

Who Should be Referred to VSOP?

Persons 60 years or older who are:

- Homebound or isolated
- In a fragile physical and/or Mental State
- In need of social supports
- Experiencing loss of loved ones and/or grief
- Suicidal or depressed
- Having issues controlling alcohol and/or substance use
- Would benefit from a mental health screening or socialization with peers

If any of these sound like someone you know, please refer them to your local coordinator (see How to Receive Services).



Characteristics of a Volunteer

- Compassion for Older Adults
- Willingness to Serve
- Available to Make the Commitment
- Active Listener
- Ability to Express Empathy
- Willingness to Learn New Skills

How to Receive Services or Volunteer

Call your local site coordinator:

Bakersfield: Martha Juarez

661-868-5022

Lake Isabella: Cindy Brown

760-379-3412

Tehachapi/Desert: Linda Lovendahl

661-822-8223

Wasco/Shafter: Brenda DeMonge

661-758-7332

Kern County VSOP Coordinator
Melissa Gibson-Enciso
Aging and Adult Services

Phone: (661) 868-1021

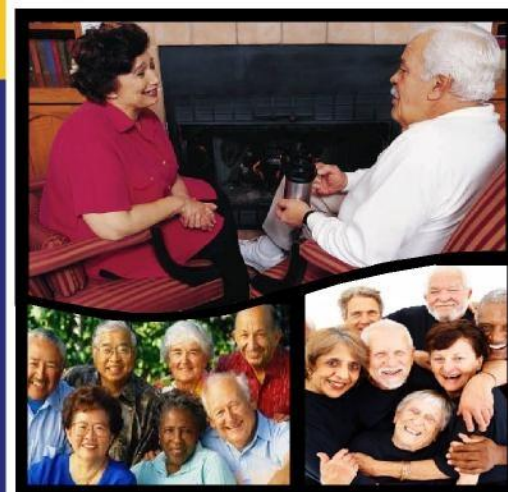
Mental Health Crisis Hotline

1-800-991-5272



Volunteer Senior Outreach Program

An outreach program serving seniors in your community



Prevention & Early Intervention

What is VSOP?

The Volunteer Senior Outreach Program (VSOP) is designed to provide community outreach to homebound older adults, 60 years of age or older that are isolated from others but still living independently and are at risk of hospitalization and /or institutionalization. The purpose is to provide socialization and stimulation to the individuals that are isolated and alone.

The VSOP utilizes community volunteers to make regular contact with this specific population and act as advocates on their behalf. The program is now being made available in remote areas of Kern County. It is modeled after the Santa Monica Senior Peer Counseling model, which uses trained volunteers to regularly interact with clients to encourage independence and stability.

The program is a collaborative effort between Kern County Behavioral Health & Recovery Services, Kern County Aging and Adult Services Department (AASD), College Community Services (CCS), and other local community agencies.

FACT SHEET:

One of the primary risk factors of aging is isolation from others, whether it is intentional or a change in the life process resulting in fewer interactive relationships.

Isolation Factors:

- Geographic Boundaries
- Lack of Transportation
- Loss of Close Relationships
- Family Living Out of the Area
- Physical Disabilities
- Loss of Independence

Isolated Senior Adults are more at risk of:

- Depression
- Physical Illness
- Unresolved Grief
- Mental Confusion
- Suicide
- Dementia
- Elder Abuse
- Psychotic Behaviors
- Substance Abuse



Successful Aging Requires:

- Relationships with Others
- Consistent Interaction with Others
- Mental and Physical Stimulation
- Need to be Needed by Others
- Making a Difference

Prevention Strategies for Aging:

- Develop New Relationships in the Community
- Maintain Interest in Daily Activities of Life
- Share Your Experiences with Others
- Maintain Physical and Mental Health
- Seek Help When Needed

Volunteer Senior Outreach Program can:

- Stimulate Active Interaction
- Create New Relationships with others
- Develop a New Purpose in Life
- Prevent Institutionalization (loss of independence)
- Reduce Hospitalization
- Maintain Mental Stimulation
- Maintain Mental Stability

Expected Outcomes with Volunteer Senior Outreach Program:

- Increases the Socialization with Others
- Decreased Hospitalization for Psychiatric or Behavior Issues
- Decreased Early Institutionalism to a Care Facility vs. Independent Living
- Improved Physical and Mental Wellness
- Increased and Improved Connection to the Community
- Prevent Suicidal Ideations or Attempts

