

Community Champions (CC)

Community Champions who work to inform community members about the various resources and services that are available in Washtenaw County to serve residents. They make an effort to find and disseminate information regarding the multitude of resources in their faith communities, the city, county and the state that would enhance, enrich and improve the health, wealth, and well-being of all community members.

Each champion is the “go-to” person inside his/her faith community or neighborhood where those with a variety of needs, concerns or questions can go-to to obtain help, information and referrals to a variety of resources, programs and services.

Community Champions will meet on a monthly basis to make connections, elaborate on community needs, identify new key community resources and to indicate which community members, business leaders and social service agencies that could be resource advocates for faith communities and support various causes and needs (even fundraising efforts). These persons/businesses/groups become “living” resources that are willing to assist the CC with support and resources.

Friendly Visitors (FV)

Friendly Visitors volunteers are matched with an elderly individual who would like somebody to visit them on an ongoing basis.

Why Friendly Visitors?: Without the stimulation that social interaction and friendship provide, an isolated elder can experience poor health, a lack of strength and energy, depression, and other physical, emotional, and mental health problems. Weekly visits or calls from a friendly volunteer can change all that. We hope that many of the “matches” will last for years, allowing for shared interests and activities that come with enduring friendships.

How It Works: Volunteers visit with their friends for an hour or two, once a week. Some activities that volunteers can enjoy with their friends include:

- A friendly chat over a meal
- Reading aloud
- Helping with light chores
- Trips shopping or to a local coffee shop
- Any other activity that friends enjoy!

Many elders would like to walk or listen to music during this weekly visit, so a “walking buddy” or “music partner” could be incorporated as an activity for the volunteer and elder to do together. For example, partners could:

- Share thoughts, feelings, and memories associated with an elder’s favorite music. Friendly Visitors could bring music to elders in their homes and work together with them to create a list of the elder’s favorite music, which they will enjoy and discuss together.
- There is no exercise like walking. It’s easy, natural, and something we enjoy doing. A walking buddy could be matched with an older adult who would like a volunteer to walk with them. Depending on the needs of the elder, walks may be short or long, indoors or outside.

There are lots of possibilities for a Friendly Visitor volunteer to make all the difference for a senior by a visit.