

## **Public Health CHIP Funding Healthy Aging Grant through Waukesha County**

Social isolation and loneliness are important yet neglected social determinants for people of all ages as noted in the Surgeon Generals Report issued in April, 2023.

The physical consequences of poor or insufficient connections include:

- 29% increased risk of heart disease
- 32% increased risk of stroke
- 50% increased risk of developing dementia
- 60% increase risk of premature death.

In addition, fall related hospitalization and mortality rate as noted in the Waukesha County Community Health Assessment is higher in Waukesha County compared to the State of Wisconsin. Waukesha has twice the national rate of deaths due to falls which makes us first in the nation.

WPRF truly embodies the essence of belonging by providing welcoming and inclusive programs, essential health/wellness services for all ages and abilities, and safe, accessible spaces to build meaningful connection.

If awarded the Healthy Aging grant, the City of Waukesha Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department will partner with Ballroom Basics for Balance (BB4B) to support the CHIP result goals of people 60+ in Waukesha County being safe from falls and work towards the goal of all people in Waukesha County having social connections by offering BB4B instructor training, community classes and would compile results for Waukesha County Health Improvement Process use and evaluation.

Ballroom Basics for Balance (BB4B) is a group balance class that uses basic dance moves to practice and enhance balance and learn to prevent falls. It is fun and instructive and includes validated pre- and post- testing to measure balance, cognitive function, and quality of life. The curriculum is a therapeutic practice and evidence informed.

Social isolation is associated with increased fall risk and we know that participation in a BB4B program will increase social relationships, social roles, group membership and interactions while improving balance and cognitive function. Social isolation, loneliness and falls are all interconnected.

If funded the project will work to obtain the following outcomes:

- Twelve (12) instructors would be identified and trained at no charge.
- 12 classes will be offered in the City of Waukesha at no charge with the following goals:
  - 95% of Ballroom Basics for Balance (Participants 60+) will experience increased socialization and friendship as a result of programming as measured through surveys.
  - 95% of Ballroom Basics for Balance (Participants 60+) will reduce their “fear of falling” or concerns about falling as measured through Fall efficacy scale
  - 95% of Ballroom Basics for Balance (Participants 60+) will increase knowledge and awareness of resources as measured through surveys
  - 70% of Ballroom Basics for Balance (Participants 60+) will improve dynamic balance as measured through the TUG test
  - 70% of Ballroom Basics for Balance (Participants 60+) will improve static balance as measured through the 4 stage balance test

**Grant Application Due by April 24, 2024.**