

Staying Confident and in Control: Falls Prevention in Older Adults in Pitt County, NC

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Project Description

As Schweitzer Fellows, we addressed fear of falling in older adults by teaching falls prevention classes at senior centers throughout rural North Carolina

We used a nationally recognized “Matter of Balance” curriculum which involved:

- educating older adults on risks associated with falls
- discussing fear of falling
- engaging in exercises that improved balance and strength

Activities

- Screened older adults at Pitt County senior centers for falls risk
- Taught 3 MOB classes at Farmville, Greenville, and Bethel senior centers
- Held celebration luncheons 1 month after class completion to track progress
- Followed up with each class at 6 months to assess falls

Outcomes

Out of 25 participants who completed the class,

- 19 exercised 20 minutes per day, 4 times per week using MOB exercises
- 25 implemented 3 changes to their home environment and 4 factors outside of the home to reduce the risk of falls
- 7 reported a 50% increase in falls efficacy as measured by the Falls Efficacy Scale
- 23 remained fall free 6 months after the completion of the MOB class

Sustainability

Two Pre-Occupational Therapy Student Association (P-OTSA) students were trained to be coaches for A Matter of Balance and will continue to teach classes throughout Pitt County as well as promote this project in their group at ECU



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