



NEWS COLUMN – Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

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Intergenerational Connection

Nina R. Keller, Executive Director, Area Agency on Aging District 7

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As we soon approach the two-year mark of the coronavirus pandemic, we note all of the ways we have adapted and adjusted while understanding some of the issues that intensified as a result, such as isolation and loneliness.

Shortly after the pandemic started, our Agency developed a new program to address isolation and loneliness. Through our “Porch Talk” telephone reassurance program, staff at our Agency reach out to seniors for an informal chat and check-in...a way to provide companionship and a friendly voice for those who may not have much interaction with others. Callers can also talk with someone in more detail about community resources that are available to help them with any needs they may have.

Since the inception of the program, we have made over 850 calls. Participants in the program have expressed their appreciation for the calls and how much they look forward to the conversation.

As a way to expand the outreach to those participating in the program, our Agency has developed a “pilot project” by working with local schools to develop items to send to program participants as a way to provide cheer in another way. This consists of special drawings and messages from school-age children that are mailed to the seniors to brighten their day. We are looking forward to additional ways to “send sunshine” to participants through this format and the intergenerational connection it provides.

The “Porch Talk” program is always open to receive more participants. If you or someone you know would be interested in receiving a weekly telephone call for a check-in or just a friendly chat, call us at 1-800-582-7277 or e-mail info@aaa.org.

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