

Age-Friendly

Stanislaus County

2025 - 2030



“Aging is an extraordinary process whereby you become the person you always should have been.”

- David Bowie,
Songwriter and Musician



Welcome Letter



 **COMMUNITY SERVICES AGENCY** | STRENGTHENING THE FOUNDATION FOR ALL

We build community by cultivating safety, stability, and resiliency - strengthening the foundation for all.

Dear Community Member,

The Community Services Agency is excited to launch the Stanislaus County Age-Friendly Action Plan 2025-2030! This plan is designed to make our county a more welcoming and accessible place for residents of all ages, with a particular focus on supporting our older adults – the fastest growing segment of our population.

This plan was brought to fruition with the assistance of the Local Aging and Disability Action Planning grant program, of the California Department of Aging. It was the result of a collaborative effort between a multi-disciplinary Advisory Committee, and the exemplary leadership of Gina Innes and Jose Michel, managers at the Stanislaus County Community Services Agency. Through their collective work, this plan was developed with extensive community input, which enabled the Advisory Committee to identify four main focal points: Food Security, Housing and Homelessness, Healthy Aging and Wellness, and Information and Communication. The primary action of this plan is the establishment of processes that will guide our county in developing strategies that build upon programs and services already established, underscoring our commitment to sustainability and continuous improvement.

As we implement this plan, we encourage you to actively participate by sharing your ideas, concerns, and feedback. Your input is vital to ensuring our community truly reflects the needs of all residents.

Together, let's build a vibrant and inclusive Stanislaus County where everyone can age gracefully and enjoy a high quality of life.

Sincerely,



Christine Huber, MSW
Director, Stanislaus County Community Services Agency



Age-Friendly Stanislaus County

This report profiles older adults and people with disabilities living in Stanislaus County; it is an opportunity to review demographic changes, hear from people with lived experiences, and facilitate discussions on how an age-friendly approach creates a livable community for all residents.

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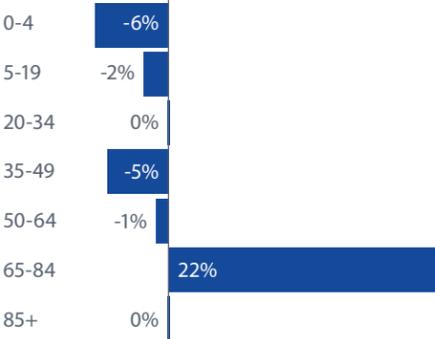
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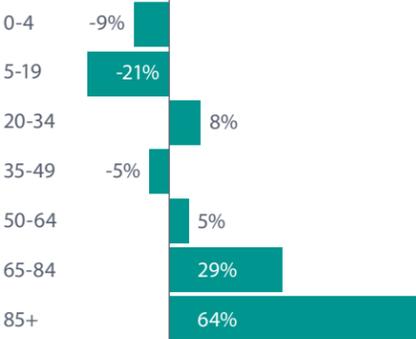
Community Profile

In Stanislaus County, older populations will increase dramatically

Actual percent of population change 2010-2020



Projected percent of population change 2020-2040

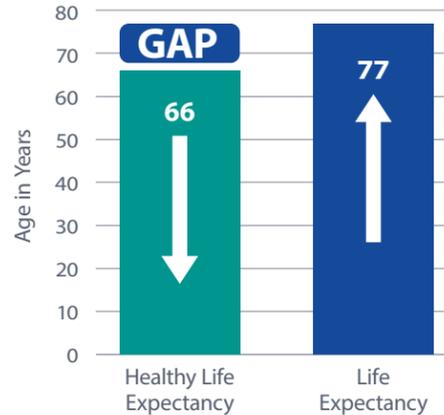


Stanislaus County was organized in 1854 with 1,000 residents just four years after California became a state. The County's central geographic location with its long, rich agricultural history and natural beauty make it an ideal place to live, raise a family, and age in community. The population is now 551,430 (2023), representing steady and substantial growth. Stanislaus County is diverse - with the number of Hispanic and Asian residents growing - and encompasses an array of urban, suburban, and rural communities.

Stanislaus County is aging. In 2010, adults over the age of 65 years comprised 10.6% of the total county population. By 2020, this increased to 12.6%, an increase of 22%. All other age groups either remained the same or decreased as a percentage of the total population during this same period. This trend is expected to continue, impacting every area of community living and resource utilization. In fact, it is the 85+ year olds that will increase the most, more than doubling by 2040. While the change in percentage of population shows us trends, it is important to note the number of older adults increases from an actual 54,831 in 2010 to a projected 96,625 by 2040.

