

By the end of our 5th year of the project, we have served in 6 different elderly housings around Boston:

- General Warren Apartments, 2015
- ABCD Parker Hill / Fenway Neighborhood Service Center, 2016 and 2019
- Robert Georgine Tower, Charlestown, 2016
- South Boston Elderly, 2016
- St. Cecilia's House, 2017
- Susan Bailis Assisted Living, 2017-2019

Problem Addressed:

There is a substantial lack of programs geared towards helping seniors in general, and especially for improving their physical and mental health. Our team seeks to close the gap through our weekly volunteering experiences at neighboring senior housings and centers surrounding Northeastern community.



Impact:

We aim to develop a fun curriculum that gets our participants moving, but most importantly, to create a space for social interactions that didn't exist. It is important to develop a sense of community and friendship among our participants.

Moving forward:

We are excited to continue with Project FIT throughout Summer I and upcoming academic year of 2019/2020. Our attempts to incorporate a short meditation/positive thinking exercise have proven successful, and we hope to research and adopt the most efficient and enjoyable meditation methods into our curricular moving forward.

Methods:

We always start our hour-long weekly fitness class with a warm-up, then move to higher impact (selected body part) or higher intensity (cardio) part of the class. We round up with a cool-down that consists of stretching, breathing, and meditation.

"More than just an exercise program, we want to promote the entire well being of our participants through physical, social and emotional interactions."



Results:

Through qualitative research and interview method, we learned that weekly activity sessions help improve overall mobility, mood, and encouraged increased interaction among seniors. We are very happy to see consistent attendance as well as growing participation rates every week. After 5 years of service, our curricular has passed the time test, and we are confident that our sessions are tailored and customized to different levels of physical capabilities and participants' preferences.