

WNY Aging in Place Council NewsLetter

Preparing for Aging in Place

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Aging in Place means staying in the home you know and love while making it safer and more accessible. Regular exterior maintenance can reduce the risk of accidents, deter intruders, and improve overall quality of life—not only for seniors but for their family, friends, and caregivers who visit. Even small improvements can have a big impact.

As we age, many of us express a strong desire to remain in our own homes for as long as possible. Home represents comfort, familiarity, and independence. For older adults and veteran owners, **Aging in Place** can be both emotionally fulfilling and financially practical. However, family members often worry about safety, mobility, and what might happen if their loved one is alone during an emergency.

Here are **8 key areas** every senior or their family should consider evaluating as they prepare for **Aging in Place**:

- 1. Interior & Exterior Modifications & Accessibility:** Creating a safe and accessible home environment helps reduce the risk of falls and injuries while supporting independence.
- 2. Health & Physical Activities:** Maintaining physical health through regular exercise, preventive care, and routine medical checkups can help seniors remain active and independent.
- 3. Nutrition & Meal Preparation:** Good nutrition is essential for maintaining energy, managing chronic health conditions, and supporting overall health.
- 4. Transportation:** Having reliable or planning for transportation needs before they become a challenge is an important part of aging in place.
- 5. Financial Planning:** A solid financial plan helps ensure that resources are available to cover housing, healthcare, home maintenance, and other future needs.
- 6. Legal Planning:** Having important legal documents in place helps ensure that personal wishes are known and respected if decisions need to be made by others.
- 7. Community & Support Networks:** Strong social connections and support systems contribute to both physical and emotional well-being.
- 8. Technology & Communication:** Technology can enhance safety, convenience, and social connection for older adults.



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“Aging in Place with Universal Design Technology”

By Willie A. Price

Universal Design Technology can play a vital role when it comes to preparing for **Aging in Place**. By combining thoughtful design with modern technology, homes can be adapted to support independence while providing peace of mind to family members. Universal Design is the concept of designing environments and products to be usable by people of all ages and abilities—without the need for specialized adaptations. When paired with technology, universal design focuses on simplicity, accessibility, and safety, making everyday tasks easier and reducing risks. Universal Design Technology is user-friendly tools that blend seamlessly into daily life.

There are so many benefits to installing universal technology in the home. As we get older, we experience changes in vision, hearing, balance, memory, or strength. Making everyday activities more challenging and this is where the technology becomes helpful: 1) Enhancing safety and security. 2) Reducing fall risks. 3) Supporting mobility and daily routines. 4) Allowing remote monitoring without being intrusive. 5) Promoting independence and dignity. For family members, these tools ease anxiety by providing reassurance that their loved one is safe and supported. The following items are some of the items I often recommend to help ease the worry of family members. Others are can also be helpful.

A) Motion-activated lights are always my number 1 recommendation. These lights are a simple but powerful safety feature. They light-up hallways, bathrooms, and staircases automatically, reducing fall risks—especially at night.

B) Indoor and outdoor cameras which allow family members to check in remotely without constant phone calls. When used respectfully and with consent, cameras placed at entryways or common areas can help ensure everything is okay with the older adult.

C) Smart locks and security systems like Smart locks allow doors to be locked or unlocked remotely and eliminate the need for physical keys, which can be difficult for those with arthritis or memory concerns. Security systems with alarms and sensors help protect against intrusions and provide reassurance, especially for parents living alone.

D) Additional devices & technology devices like voice assistants can be very helpful for aging adults. Simple voice commands will allow them to: Make phone calls or calls for help, Control lights and thermostats. The technology can help with everyday household activities: Operate smart thermostats and control stoves with automatic shut-off features.

Aging in Place does not have to mean aging alone or at risk. With the use of Universal Design Technology, homes can become safer, smarter, and more supportive for older adults. These solutions not only enhance quality of life for parents but also bring reassurance to families who want the best for their loved ones. Investing in Universal Design Technology is an investment in independence, dignity, and peace of mind for everyone involved.

For more information: Willie A. Price, the only C.A.P.S. and Universal Design Essentials, Rehabilitation Specialist in the country at WNYAginginplace@gmail.com or 716-246-1477.

WNY Aging in Place Council

Aging in Place Awareness & Preparation Checklist

Aging in Place is more than home modifications.