Source: California Department of Finance, Population Projections, September 2024.

Addressing the Gap between a Healthy Life and Life Expectancy



Addressing the Needs of Individuals

- Older Disabled
- Unhoused Elders
- Complex Medical Conditions
- Socially Isolated
- Food Insecure
- Financially Strained



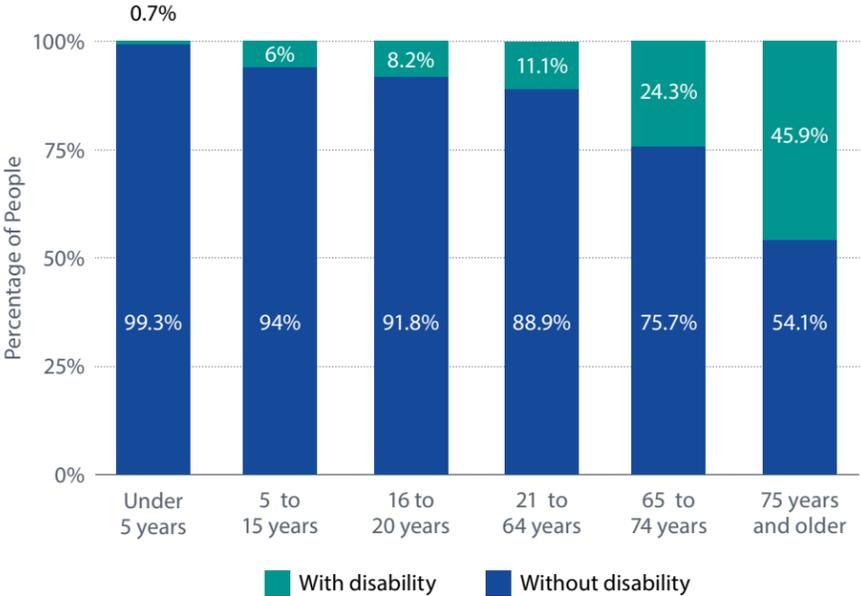
Why an Age-Friendly Lens?

Looking at Stanislaus County through an age-friendly lens encourages healthy lifestyles for all residents and provides appropriate assistance to those in need of care and services.

Life expectancy in Stanislaus County is trending up, people are living longer. While there are several factors that impact how long people live, on average the life expectancy in our county is 77 years. That said, it is important to note that the United States is the only developed country that has a declining healthy life expectancy, the number of years one can expect to be healthy. Healthy life expectancy has declined to 66 years in the US, so that now people are living longer in poor health, around 11 years. Supporting a healthy lifestyle will shorten the gap between healthy life expectancy and end of life.

People with a disability and/or multiple chronic conditions often require assistance with day-to-day activities, such as moving around their home or community, preparing and consuming meals, or getting dressed. They experience more hospitalizations and medical interventions than others. With the aging of the Stanislaus County population, the number of people in need of support will increase and there will be a surge in demand for medical, social, and familial support.

The percentage of people living with a disability increases with age



Source: Statista 2025

Aligning Aging Efforts

“We have limited resources and by working together we can put more meaningful effort into making sure all people benefit.”

Advisory Committee Member

In response to an executive order from the Governor, the California Master Plan for Aging was released in 2021. It is a 10-year strategy to create communities that support the growing number of older adults and people with disabilities. The Plan outlines 5 goals and 23 strategies to build bridges across state agencies, raise awareness of demographic trends, and create academic and research partnerships.

California also joined the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Age-Friendly Network in 2021. The AARP Network outlines 8 domains of livability for cities, counties, and states in the US to improve how residents age in community.

Stanislaus County joined 18 other California Counties in the AARP Age-Friendly Network in 2024 while working on this Age-Friendly plan that aligns with the California Master Plan for Aging.

Aligning state and local efforts strengthens the vision of being an age-friendly community and can leverage resources to meet the growing needs of Stanislaus County.

Master Plan 5 Goals

- Housing for All Ages and Stages
- Health Reimagined
- Inclusion & Equity, Not Isolation
- Caregiving that Works
- Affording Aging

AARP 8 Domains of Livability

- Housing
- Community & Health Services
- Social Participation
- Outdoor Spaces & Buildings
- Work & Civic Engagement
- Transportation
- Respect & Social Inclusion
- Communication & Information



Age-Friendly Plan Development

Timeline



“As the saying goes, it takes a village. There is greater momentum when approached from a collaborative.”

