

Growing our Virtual Village



AGING
AHEAD 

September 9, 2025



Washington University in St. Louis

Federal Definition

ACL recognized the value of virtual meal programs during the pandemic

- [Tele or Virtual Nutrition Education for Older Adults \(acl.gov\)](#)
- [Health, Wellbeing and/or Social Connections in a Remote Environment](#)

Final Rule

- Recognizes direct services that happen in-person or virtually including multipurpose senior centers and direct services ([1321.3 Definitions](#))
- Congregate meals that happen in-person or virtually ([1321.87 and 1322.27](#)).

AGING AHEAD | CONNECT

- CHOICE at Aging Ahead brings the services of a Senior Center directly to older adults at Focal Points where older adults naturally congregate such as the public library, community centers, and now their homes via ***Aging Ahead-CONNECT***. CHOICE allows older adults to choose their meals and which educational and social programs they would like to attend.

With ***Aging Ahead-CONNECT***, Older Adults have access to

- Educational programming, including nutrition and exercise
- Social gatherings via Zoom
- Information on Aging Ahead Services
- Virtual Congregate Meals delivered to their door via third-party vendor

How does *Aging Ahead-CONNECT* work?

Virtual Senior Center participants are expected to participate in a combination of virtual educational content and Zoom gatherings each month to remain active in the Virtual Senior Center.

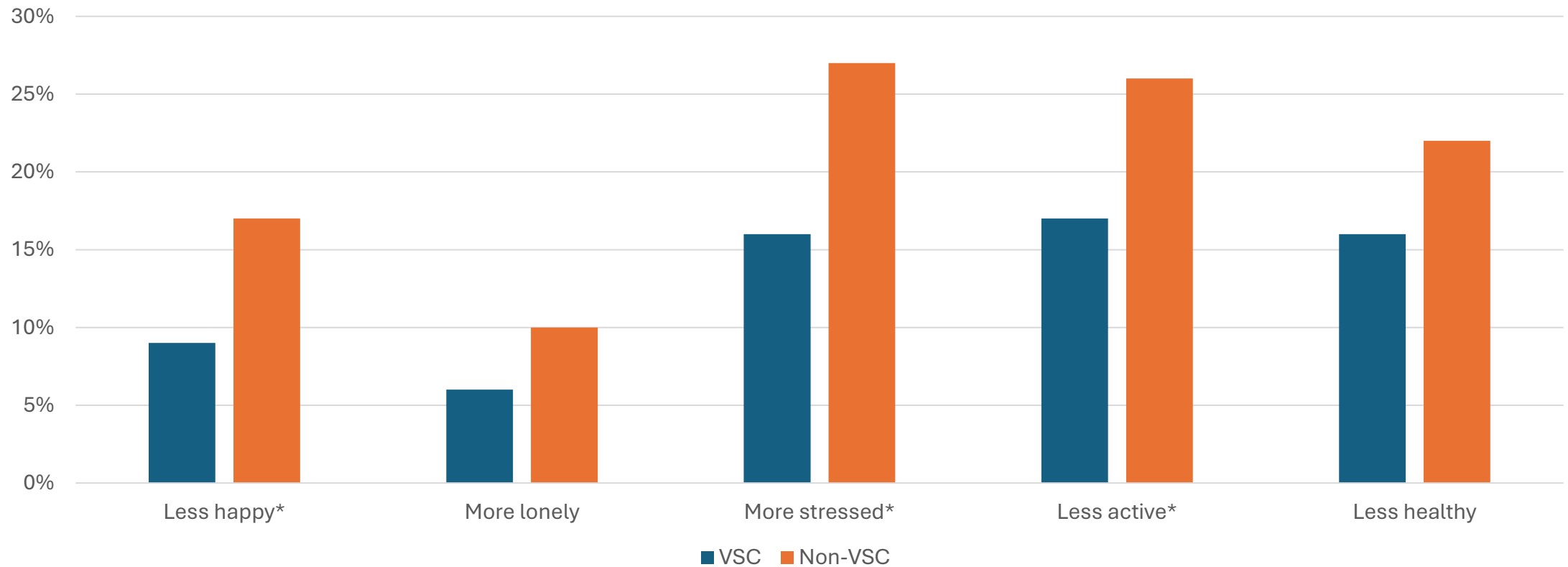
- Virtual Congregate Meals
 - Participants receive virtual congregate meals delivered once a month directly to their door.
- Educational Content
 - Participants are provided with a list of educational content that covers a variety of topics and interests, including information on nutrition, exercise, Medicare benefits, online safety, and services available at Aging Ahead.
- Meals and Mingle
 - Participants are provided the opportunity to enjoy their lunch and gather on zoom to socialize and discuss the provided educational content in breakout rooms.

