

SENIOR GAMES RESEARCH RESULTS

In 2006, a systematic sample of 1000 Local Games participants was randomly drawn and mailed a survey with an excellent 46% response rate. The purpose of the research was to assist Local Games and the statewide program with information on a participant profile, motivation for and benefits of participation and physical activity, perceived health status, and satisfaction with the North Carolina Senior Games program.

Participant Profile:

- * An almost equal number of women and men responded (52% and 48% respectively).
- * The mean age was 70 years with a range of 55-96 years.
- * Over 75% rated their present health *Excellent* or *Very Good* compared to others their age.
- * Sixty-nine percent were married and over 72% live with a spouse or relative.
- * Ninety-four percent had a high school education with 44% having at least a bachelor's degree.
- * Eighty-one percent are white, African American (9.5%), Hispanic/Latino (<1%), Asian American (<1%), and Native American (5.4%).
- * Over half (54%) had attended State Finals, 13% Nationals, and over 22% were Silver Artists.

They told us . . .

- * Over 60% said that SG motivates them to be more physically (61%) or socially (65%) active.
- * Over 95% would recommend participating in Senior Games to friends and family.
- * Over 75% said that training and preparation for Senior Games is part of their regular weekly activity.
- * Once they get involved in Senior Games, they stay involved. Retention is high . . . 88% have never thought about stopping!
- * The "F-words" are still important! When asked the reasons for participating, they said: Fun (95%), Keep Active (91%), Friendship (90%), Fitness (83%), Improves My Health (78%).
- * Most participants first heard about Senior Games from a friend or family member or a senior center. They currently get SG information from: senior centers (67%), recreation departments (35%), friends and family (31%), newspaper (21%), Ambassador (14%), and emails and web sites (25% combined).
- * Our participants were compared to North Carolinians in the world's largest, on-going telephone health survey (BRFSS) conducted by the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion for the question "How is your general health?" Our data indicated that 78% of the SG participants rated their health as *Excellent* or *Very Good* compared to 43% of the 55-64 year olds and 32% of the 65+ year olds in the BRFSS study. SG participants have a higher perceived health status than the general population of respondents in the BRFSS study!

Interpretations? North Carolina Senior Games is keeping participants active, motivating them to be both physically and socially active, and providing excellent benefits of health and happiness. Senior Games participants were found to be a healthy group of individuals with physical activity levels and perceived health status much higher than older adults in the state's general sample. The NCSG mission of health promotion is alive and well!