

HEALTH & WELLNESS: Living in a Senior Community vs. the Community at Large

Over a five-year period, the Mather Institute and Northwestern University surveyed more than 8,000 residents living in 122 senior communities across the country on their health and wellness. They compared their findings with a demographically similar group of adults living out in the community at large.

In summary, the “Age Well” study found that:

Senior Community residents tended to have greater emotional, social, physical, intellectual, and vocational wellness than their community-dwelling counterparts.

Residents reported significantly more healthy behaviors than community dwellers.

More than two-thirds (69%) of residents reported that moving to a Senior Community “somewhat or greatly improved” their social wellness.



Emotional Wellness

Residents maintained higher levels of life satisfaction, optimism, and perceptions of aging, and lower levels of pessimism relative to the community-at-large respondents.



Physical Wellness

Residents exhibited higher self-reported health levels and higher levels of physical activity than older adults living out in the community.



Social Wellness

Residents exhibited greater social wellness on all measures—social contact, meet-ups, loneliness—relative to the community-at-large respondents.



Intellectual Wellness

Residents reported better self-rated memory and higher participation in intellectual and educational activities compared to older adults in the community at large.