Advisory Committee Member

Developed Leadership Structure and Increased Awareness

After receiving a Local Aging & Disability Planning Grant to develop a local action plan, the Community Services Agency (CSA) formed a multi-sector Advisory Committee to guide the process. Representatives from the public, non-profit, and private sectors met on a regular basis to learn about the State Master Plan for Aging, understand demographic changes, review the status of current programs, and discuss local strategies. The Advisory Committee prioritized garnering input from community members and oversaw data collection from focus groups and community surveys.



Listening to Our Community

Focus Group Demographics

53% Caucasian

34% Hispanic

53% lived in Stanislaus County for over 30 years

25% described their health as fair or poor

26% over the age of 75 years

24% lived alone

Focus Groups

Nineteen Focus Groups were held in various community locations. Groups were conducted in English and Spanish and were comprised of diverse stakeholder groups including local leaders, caregivers, unhoused older individuals, and service providers.

Each focus group discussed one of the 5 State Master Plan Goals: sharing their ideal vision for that topic, current challenges, and possible action steps to be considered. The discussions were energetic, and participants expressed they were happy to be 'asked' for their perspective.

Community Survey

The survey was available in print and on-line in English and Spanish. Its purpose was to hear how people felt about aging in Stanislaus County and asked respondents to rate areas of concern. We received 829 surveys.

96% of respondents felt that Stanislaus County is a good place to age.



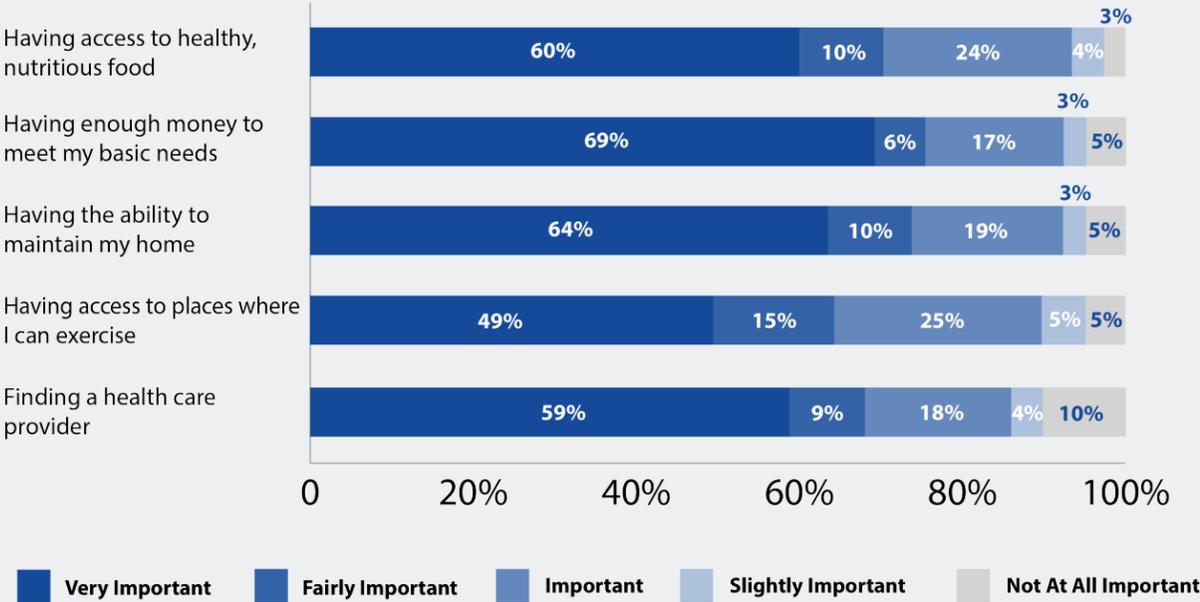
Listening to Our Community – What We Heard

“The focus groups were eye opening. Hearing about lived experiences and what people value is so critical.”
Advisory Committee Member

As Older Adults and People with Disabilities

- We want to be **Seen and Heard**
 - As an Individual
 - As Advocates
 - As Part of the Solution
- We want to be **Connected**
 - Be Informed & Involved
 - Have Transportation Options
 - Live In Healthy Neighborhoods
- We want to **Support Others and Be Supported**
 - To Know and Care for Each Other
 - Understand How to Find Information & Supportive Services
- We want to be **Healthy**
 - Connected to Knowledgeable Providers
 - Easy Access to Healthy Outdoor Spaces
 - Through Food Security
 - Living in a Clean Environment
- We want to feel **Secure**
 - Economically, Physically, & Emotionally

Respondents' Top Concerns



“If not now, when?
If not us, who?”