It is a comprehensive plan that allows individuals to remain safe, healthy, independent, and connected in their homes and communities as they age.

Use this checklist to identify areas that may need attention now or in the future.

PERSONAL INFORMATION & DOCUMENTS

- ☐ Emergency contact information is updated and accessible
 - ☐ Family members know where important documents are stored
 - ☐ Copies of identification documents are available, Important documents are stored in a safe location
 - ☐ Medical information and medication lists are current
 - ☐ Passwords and important account information are organized
-

HEALTH & WELLNESS

- ☐ Primary care physician is established
 - ☐ Annual wellness visits are scheduled
 - ☐ Medication & Dental management system is in place
 - ☐ Vision and hearing exams are up to date
 - ☐ Health insurance coverage has been reviewed
 - ☐ Long-term care needs have been discussed & Personal health records are organized
-

FITNESS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- ☐ Participate in physical activity at least 3 days per week: Including Strength and balance exercises
 - ☐ Walking plan & Fitness goals are established
 - ☐ Fall prevention strategies have been reviewed
-

NUTRITION & MEAL PLANNING

- ☐ Healthy meal plan is established
 - ☐ Access to nutritious food is available (Meals on Wheels & Food Pantries)
 - ☐ Grocery shopping assistance is identified if needed
 - ☐ Meal delivery programs have been researched
 - ☐ Water intake & Special dietary needs are monitored daily
 - ☐ Emergency food supply is available (winter months)
-

TRANSPORTATION

- ☐ Reliable personal transportation is available
- ☐ Family or friends or Backup transportation available
- ☐ Public transportation or Ride-sharing services options have been identified
- ☐ Medical transportation resources have been researched
- ☐ Transportation to fitness activities is available if needed

FINANCIAL PLANNING

- ☐ Monthly budget has been reviewed
 - ☐ Retirement income sources are identified
 - ☐ Emergency savings fund is available & Fraud and scam prevention strategies reviewed
 - ☐ Insurance policies have been reviewed
 - ☐ Long-term care expenses have been considered
 - ☐ Housing costs have been evaluated
 - ☐ Financial advisor or trusted resource identified
-

LEGAL & ESTATE PLANNING

- ☐ Will is current and updated
 - ☐ Durable Power of Attorney is established
 - ☐ Health Care Proxy is completed
 - ☐ Living Will or Advance Directives are completed
 - ☐ Beneficiaries have been reviewed
 - ☐ Estate planning documents are accessible
 - ☐ Family members know wishes and plans
-

CAREGIVER & SUPPORT NETWORK

- ☐ Support network has been identified
 - ☐ Family members have discussed future care needs
 - ☐ Caregiving responsibilities have been discussed
 - ☐ Respite care options have been researched
 - ☐ Professional caregiving services have been identified
 - ☐ Emergency caregiving plan is in place
-

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- ☐ Participate in community activities. Know where local senior/community centers are located
 - ☐ Volunteer opportunities have been explored
 - ☐ Faith-based or social support groups are identified
 - ☐ Regular social interaction is maintained (Face-Time activities)
 - ☐ Community resources are known and accessible
-

TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNICATION

- ☐ Cell phone is easy to use. Recommend Ring Camera Doorbell to monitor visitors
 - ☐ Emergency contacts are programmed into phone
 - ☐ Video calling capability is available (Face-Time activities)
 - ☐ Internet access is available
 - ☐ Medical alert systems have been considered
 - ☐ Family members can be reached easily. (Voice Activated cameras installed.)
 - ☐ Online safety practices are understood. Motion Lights installed at front and rear entrances
-

IN-HOME SERVICES & SUPPORTS

- ☐ Housekeeping assistance options identified
 - ☐ Home maintenance assistance available
 - ☐ Lawn care and snow removal plans established
 - ☐ Personal care assistance options researched
 - ☐ Home health aide resources identified
 - ☐ Skilled nursing services information available
-

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- ☐ Emergency contact list is current. Emergency kit is prepared
 - ☐ Medical information is readily available
 - ☐ Weather emergency plan is established & Backup power plan exists for medical equipment
 - ☐ Family communication plan is in place (Face-Time or Voice Activated Cameras)
 - ☐ Neighbors or nearby support persons identified
-

MY AGING IN PLACE ACTION PLAN

Three Areas I Need to Address First:

1.

