

The History and Development of SAIL (Stay Active & Independent for Life)

Washington State Department of Health

2003 – 2005

The Senior Falls Prevention Study is conducted by primary research investigators Anne Shumway-Cook, Ilene Silver, Mary LeMier, Sally York, Peter Cummings, and Thomas Koepsell with funding from the Washington State Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A total of 453 seniors in two counties in Washington State participate in this 12 month program. Seniors receive a risk assessment by a registered nurse, falls prevention education, and a group exercise class that includes aerobics, balance exercises, strength training, and flexibility exercises.

2005 – 2006

The Washington State Department of Health sponsors research in social marketing to determine how to translate the results of the Senior Falls Prevention Study into community-based intervention programs. Senior focus groups reveal key factors that motivate older adults to participate in exercise programs: to stay active, to stay independent, and to prevent falls. The researchers learn that seniors respond poorly to the “fall prevention” message; and that the best way to engage seniors in exercise programs is to convey a message of “staying active and independent”.

2006

SAIL instructor training is developed by Anne Shumway-Cook, PhD, PT, Sally York, MN, RN and Clare Morrison, MCSPT. The Washington State Department of Health provides funding for numerous live 2-day classes that are held throughout Washington State.

2007

The results of the Senior Falls Prevention 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, Controlled Trial”. The results of this study showed that the participants demonstrated improved balance, mobility skills, and leg strength. Fear of falling was reduced among participants.

2006 -2007

Primary researchers Sally York, MN, RN, Anne Shumway-Cook, PhD, PT, Clare Morrison, MCSPT, and Ilene Silver conduct a “Translational Research Evaluation” to examine the dissemination and implementation of the SAIL Program in the community. Six SAIL Program sites in four communities in Washington State were examined to determine levels of attendance and physical function. In addition, seniors completed surveys regarding their improvements in performing their daily activities.

2009

The live two-day SAIL instructor training class is adapted into an online format by Exercise Physiologist; Blake Surina and Laurie Swan, PhD, DPT, PT. The class is now taught in a 10-week online format through Pierce College.

2010

The onsite instructor training is updated and revised by Laurie Swan, PhD, DPT, PT, and is offered through Synaptic Seminars. Successful completion of this course enables appropriately credentialed professionals to be ready to set up and lead a SAIL Program in their community.

The results of the “Translational Research Evaluation” are published in *Health Promotion Practice*. Seniors demonstrated improved physical function that directly correlated with their self-reported improvements in performing everyday tasks of daily living. This publication firmly establishes “Stay Active and Independent for Life” as an evidence-based intervention for preventing falls in the elderly population.

2012

SAIL is recognized as a Title III D – Evidence-based Program by the Administration on Aging. SAIL met the highest level criteria for an evidence-based program, and was listed as an approved physical activity program on the website for the Center for Healthy Aging, National Council on Aging.

2014

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. The members of this workgroup developed the “Strategies for the SAIL Program, 2014”.