Advisory Committee Member



Action Area

Primary Action Area: Invest in Continued Local Leadership Efforts

Vision: Establish an Age-Friendly Stanislaus Committee that will be a catalyst in Stanislaus County to address the needs of older adults and people with disabilities. The Age-Friendly Stanislaus Committee will be the Lead Partner and will develop specific objectives and strategies to address gaps and strengthen existing resources.

Core Principles: Take a capacity building approach with a focus on building upon existing resources, strengthening local coordination, and collaboration. Listen to our community and monitor progress and change. Convene regular meetings to leverage public, non-profit, private, and community participation.

Alignment with California State Action Plan

Goal 3: Inclusion & Equity, Not Isolation

Strategy: Leadership in Aging

Building Upon: The Local Aging and Disability Action Plan Advisory Committee formed for the grant period.

Short Term Goals:

1. Define the structure for an Age-Friendly Stanislaus Committee to continue local leadership efforts including the composition of committee members, meeting structure, and action area sub-committees. The Community Services Agency will be the lead agency to coordinate planning efforts.
2. Define Age-Friendly Stanislaus Committee responsibilities including the development of Action Areas, ensuring community involvement, monitoring the State Master Plan for Aging and relevant initiatives, and regular reports to the Community Services Agency Director.



Short Term Objectives:

- a. By the end of calendar year 2025, establish an Age-Friendly Stanislaus Committee consisting of key representatives from community partner agencies, and staff representatives from the Stanislaus County Community Services Agency, Aging and Veterans Services, and Health Services Agency, with a regular meeting frequency. Include older adults and people with disabilities on the Committee. Committee composition will represent the geographic and ethnic diversity of the county.

Progress Indicators:

- Committee roster
- Committee guiding documents and agendas

- b. By the end of calendar year 2025, develop a plan to address a minimum of two Action Areas, that includes strategies and action steps to achieve the short-term goal in each area.

Progress Indicators:

- Action Area plans
- Reports to Community Services Agency Director

Long Term Goal:

1. Embed Age-Friendly planning principles within the programs and practices of other community partner and County agencies.

Responsible Party: Community Services Agency

Resources:

- Staff leadership
- Administrative support
- Meeting space

94%

Having Access to Healthy, Nutritious Food was the top concern reported in 2024 Age-Friendly Stanislaus Community Survey, with 94% responding it was important to them.

Grandparent-headed households

are at greater risk for food insecurity. Source: Generations United, 2022 State of Grandfamilies Report



Action Area 1: Food Security

Food security is the state of having access to enough safe and nutritious food to meet dietary needs. It ensures that people can live an active and healthy life. Food needs to be available, accessible, and affordable. According to the report “The Challenges of California’s Aging Population,” 16.3% of Californians over age 60 are food insecure, and more than 1 in 5 low-income Californians over age 65 cannot afford to put food on the table.

Vision: Ensure that residents of all ages and abilities have access to fresh and healthy food.

Alignment with California Master Plan for Aging

Goal 5: Affording Aging

Theme: Food Support

Building Upon

- Meals on Wheels – meals are delivered on a weekly basis to homebound seniors age 60 and over
- Cal-Fresh – supplemental nutrition assistance program based on income
- Green Bag program – monthly distribution of fruits and vegetables to seniors age 60 and over
- Faith-based site food pantries
- Second Harvest Food Bank
- Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans
- Senior Housing Sites
- Food Recovery Efforts
- Farmer’s Markets & Vouchers
- Rx for Food
- Community Food Distribution Sites

Short Term Goals

- Identify areas in the county where food programs could be implemented or expanded - these can include food pantries, neighborhood markets, additional farmer’s markets
- Identify opportunities for senior discounts and promote widely

Long Term Goals

- Increase awareness of healthy and accessible food options
- Align food security efforts with Public Health, faith-based organizations, and others



Air Quality disproportionality affects older adults since they are more likely to have chronic conditions, weakened immune systems, and longer exposure that can lead to respiratory and cardiovascular disease.