Background

- Inheriting the program and devices from the St. Louis County Library, Aging Ahead introduced 750 older adults to the Virtual Senior Center.
- Pilot testing of this group prior to April 2025 found that
 - After 3 months, VSC participants were more likely than Home Delivered meal clients who weren't part of the VSC to say:
 - “My social relationships are supportive and rewarding”
 - “I think it is wonderful to be alive right now”
 - “I generally feel full of energy”
- VSC participants also reported better outcomes for health and well-being

Background: Compared to 3 months ago...

Self-reported health and well-being outcomes



*Significant difference between the VSC and Non-VSC groups

Background: In their own words...

Family members of Virtual Senior Center participants shared how the Virtual Senior Center has impacted their family:

Using the [tablet] makes her think and helps exercise her brain (ie - the articles/videos/games/using the video call capability)...simply having to interact w/ a "computer". Being part of this program, she enjoys the nutritious Moms Meals.

It helps her learn technology, She uses it daily. It helps her answer questions she has. It gives her independence.

It kept her connected to family that were away at college which was a lifeline for her, she LOVES the games and content, and is enjoying the virtual programs she participates in. It is keeping her connected to others since she is in the house now and unable to get out in a social situation.

New program

- Funding began April 2024
- Website Development
 - Interviews with current VSC participants
- Recruitment began April/May 2025
 - 3 groups
 - 2 HD groups – some receive the GrandPad right away, some receive the GrandPad in 6 months
 - 1 Congregate meal group, focusing on those who have made a transportation request




GOAL: Improve feelings of loneliness, isolation and overall well-being

New Program – Updated Website



 Earn program credits

 Additional services

 Program Credit Tracker

 Logout

[← Go back](#)

 **Earn program credits**

[🏠 Go home](#)

Which programs do you want to explore?



**Articles, videos,
& podcasts**



Exercise videos



Zoom sessions

← Go back

Articles, videos, & podcasts

Go home

Article

Aging Ahead
Keep Your Cool
In Extreme
Heat

Earn a credit

Article

Aging Ahead
Meet our
Spotlight
Member Jesse
C. Swanigan

Earn a credit

Article

Aging Ahead
Senior
Medicare
Patrol – Taking
Control of Yo...

Earn a credit

Article

AARP
What's in the
'One Big
Beautiful Bill'
for Older...

Earn a credit

Article

AARP
5 Things You
Need to Know
Before Buying
a Doorbell...

Earn a credit

Article

AARP
What's the
Best Social
Media for
Connecting...

Earn a credit

Video 1 hour

**Container
Gardening:
Fruit,
Vegetables...**

Earn a credit

Video 76 min

**St. Louis County
Library**
Exploring
Earth's Moon –
Past, Present
and Soon

Earn a credit

[← Go back](#)[📁 Articles, videos, & podcasts](#)[🏠 Go home](#)

🌟 *Earn a credit* 📺 *Video* ⌚ *5 min*

HEC Media


Saint Louis to Cooperstown

This summer, hundreds of young baseball players will trek to Cooperstown for games and a visit to the Baseball Hall of Fame. In July, the Baseball Hall of Fame will induct its newest members.

[📺 Watch video](#)


← Go back


Exercise videos

 Go home

 Video  46 min


**St. Louis County
Library
Chair Yoga**


 *Credit earned!*



 *Repeatable daily*

 Video  48 min


**St. Louis County
Library
Gentle Ballet**


 *Earn a credit*

 *Repeatable daily*

 Video  9 min


**yes2next
Guided Meditation
for Seniors**


 *Earn a credit*

 *Repeatable daily*

 Video  16 min

**yes2next
Fat Burning Walk |
Boost Heart Health
& Burn Calories**

 *Earn a credit*

 *Repeatable daily*

← Go back

Program credit tracker

Go home

You've earned

3 Credits

7 Credits remaining



Earn more credits

[← Go back](#)

Additional Services

[🏠 Go home](#)



