



*Planning*  
**GUIDE**



*Inspiring*  
**GENERATIONS**

**NATIONAL ASSISTED LIVING WEEK®**  
**SEPTEMBER 8-14, 2024**

**NCAL**  
NATIONAL CENTER FOR ASSISTED LIVING

Official Sponsor



**#NALW**  
**nalw.org**

# ABOUT NATIONAL ASSISTED LIVING WEEK®

Established in 1995 by the National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL), National Assisted Living Week® (NALW) provides a unique opportunity for residents, their loved ones, staff, volunteers, and local communities to recognize the role of assisted living in caring for America's seniors and individuals with disabilities. The annual observance encourages assisted living communities around the country to offer a variety of events and activities to celebrate the individuals they serve, as well as to help educate members of the public about this important aspect of long term care.

NCAL is grateful to have the support of this year's NALW official sponsor, **Select Rehabilitation**.

## *Inspiring* GENERATIONS

This year's NALW theme – **Inspiring Generations** – offers assisted living staff, communities, residents, and families the opportunity to look at how assisted living has evolved and grown, inspired by the residents and those who care for them. This is a chance to listen and learn from each other, share stories and wisdom, and find inspiration from those around you.

Assisted living communities around the country are encouraged to host a variety of events that celebrate residents, staff, and volunteers. Please explore the suggested activities in this planning guide for ideas on how to commemorate NALW in safe and meaningful ways.

Visit **NALW.org** for a wide range of **Inspiring Generations** themed gifts and decorations to elevate all your NALW events and activities.



**How are you celebrating NALW?**  
Share your NALW celebrations, photos, and videos on Facebook and X using

**#NALW**



# PLANNING IDEAS

## START THE WEEK WITH A FUN GRANDPARENTS' DAY CELEBRATION

NALW begins on Grandparents' Day, making it the perfect opportunity to kick off the week with a special celebration that brings together multiple generations! Invite residents' grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and other family members – as well as staff and their family members – to a party. Celebrations might include:

- Arranging for special music, whether that is a live band or music that residents have picked out. Sing and dance to classics like the hokey pokey!
- Hosting a meal such as an outdoor picnic or barbeque.
- Asking guests to bring photos of their grandparents and share inspirational stories with each other. Invite grandchildren to share stories about their grandparent(s) and why they are an inspiration.
- Connecting tech-savvy young people with residents to teach them how to use smartphones or set up a social media account to help them stay connected with family. (Please ensure your residents follow these **best practices** from AHCA/NCAL.)
- Setting up a photo booth with props and costumes! It can be as easy as someone taking pictures with a fun background. Encourage grandparents and grandchildren to take pictures together and provide copies of the photographs to each.
- Offering fun games to play, such as ring toss and bingo, with prizes/awards.

There are many ways to celebrate Grandparents' Day, so be creative and design a unique day that you know your residents and their families will love.



## MORE IDEAS TO CONSIDER



Celebrate your “roots” with Route 66 Day! Ask those who have visited or are from somewhere along Route 66 to share their experiences. Examples of locations include Chicago, Tulsa, Amarillo, Albuquerque, Flagstaff, Los Angeles, and Santa Monica. Encourage residents to share a special memory or a funny story. Consider setting up a trivia game by researching facts about Route 66. And whatever you do, don't forget to play the song, “Get Your Kicks on Route 66.”



Offer a movie night that both residents and grandchildren will enjoy. Make it even more special by providing popcorn and fun snacks.