Source: Environmental Protection Agency, Older Adults and air quality, 2022

30%

of older adults experience mental health concerns, depression and/or anxiety. This has been increasing since COVID.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation

75%

of people live within walking distance (.25 miles) of an outdoor space

Source: Trust for Public Land ParkServe 2023

20%

of adults over 60 live alone which increases risk of isolation, falls, and poor health.

Source: California Department of Aging 2020 Profile

Action Area 2: Healthy Aging and Wellness

Healthy aging is the process of maintaining good health and well-being as one gets older. It involves making healthy lifestyle choices and habits and living in a healthy environment.

Healthy aging includes the following:

- **Physical health:** Eating a balanced diet, exercising regularly, health screenings, and avoiding falls
- **Mental health:** Maintaining an active mind, getting enough sleep, and managing stress
- **Social health:** Staying connected with others and contributing to society
- **Emotional health:** Having a support system or network that enables one to cope with challenges
- **Environmental health:** Living in a safe, well-lit community with accessible outdoor space and good air quality
- **Infrastructure:** Ability to access appropriate transportation options

Vision: Ensure that residents of all ages and abilities have access to caregiver support; accessible medical and dental care; and places for wellness activities, including social connections.

Alignment with California Master Plan for Aging

Goal 2: Health Reimagined

Strategy: Lifelong Healthy Aging

Building Upon

- Fall Prevention efforts and events – Senior Coalition of Stanislaus County has a Fall Prevention Resource Guide
- Senior Center activities – Stanislaus County has six senior centers that offer a variety of classes and activities for older adults
- Medi-Cal Managed Care Plan efforts
- Commission on Aging Senior Ball – annual social event promoted by Healthy Aging Association



Short Term Goals

- Increase exercise classes and healthy aging events at senior centers
- Engage youth participation at senior centers to foster intergenerational programming
- Increase outreach and understanding about available health services and programs

Long Term Goals

- Improve systems of care:
 - Improve hospital discharge protocols: ensure family members are knowledgeable of resources
 - Increase training to clinical staff about Medicare and aging services
 - Provide workforce development for clinical staff: retention, recruitment, training
- Further develop supportive resources for aging in community:
 - Home modification assistance
 - Support the growth of housing options such as residential and assisted living facilities, and shared housing
- Create healthy communities
 - Develop affordable ride sharing options
 - Mobilize volunteerism
 - Develop pathways to cognitive and mental health support
 - Support clean environment and safe outdoor areas
- Increase awareness and advocacy of healthy aging needs
 - Engage policymakers at the local level
 - Support care providers
 - Advocate for skilled nursing reform

A higher percentage of 80 year olds are concerned with having the ability to maintain their home and enough money to meet their basic needs.

Source: Age-Friendly Stanislaus 2024 Community Survey

A higher percentage of hispanics were concerned with finding employment and living in a suitable home.

Source: Age-Friendly Stanislaus 2024 Community Survey

~35%

of the population age 65+ are economically insecure

Source: Justice in Aging report based on using the Elder Index



Action Area 3: Housing and Homelessness

Description People need housing options that meet changing life situations. Housing that allows for different household sizes; changes in health and income levels; and easy access to services, social connections, and outdoor spaces.

Vision: All people live in a home that meets their socio-economic and health situation.

Alignment with California Master Plan for Aging

Goal 1: Housing for all Ages and Stages

Strategy: More Housing Options

Building Upon

- Housing developers
 - US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) 202 funding
- Home modification programs
 - Community Development Block Grants
 - Area Agency on Aging (AAA)
 - Housing Authority
 - Faith based programs
- Senior Advocacy Network
 - Home Share program
 - Rental subsidies
 - Housing navigation
- Housing Authority
 - Housing Choice Voucher
- Emergency Shelter Programs
- Planning departments
- Modesto Irrigation District Weatherization Program
- American Red Cross Northern California Region Home Fire Campaign
- Behavioral Health support
- Stanislaus Housing Assessment Team (HAT)
- Rapid Re-housing
- Housing & Support Services Continuum of Care
- Homeless Emergency Aid Program Point-In-Time Count

24%

The 2023 Homeless Point-In-Time Count data identified 24% of homeless individuals in the County were over the age of 55 years.

Older adults are the fastest growing segment of the unhoused population.

Source: Cal Matters Report 2023

Short Term Goal

- Optimize California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) Community Supports to help older adults and people with disabilities.

