

The Washer Game
Rocky Knoll Health Care Center, Plymouth, WI
WRAP Members – Debra Jacoby and Kim Loose

Games stimulate the mind, encourage socialization, and combat loneliness and boredom.

Exercise is recommended as a part of any healthy lifestyle.

This is true for residents living in a nursing home as much as it is in our own lives.

Games such as the Washer game will incorporate exercise as well as socialization and inclusion.

- Socialization is incorporated in the Washer Game by allowing residents to cheer one another on, encouraging socialization while waiting for their turn, and in celebrating others' success.
- The washer game offers many types of physical outlets.
 1. Standing while playing the game works on balance.
 2. Playing works on range of motion.
An arthritic person may have difficulty throwing a washer from a wheelchair. By swinging their arm, they are working on range of motion without even being aware of it.
 3. A resident restricted to a wheelchair may have restricted mobility, but with a little adaptation is able to play along.
 4. Playing the washer game also works the fine motor skills of a person such as being able to hold and release the washer.
- Playing washers works on increasing Attention Span
 1. A resident with dementia may not have the attention span to play a long game. During the washer game this person may only be asked to pay attention for a few minutes. Generally even lower functioning residents are able to play along with this game.

Other Benefits:

1. Ongoing contact with people.
2. Provide an opportunity for fun and enjoyment.
3. Create a way to encourage physical activity.
4. Offer a chance to feel a part of a group. (Inclusion)
5. Offer an opportunity to meet new people and try a new game.
6. Provide an opportunity for residents to invite and involve family in programming.
7. Increase Self Esteem.
8. Offer opportunity for reminiscing.

The Washer Game

HOW TO PLAY

The game of washers can be played with two or more players--or even teams.

Boxes are placed 20 feet apart on a flat and level surface.

Players must stand behind the front edge of the box, and toss each of his or her four washers

(usually underhanded) toward the opposite box. The next player then does the same. The highest score wins the round.

Points are awarded as follows:

1 point for a washer that lands in the box

3 points for a washer that lands in the cup (a "cupper")

Opposing washers in the box (or in the cup) cancel each other out.

Continue rounds until one player/team reaches 21 points.

Adaptation

We have adapted our game to meet our residents skill level.

We use only one box and place it closer than the suggested distance.

We also place a rug under the box and award a point for any washer landing on the rug. A mat is placed the required distance from the box so residents are aware of where they can stand.

The Tournament

When playing our tournament any number of residents may join in. The tournament is scheduled for six weeks. A seventh week is scheduled as a make up day. This allows residents to make up for days they were not feeling well, at appointments, etc.

The tournament consists of two rounds each from a different length. First one is set at 7 feet and the second round is at 5 feet. Four washers are thrown for each round.

Scores are kept and announced after each week and again as a total at the end of the six weeks.

The eighth week of the event a party or wrap day is planned. Here certificates of attendance are handed out, scores are announced and a social follows.