



Pets and Older People Aging Together

Our *Pets and Elders Together* program (PET) helps clients and their beloved animal companions age together. Whether a dog, cat, or bird, pets are often an older person's main source of affection. Most live on fixed incomes and—without help—may sacrifice their needs for their pets'.

Our PET Fund provides stipends for food, vet services, grooming, and supplies. We partner with local vets that offer affordable, often in-home care. We help clients identify trusted contacts willing to care for pets in case of emergencies. And a cadre of volunteers walk dogs, change cat litter, provide friendly dog visits, etc.

As Mrs. F said in an email to our PET Coordinator, Robin Strashun, about her recently deceased beloved dog, Mishie, "Thanks so much for all that Search and Care did for my Mishie—purchasing food, treats, grooming, and vet visits. You made his life so much more comfortable. And he gave me so much joy."

New & Noteworthy

New Handy Person On-call Service: Simple home modifications to reduce fire risks, prevent falls, and improve overall safety and comfort.

New Notary Public Service: Wonder what to do when you need an official document notarized? Our Notary is here to help!

Seniors Connecting Online

Ms. E, 76, expressed to her Computer Coach, "I feel more empowered every time I come here."

"You said this might make my days more fulfilling," Ms. R, 80, told her Social Worker. "And you were right."

Ms. C, 79, told her Computer Coach, "Our sessions are the highlight of my week. I feel much happier, now."



Money Does Matter

The declining ability to manage one's finances can pose a significant risk to remaining independent.

Warning signs of financial decline include (from the National Endowment for Financial Education):

- Taking longer to complete everyday financial tasks
- Reduced attention to details in financial documents
- Decline in everyday math skills
- Decreased understanding of financial concepts

Our *Money Matters* Financial Navigators (primarily finance retirees) help with bill-paying, budgeting, debt consolidation, avoiding scams, etc. They work one-on-one with clients to gain trust. Encouraging seniors to reveal financial challenges takes a patient, sensitive approach.

Now, *Money Matters* is being offered at numerous agencies across NYC, and replicated by Baltimore's Health Department Aging Services! Director, Elizabeth Briscoe, expressed that the program has "made a significant impact on many of our older adult's quality of life."

Watch for *Why Money Matters* on Amazon—a manual for senior-serving agencies interested in replicating this program for their seniors who need financial assistance.

Silver Circles, our Computer Education Program, helps older people become more tech-savvy—from learning email, to saving photos and videos, utilizing social media, shopping online, writing blogs, and connects older people to information and one another.

One-on-one in-home tutoring makes **Silver Circles** unique, and a big draw for older people who've had challenging experiences in classrooms at other settings. Individualized attention enables them to learn at their own pace.

The number of homebound older people in the program has increased significantly—both for in-home, one-on-one tutoring sessions, and for our lending library of iPads and Kindle Fires. In addition, many have begun to use FaceTime to participate at home in Search and Care's in-agency computer groups.

In the year ahead, we plan to use services like Zoom—enabling participants to video chat during in-agency activities, bolster new online Tech Games and Art Stylus Groups, and help isolated clients build even more meaningful social connections.

If you'd like to become a Volunteer Computer Coach, Companion, or bring your friendly dog to an isolated older person, please call (212) 289-5300.



Make a Donation Where it Truly Counts!

When you support Search and Care, you are helping underwrite our many fee-free programs and services that enable older people to age in cherished apartments with quality of life and peace of mind.

To Donate: www.SearchandCare.org/Donate

2019/20 Search and Care Fee-Free Programs & Services

Social Work/Care Management: organizing benefits/entitlements, homecare, transportation; providing advocacy with housing, legal, and medical matters.

Money Matters: Field Financial Navigators safeguard financially vulnerable older adults by providing bill-paying, budgeting, banking, credit card oversight, and fraud avoidance.

Mental Health Specialist: empathically listens/counsels; connects clients to resources; intervenes during crises; supports clients facing depression, anxiety, bereavement, substance use and other concerns/issues.

Cognitive Care: supports memory impaired, cognitively challenged clients and their caregivers.

Medical Escorting: chaperoning frail older people to/from vital physician appointments.

Senior Computer Connectivity: in-home/in-agency tutorials fostering tech literacy; tablet lending library.

Homecare: shopping, decluttering, laundering, cooking, ensuring safe hospital-to-home reintegration.

Nursing: educating, advocating, monitoring, triaging with physicians on follow-up care.

Therapeutic Groups and Enrichment Activities: 10+ regularly | Tea & Creativity, Medical Rap, Lunch Bunch, La Hora del Cafecito, NYC Cultural Outings & Enrichment, Healthy Living Bingo, Computer Games, Nutrition, PET Pro Workshops, Yoga & Meditation.

Telephonic Monitoring: weekly check-ins with community seniors to ascertain their current needs/status.

Occupational Therapy: Columbia University Grad Interns assess apartment risks, enhance comfort, reduce falls.

iChoose: East Harlem lunch-time mentorship program; seniors offering teens sage wisdom and tips to live healthy lives.

Volunteerism: 175 intergenerational volunteers providing companionship, pet support, shopping, neighborhood strolls, etc.

Spread Some Cheer/Pet Stockings: holiday visits to homebound seniors by Board, volunteers, community partners.

Emergency Closet: offering essential items to clients returning home from hospital/rehabilitation stays.

Community Sentinels: 120 community representatives (“eyes and ears”) identifying seniors needing help.

PET (Pets and Elders Together): enabling senior pet owners and their animal companions to age together at home.

Keeping Yourself Active



Clients attended Tootsie on Broadway. Made possible by The Freed, Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels, & Carl Jacobs Foundations; the Search and Care Board; and donors.

Isolation is a growing problem—linked to a multitude of physical and mental health issues. But there are things older people can do to build connections and feel like a part of the community.

Social Activities: For a lonely older person, groups and outings offer opportunities for joyful interactions, camaraderie, and peer support.

Communal Meals: Eating together with others can foster conversations and new, meaningful bonds.

Get a Hearing Test: A hearing aid may be the sole obstacle between being isolated and socializing.

Caring for a Pet: Adopting a pet can renew purpose for a capable older person. For current pet parents, assistance with pet care can help keep those treasured relationships intact.

Access to Transportation: Reliable and affordable transportation, readily accessible to less mobile older people, can greatly reduce isolation.

Tech-savviness: Technology can bolster social connections, particularly for the homebound: from e-mail and FaceTime, to chat rooms, online book clubs and games, and much more.

Search and Care Recognitions

Awarded *Charity Navigator's* 4-star highest rating for sixth year in a row (achieved by only 7% of nonprofits evaluated nationwide), and *GuideStar's* Gold Seal of Transparency.