



## HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

# OFFICE ON AGING

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May 2008

## Working Together Creates Strong and Healthy Communities

By: Erin Ulibarri, MPH

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Strength in numbers. Never forget that you're a member of your own community...don't do something that you wouldn't like to see done.

These familiar expressions signify the importance of individual effort and power on the overall community strength. The theme of Older Americans Month is "Working Together for Strong, Healthy, and Supportive Communities." The older adults and boomers of today have talents and experiences that can contribute to the community. Retirement does not have to mean the end of a productive life. There are many opportunities for older adults to continue to make a difference for others well into retirement:

- Volunteer at a local elementary school or library
- Work part-time for a charity or other community organization
- Participate with community advocacy groups
- Visit a senior center and meet someone new
- Enroll in an adult education class

Staying connected with the community builds a stronger society, but also leads to better physical health for everyone. Encouraging others to make lifestyle behavior changes (such as becoming more physically active) can reduce the risk of disease, disability, and injury. Telling a home-bound friend who needs supportive resources about the **Office on Aging Information and Assistance line at 1-800-510-2020** can help that person stay independent, healthier, and happier longer. Be an advocate for all older adults. This can benefit those who are not in the position (because of a health condition or life circumstances) to advocate for themselves.

The County of Orange Office on Aging can provide you with the tools and resources to help build a stronger community for everyone. Call the friendly and helpful Information Specialists at **1-800-510-2020** or **1-714-567-7500** to learn more about volunteer opportunities, friendly visitor programs, senior centers, senior employment options, community college classes, healthy lifestyle options, and much more.



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