Contact Aging Ahead



Frequently Asked Questions



Meal Services



Transportation



Other Services

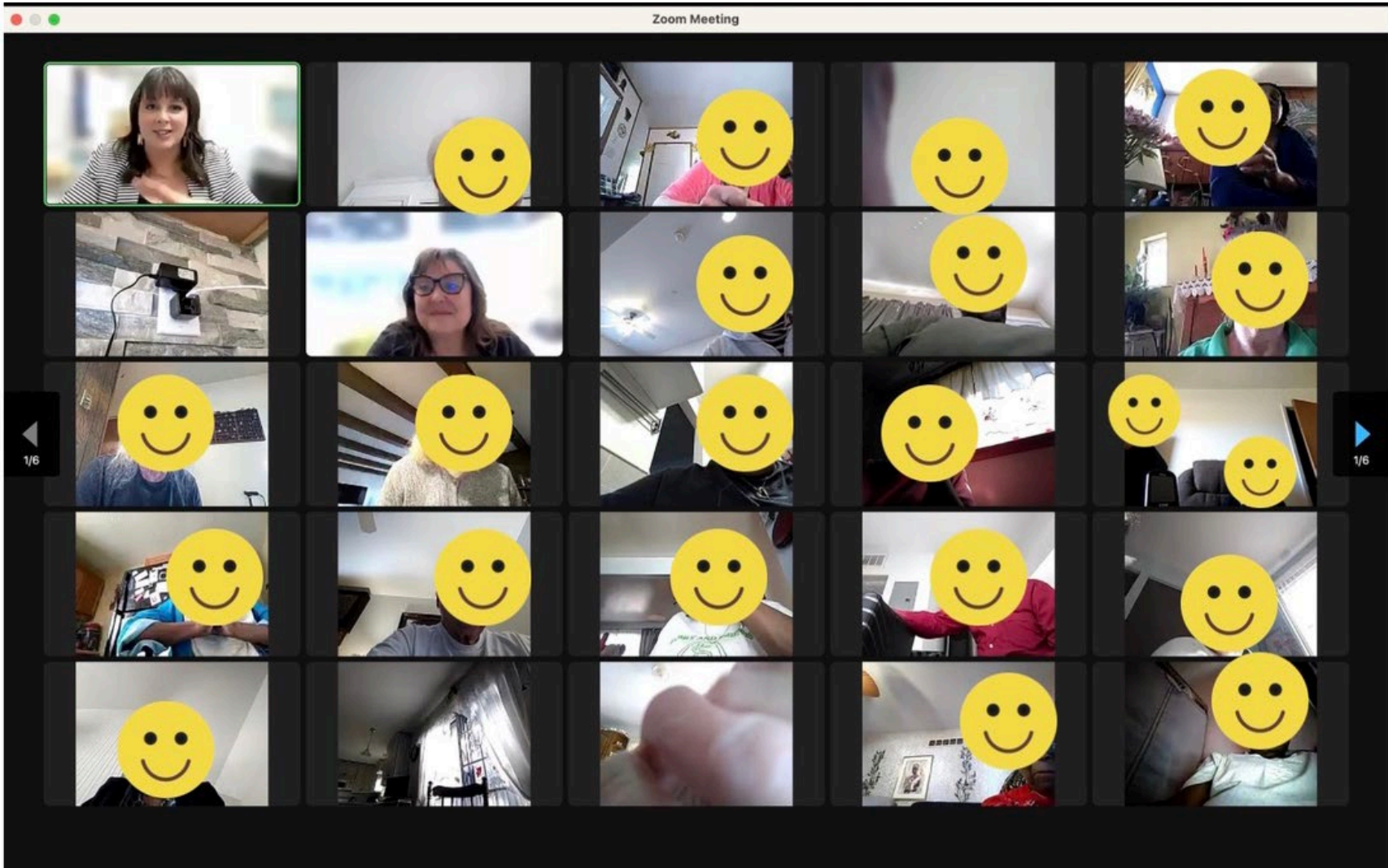
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Meal Services

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Mom's Meals ***Call 1 (866) 716-3257***

If the meal service listed above is not the service you use, please call Aging Ahead at (636) 207-4218



What is Aging Ahead-Connect? ▾

Can anyone join Aging Ahead-Connect? ▾

Why are there credit requirements for Aging Ahead-Connect? ▾

How many credits do I need to earn to stay in the program? ▾

How do I earn credits? ▾

Why are some credits "repeatable"? ▾

How do I check how many credits I have? ▾

My credit tracker isn't correct. How do I fix that? ▾

What happens if I don't earn 10 credits each month? ▾

I forgot my password. How can I find out what it is? ▾

What are the Zoom sessions? ▾

Do I have to join all the Zoom sessions? ▾

How do I make a change to my meals? ▾

Virtual Senior Center funding

Currently funded by

- OAA IIIB for devices (consumable)
- OAA IIIC for congregate virtual meal
- OAA IIID for EBP virtual (as applicable)
- OAA IIIE for FCG Training & EBP
- NIH Grant with WashU
- SSGDF
- Suggested contributions

Other potential funding sources

- Local foundations
- Technology grants

Next steps

- Continue to recruit and enroll program participants.
- Capture data via 5 surveys during the next 2 years.