



Washington State
Older Adult Fall Prevention

Strategies for the SAIL Program

(Stay Active & Independent for Life)

June 2014



Stay Active & Independent for Life



Acknowledgments

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Visit the Department of Health [Older Adult Fall Prevention site](#)

Falls among older adults (age 65 and older) in Washington are a leading cause of injury death and disability. According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) one in three adults age 65 and older fall each year. Falls can cause moderate to severe injuries, such as hip fractures and head injuries and can increase the risk of early death.

SAIL Overview

SAIL (Stay Active & Independent for Life) is a strength, balance and physical fitness program for adults 65 and older. Performing exercises that improve and maintain strength, balance and fitness are the single most important activity adults can do to stay active and reduce their risk of falling. If done regularly and in its entirety, the SAIL Program can help improve and maintain strength and balance. SAIL Fitness Classes may be offered at senior centers, community centers, fitness organizations, parks and recreation facilities, churches, retirement communities, independent and assisted living residential facilities, and community colleges. Some sites offer the SAIL Program as one of many benefits of being a member of that community.

In 2003-2005, the Washington State Department of Health led the Senior Falls Prevention Study with funding from the department and CDC. The results of the study are published in the *Journal of Gerontology*, "Effectiveness of a Community-Based Multifactorial Intervention on Falls and Fall Risk Factors in Community-Living Older Adults: A Randomized Control Trial".¹

In 2005-2006, the department conducted

research in social marketing to determine how to translate the results of the Senior Falls Prevention Study into a community-based fall prevention intervention program. In 2007, primary researchers conducted a translational research evaluation to examine the dissemination and implementation of the SAIL Program in the community. In 2011, the results of the research were published in *Health Promotion Practice*. This published evaluation firmly established "Stay Active & Independent for Life" as an evidence-based intervention for preventing falls in the elderly population.²



SAIL is a public-domain program, which means there are no initial site license fees and no yearly renewal fees for conducting SAIL classes. Current funding for the SAIL Program is provided through our agency and an interagency agreement with Department of Social and Health Service (DSHS), Aging and Long Term Support Administration (AL TSA). The current agreement provides funding to train new SAIL Program Leaders throughout the state. The training sessions are led by a Department of Health contractor. In addition, [Pierce College, a public community college located in Lakewood, WA](#), hosts an on-line version of the SAIL Program Leader training, through their Distance Learning Program. The online training is not funded by our agency or DSHS.

1 Shumway-Cook A, Silver IF, Le Mier M, York S, Cummings P, Koepsell, TD, Effectiveness of a Community-Based Multifactorial Intervention on Falls and Fall Risk Factors in Community-Living Older Adults: A Randomized Control Trial. *Journal of Gerontology; MEDICAL SCIENCES* 2007, Vol. 62A, No. 12, 1420-1427

2 York S, Shumway-Cook A, Silver IF, Morrison CA, (2010) A Translational Research Evaluation of the Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL) Community-Based Fall Prevention Exercise and Education Program *Health Promotion Practice*.

Currently, a contract is in place with a trainer to offer leader trainings throughout the year. However, there is limited ongoing support for new Program Leaders. Each local Program Leader is responsible for securing funding, a location and support for the class they establish in a local community. Some Program Leaders find opportunities to work for a local senior center, fitness or community organizations that will provide the structure and funding needed to support and sustain the SAIL Program.

The SAIL Program provides two documents for class participants. The [blue SAIL Information Guide](#) is the fall prevention education component of the SAIL Program. [The green Exercise Guide](#) is for program leaders and class participants.

As of January 2014, there were at least 64 known SAIL Programs in Washington State that provided the fitness class to an estimated 1,000 participants.

As the population ages and the demand for fall prevention interventions increases, DOH does not have the necessary resources to operate, maintain or sustain the infrastructure needed for widespread dissemination of the SAIL Program. The community based model of the SAIL Program has great potential, but needs additional resources to maximize the dissemination and impact. This document is the first attempt to methodically define the needs of the SAIL Program and to achieve the infrastructure needed to continue its growth and sustainability.

Definitions Used in This Plan

Fidelity refers to delivering a program exactly as it was intended according to the original plan. SAIL is effective in improving the strength, balance and fitness of older adults when delivered the same way as developed and planned in the original research study and follow up program evaluation. We strongly

encourage you to replicate the original program model by:

- Conducting the SAIL Program in a local community setting;
- Adhering to the SAIL Program schedule of one hour classes;
- Providing the minimum number of three classes per week;
- Using adjustable 10 lb. (20 lbs total/pair) ankle weights. Weights can be used on both ankles and wrist to strengthen arms and legs;
- Having participants perform the mandatory exercises exactly as taught in the SAIL Program Leader training.

Evidence-based programs are based on the best available external evidence from systematic reviews of research literature. They are shown to be effective at helping participants adopt healthy behaviors, improve their health status, and reduce their use of hospital services and emergency room visits. Evidence-based programs can mitigate the impact of chronic diseases and injuries, such as falls. SAIL is one of many evidence-based programs for the prevention of older adult falls.

Evidence-based programs provide an ideal model for giving older adults information and support. Evidence-based programs can add value in many ways. First, they can significantly improve the health and well-being of older adults in the community. Second, they can help attract new participants and funders through innovative programming. Third, they can create powerful partnerships with other organizations, including health care providers.