## GET THE COMMUNITY INVOLVED

- Host a special back-to-school event with a local school. Invite students, families, community members, and/or local officials to join. Consider inviting musicians to play, hosting a game night, and serving food that residents and staff love. Make your events even more festive with NALW themed decorations, gifts, and prizes!
- Collaborate with a local high school group (such as National Honor Society) to host a fall formal dance with your residents. Schedule a band or DJ, and encourage residents to dress up in their finest attire. Invite staff and family members to attend, and offer snacks and beverages picked out by residents. Decorate the event with NALW posters and balloon bouquets!
- Partner with your local library for a day and invite nearby elementary school students to attend. Encourage the children to read to residents and vice versa. Host a storytelling session, where everyone can share their favorite stories and books.
- Create and share music and art experiences. Not only is this therapeutic, but it is a powerful way to connect to one another. Offer a painting project, sing-along, or even a silent disco. Invite families and the local community to view the artwork and/or attend a talent show. Consider giving out NALW-themed prizes.



## SHARE YOUR STORIES

Be sure to showcase the unique and wonderful ways your staff, volunteers, residents, and families are celebrating **Inspiring Generations**. Share your stories, photos, videos, and other content with AHCA/NCAL's publication *Provider Magazine* at [storiesofcare@ahca.org](mailto:storiesofcare@ahca.org).



Looking for more great ideas? Check out **The Big Book of Resident Activities** with over 100 engaging activity suggestions!

## MORE IDEAS TO CONSIDER



Host a scrapbooking event for residents and their families. Make sure you have a variety of scrapbook supplies on hand, and allow participants to create a scrapbook of their own. Display completed scrapbooks prominently where visitors can see them to promote conversation and sharing stories.



Host a book club with a local school. Find out what the students are reading, and host a reading event/discussion focused on one of those books. This gives the students a chance to learn from the residents and, in turn, residents from the students.

# MEDIA TIPS

Connect with the public by reaching out to your local press outlets to spread the word about NALW. You can promote your unique NALW events or highlight innovative services or programs you offer. Be sure to check out the **Promotional Toolkit** on the **NALW webpage**, as well, for template materials that include social media posts, a sample proclamation, sample letter to the editor, template press release, and a sample media invite.

## NEWS RELEASES

News releases are used to alert the local media of significant events, issues, services, programs, awards, and other events. Send the release to your local news editors and reporters, especially those who specifically cover your issues or “beats.” If you plan to invite the press before the event occurs, send a media advisory or a personal invite at least one week before the event or desired coverage. Be sure to follow up a couple of days beforehand to see if they can attend.

## MEDIA KITS

A media kit about your assisted living community serves as a quick reference or “background” for the local reporters who cover your community during NALW. Elements of the kit can include information about your assisted living community, the services you offer, its role in the larger community, and a schedule of your NALW activities. Remember to include the contact information for your assisted living community’s spokesperson or marketing representative.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS/OP-ED PIECES

These short articles allow for greater control over the content of your message, as they can be authored by a designated representative of the community (e.g., executive director). Share the many ways in which your assisted living community plans to celebrate NALW with your local newspaper and magazine editors. Also consider encouraging an active resident or their loved one to write a letter to the editor about their experience.

## PROCLAMATIONS

Proclamations are a great mechanism to have your local elected officials visit your community. Invite your governor, mayor, or city council members to issue a proclamation (offer a sample) in honor of NALW. Invite them to visit the community and kick off the week on Sunday, Grandparents’ Day.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Post items throughout NALW on your assisted living community’s website and/or social media channels. Share photos and videos\* of unique events or highlight resident stories. Use the hashtag **#NALW** on channels like Facebook and Twitter to contribute to the national conversation. Follow NALW on Facebook to see how your colleagues around the country are celebrating.

## KEEP IN MIND

While technologies such as smartphones and social media platforms have allowed providers, as well as residents themselves, to enhance quality of life, they have also unfortunately proven to be a set of tools used by offenders to violate the privacy and dignity of vulnerable residents. To help prevent these actions, assisted living communities must remain vigilant and ensure policies and procedures are in place. Make sure your center and company are following these **best practices** from AHCA/NCAL.

**\*Note:** Your residents’ privacy should take priority over publicizing NALW activities. **Only post pictures and videos of residents who have signed your community’s image authorization form.**