Long Term Goals

- Increase developer incentives
- Collaborative housing projects (co-location of health care, mental health support, etc.)

Nearly 45% of the population age 65 and older residing in Stanislaus County are economically insecure as measured by the Elder Economic Security Index (Elder Index). Included in the Elder Index estimates are the local costs of housing (rent or own), transportation, food, health care and miscellaneous needs, according to household size & health status. Current annual costs are Renter \$41,172; Homeowner with mortgage \$51,084; Homeowner without mortgage \$35,568.



42%

of the population speaks a language other than English at home

Source: Factfinder.census.gov

The Digital Divide, or technology gap, affects how seniors access information and stay connected.

Source: AARP Older Adults Technology Services



Above: Digital Literacy Class

If you have any questions please reach out to us at the Senior Information Hotline (209) 558-8698

Action Area 4: Information and Communications (Resource Awareness)

Description Information and referral services help people identify and connect with community resources and services.

Vision: That Information is accurate and easy to obtain. Referrals to services should be tailored to an individual's needs, considering an individual's preferences and the level of support each person may need to obtain services. That providers collaborate and provide warm handoffs to ensure wrap-around care. Information and assistance is available in multiple formats and languages.

Alignment with California Master Plan for Aging

Goal 3: Inclusion & Equity, Not Isolation. No Wrong Door Initiative.

Strategy: Leadership in Aging

Building Upon

- Aging & Veterans Services Senior Information & Assistance line
- Aging & Veterans Services Information Directories
- Senior Centers and Family Resource Centers as places people visit
- Technology classes and support
- Service provider networks
- 211 Stanislaus County

Short Term Goal

- Increase awareness of Aging & Veterans Services Senior Information Line
- Promote Senior Information Directories
- Start Provider Forums for service providers to share resources and solutions

Long Term Goal

- Monitor State Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) program. Align with ADRC processes and monitor for expansion of program funding
- Provide a variety of means are available to individuals to obtain information, including in-person, on the phone, through technology, and at places they routinely visit



Thank You To... Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors

Local Aging & Disability Action Plan Committee Members

- | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| • Christine Huber | • Margie Palomino | • Patty Davis | • Heather Duvall |
| • Jeff Davis | • Dianna Olsen | • Kelly Alvarado | • Luisa Kirkbride |
| • Gina Innes | • Narinder Bahia | • Damian Martinez | • Christina Johnson |
| • Jose Michel | • Jeremiah Williams | • iLeisha Sanders | • Karen Grimsich |
| • Joyce Gandelman | • Jane Finkenbine | • Dejamarie Crozier | • Tanya Bustamante |

Focus Groups

- American Veterans First
- Assyrian Collaborative
- Caregivers
- Ceres Community Center
- Commission on Aging
- Disability Resource Agency for Independent Living (DRAIL)
- Gladys Lemmons Oakdale Senior Center
- Healthy Aging Age with Movement
- Healthy Aging Association
- In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Social Workers
- Local Aging and Disability Action Plan (LADAP) Advisory Committee
- Modesto Senior Center
- Patterson Senior Center
- Salvation Army Shelter
- Senior Advocacy Network
- Spanish Speaking Seniors
- Stanislaus Asian American Community Resource
- Stanislaus County Elder Abuse Multidisciplinary Team
- Sutter Health Memorial Hospital Medical Center

Key Informants List

- Alzheimer's Association
- Aspiranet Family Resource Center
- Catholic Charities, Ombudsman Program
- Central Valley Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE)
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Office
- Housing and Homeless Services Division, CSA
- Housing Authority
- Modesto Gospel Mission
- Noble Hospice
- Oakdale Senior Outreach Program
- Senior Advocacy Network
- Seva Hospice
- Sierra Vista Family Resource Center
- Stanislaus County Affordable Housing Corp.
- Stanislaus County Aging and Veterans Services
- Stanislaus County Chief Executive Office
- Sutter Health Memorial Hospital Medical Center
- Valley Mountain Regional Center

Thank you to American Association of Retired Persons, California Department of Aging, Grimsich Consulting, Ani & Cat Design, and Oakdale Senior Center for the photo shoot. Photographs by Eva Duran. Funded by California Department of Aging Local Aging and Disability Action Planning Grant Program.

For more Age-Friendly Stanislaus information call (209) 342-5784 or use QR code to visit the website.



For local resources call Senior Information Hotline (209) 558-8698.