The SAIL Program was approved by the Administration for Community Living (ACL) as an evidence-based program. ACL is part of the federal Health & Human Services Administration. The SAIL Program has been approved as a Tier III (the highest level) evidence-based program. Title 3D provides grants for education and implementation of activities that support healthy lifestyles and promote healthy behaviors for the population of over 60 years of age. Title 3D funding can be used to implement SAIL Programs at the state and local level.



How This Strategy Plan Was Developed

In June 2013, the Older Adult Fall Prevention Program in the Washington State Department of Health convened a multidisciplinary SAIL task force to develop a plan to coordinate and focus efforts to continue the SAIL Program in Washington State. The goal of the task force was to develop a coordinated and sustainable SAIL Program in Washington State. The task force met three times over a one year period to develop value statements, strategies, and actions for the SAIL Program.

Contents of This Plan

This plan identifies seven components needed for the success of the SAIL Program:

1. Partnerships
2. Data
3. Access to Programs
4. Program Leader Development
5. Marketing & Promotion
6. Program Fidelity
7. Program Sustainability

For each component, a value statement was identified. For each value statements, a list of strategies was developed. Some of the strategies include “ideas for action”. While the “ideas for action” are not exhaustive, they are included to help make the strategies more concrete for readers. The priority areas and strategies relate only to the SAIL Program in Washington State. They do not cover all older adult fall prevention interventions. The strategies and ideas serve as a roadmap that can be used to focus, guide and sustain the SAIL Program in Washington State.

For more information and resources, please visit the [Department of Health Older Adult Fall Prevention website](#).

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SAIL Strategies

Partnerships: Fall Prevention is everyone's responsibility.

Strategies

- Establish and sustain partnerships around evidenced-based fall prevention programs.
- Create opportunities for networking and collaboration on SAIL.

Data: Use data to develop and support fall prevention strategies.

Strategies

- Identify and review all available data sources (i.e. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey – (BRFSS), death & hospitalization data, emergency services utilization data, etc.).
- Make data and reports available to interested parties.
- Institute quality control measures for tracking and reporting data.
- Identify and create opportunities in higher education institutions to assist with data collection and program evaluation.

Access to Programs: All older adults have access to evidence-based strength and balance programs to prevent falls.

Strategies

- Promote availability and access to SAIL classes.
Ideas for action:
 - ◊ Develop website for SAIL classes, instructors, documents, etc.
- Increase professional awareness of and referrals to strength and balance fall prevention programs
Ideas for Action:
 - ◊ Promote SAIL through health care provider conferences, newsletters, etc.

Program Leader Development: Program leaders are committed to implement and sustain SAIL Programs in Washington State.

Strategies

- Develop a model of delivery that is effective and sustainable.
Ideas for Action:
 - ◊ Review & redefine pre qualifications of Program Leaders
 - ◊ Identify attributes of different levels of Program Leaders (i.e. Master Trainer, program lead, assistant).
 - ◊ Investigate and promote options for different types of training – webinar, online, in person, higher education courses, etc.
 - ◊ Provide opportunities and incentives to recruit & retain new Program Leaders.
- Develop user friendly reporting protocols for existing and new SAIL Program Leaders.
- Create Evaluation Plan for the SAIL Program and Program Leaders.

SAIL Strategies (continued)

Ideas for Action:

- ◇ SAIL Program Leaders conduct annual evaluation of classes and submit information to lead agency. Lead agency will use information to publicize classes and use data for research, program evaluation and continuity of program.
- Create opportunities for networking and collaboration for SAIL Program Leaders.

Ideas for Action:

- ◇ Investigate structure for master trainings (regional, county, etc.)
- ◇ Create and maintain a statewide data base of SAIL Program Leaders.
- ◇ Establish a network of SAIL Program Leaders to provide technical support.
- ◇ Provide refresher courses, CEUs and resources for other learning opportunities.

Marketing and Promotion: Increase public and professional awareness of the SAIL Program

Strategies

- Develop “How to” guide for implementing the SAIL Program.
- Seek sponsorship for the SAIL Program.
- Review & update 2006 Social Marketing Plan.
- Collaborate with partners to assist in marketing the SAIL Program.

Ideas for Action:

- ◇ Conduct a coordinated public education campaign.
- Increase outreach and education to professionals to encourage referrals to classes.

Program Fidelity: SAIL Program and classes are conducted in the original program design and lead by highly qualified and trained Program Leaders.

Strategies

- Provide an effective organizational structure for SAIL Program sustainability and effectiveness.
- Develop a business plan for SAIL.
- Create fidelity, sustainability and evaluation protocols for the SAIL Program.
- Convene a leadership team to oversee the SAIL Program at the state level.
- Designate specialist(s) to consult on SAIL Program clinical issues.

Program Sustainability: The SAIL Program will be sustained as a public health, public domain evidence-based fall prevention intervention.

Strategies

- Provide an effective organizational structure for SAIL Program sustainability and effectiveness.
- Develop a business plan for SAIL.
- Convene a leadership team to oversee the SAIL Program at the state level.
- Expand the SAIL Program oversight beyond DOH.
- Work with partners and sponsors to sustain the SAIL Program.