2.

3.

Steps I Will Take Within the Next 90 Days:

Target Completion Date:

Remember:

Successful Aging in Place is not about reacting to a crisis. It is about planning ahead.
The earlier you prepare, the more choices, independence, safety, and peace of mind you will have in the future.

Presented by: WNY Aging in Place Council

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"Preparation today creates independence tomorrow."



Interior Home Safety Checklist

Use this checklist to evaluate the safety, security, and comfort of your home. Check each item that applies to your home and note areas that may need improvement. Small changes today can help support independence and reduce the risk of injury in the future.

Quick Self-Assessment

- ☐ My home is generally safe and accessible.
- ☐ I have identified several areas for improvement.
- ☐ I would like additional information about home modifications and Aging in Place resources.

WNYAginginplace@gmail.com or (716) 316-7776 Full Home Safety Evaluations, Assistance with locating home modification funding resources and contractors. Write Home Safety Modification Scope of Work of items to be installed or modified and Project Monitoring of work being performed.

Home Safety & Accessibility

- ☐ Home has adequate lighting throughout
- ☐ Bathrooms need grab bars?
- ☐ Flooring is free of tripping hazards
- ☐ Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are functioning
- ☐ Emergency exits are accessible
- ☐ Home has been evaluated for Aging in Place improvements (Certified Aging in Place Specialist)

Entryways & Hallways

- ☐ Entry area is free of clutter, shoes, and tripping hazards.
- ☐ Light switches & outlets are easily accessible in all areas.
- ☐ Hallways are well-lit during both day and night.
- ☐ Rugs are secured.

Notes:

Living Room & Common Areas

- ☐ Furniture is arranged to allow easy movement throughout the room.
- ☐ Electrical cords are secured. Adequate lighting is available.
- ☐ Frequently used items are within easy reach.
- ☐ Flooring is even.

Notes:

Kitchen Safety

- ☐ A sturdy step stool with handrail is available if needed.
- ☐ Floors are clean and free of spills or hazards.
- ☐ Adequate lighting is available.
- ☐ Fire extinguisher is easily accessible.
- ☐ Appliances are in good working order. Accessibility!
- ☐ Cabinet and drawer handles are easy to grip. Adjusted heights, U handles, Spring loaded.

Notes:

Bedroom Safety

- ☐ A lamp or light switch is within reach of the bed.
- ☐ Pathway from bed to bathroom is clear, flooring secured and area illuminated.
- ☐ Cell phone & charger are accessible from the bed.
- ☐ Bed height allows easy entry and exit.
- ☐ Frequently used clothing and personal items are easy to reach.

Notes:

Bathroom Safety

- ☐ Grab bars are securely installed.
- ☐ Bathroom floor & tub are slip-resistant.
- ☐ Toilet seat height is comfortable and accessible.
- ☐ Adequate lighting is available.
- ☐ Personal care items are within easy reach.

Notes:

Stairways

- ☐ Handrails are secure and easy to grip.
- ☐ Stair treads are in good condition and non-slip.
- ☐ Stairs are free of clutter and stored items.
- ☐ Light switches are located at both the top and bottom of the stairs.

Notes:

Electrical & Fire Safety

- ☐ Smoke alarms and Carbon monoxide detectors are installed where appropriate.
- ☐ Fire extinguisher is accessible and inspected.
- ☐ Electrical outlets are in good condition.
- ☐ An emergency evacuation plan is established.
- ☐ Family members know emergency contact information.
- ☐ Flashlights are available and easy to locate.

Notes:

Accessibility & Comfort

- ☐ Frequently used items are accessible without bending or reaching.
- ☐ Door handles and faucets are easy to operate: Lever/Squeeze handles or motion activated.
- ☐ Flooring transitions between rooms are smooth.
- ☐ Temperature controls are easy to access and read.
- ☐ Home address and emergency information are easily available.
- ☐ Medical equipment and mobility devices fit comfortably within living spaces.
- ☐ Seating is available in areas where prolonged standing may be difficult.

Personal Aging in Place Goals

What areas of my home would benefit most from improvement?

1.

2.

3.

What changes would make my home safer and more comfortable over the next 12 months?

Remember: Aging in Place is not about making major changes all at once. It is about identifying opportunities to improve safety, comfort, and independence one step at a time. Small improvements today can help support a safer home for years to come.

Presented by Willie A. Price, WNY Aging in Place Council

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"Preparation today creates independence tomorrow."



Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation: Caregivers Grant
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MAKING YOUR HOUSE, YOUR HOME

SAFE TODAY. COMFORTABLE TOMORROW.
INDEPENDENT LIVING STARTS AT HOME.



HOME SAFETY CHECKS & EVALUATIONS

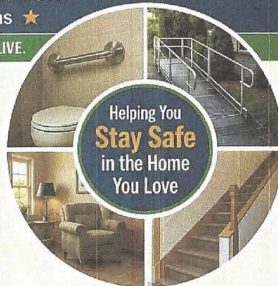
★ For Older Adults, Seniors & Veterans ★

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Our professional home safety evaluations identify risks, improve safety, and give you peace of mind.

- ✓ Prevent Falls
- ✓ Improve Accessibility
- ✓ Reduce Hazards
- ✓ Increase Comfort
- ✓ Support Independent Living



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BASIC HOME SAFETY CHECK

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COMPREHENSIVE AGING IN PLACE EVALUATION

Detailed assessment of your home for safety, accessibility & comfort.

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EVALUATION + WRITTEN RECOMMENDATIONS

Comprehensive evaluation plus a detailed written report with prioritized recommendations and solutions.

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INVEST IN SAFETY TODAY—PROTECT YOUR TOMORROW.

Small changes today can prevent big problems tomorrow. Let us help you or your loved one live safely and confidently at home.

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Successful Aging in Place Tomorrow

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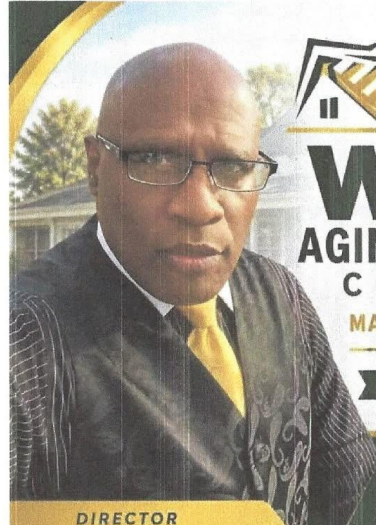
Having a Home Safety Check or Evaluation can help you remain safer and longer in your home.



WNY AGING IN PLACE COUNCIL

MAKING YOUR HOUSE
— YOUR HOME —

SINCE 2024



DIRECTOR

WILLIE A. PRICE

Certified Aging in Place Specialist (CAPS)

WE PROVIDE:

- Home Safety Assessments
- Home Modifications & Accessibility Solutions
- Resource Connections & Referrals
- Advocacy & Education for Aging in Place



Our mission is to help seniors live with dignity, security, and confidence in the homes they love.

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*Make Your House
Your Home*



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Home Safety & Accessibility

- ☐ Home has adequate lighting throughout
 - ☐ Entryways are safe and easy to access: Front & Rear Exterior Motion Detection Lights
 - ☐ Handrails are installed on stairs
 - ☐ Bathrooms have grab bars or are prepared for future installation & Bench Seat
 - ☐ Flooring is free of tripping hazards
 - ☐ Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are functioning
 - ☐ Home has a first-floor bedroom and bathroom or a future plan
 - ☐ Emergency exits are accessible
 - ☐ Home has been evaluated for Aging in Place improvements (Certified Aging in Place Specialist)
-

Entryways & Hallways

- ☐ Entry area is free of clutter, shoes, and tripping hazards.
- ☐ Door thresholds are low and easy to cross.
- ☐ Hallways are at least 36 inches wide and clear of obstacles.
- ☐ Light switches & outlets are easily accessible in all areas.
- ☐ Hallways are well-lit during both day and night.
- ☐ Nightlights are installed along pathways frequently used after dark.
- ☐ Rugs are secured with non-slip backing or removed.

Notes:

Living Room & Common Areas

- ☐ Furniture is arranged to allow easy movement throughout the room.
- ☐ Electrical cords are secured and not crossing walkways.
- ☐ Frequently used items are within easy reach.
- ☐ Chairs and sofas are stable and easy to get in and out of.
- ☐ Flooring is even and free of loose carpeting.
- ☐ Adequate lighting is available for reading and daily activities.

Notes:
