

## Socialization for seniors only a phone call away with new Seniors' Centre Without Walls program

**April 16, 2020** – The City is launching a new telephone-based program that offers community members 50 years of age and older the opportunity to enjoy socialization and programs from the comfort of their own home.

With the City's Older Adult Centres closed and programming on hold until further notice, the City of St. Catharines is launching Seniors' Centre Without Walls. The new program offers interactive, telephone-based social and educational programming, free of charge and registration is now open. The City is offering the program with the support of the Older Adult Centres' Association of Ontario, through provincial funding from the Ontario Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility.

"We're pleased to be able to bring together our seniors in a way that will allow them to stay safe in their home, yet still provides an opportunity to socialize, stay connected and learn some new things," said Koby Vanyo, the City's programs supervisor. "No special equipment is needed to participate – just a telephone."

The program is open to any residents 50 years of age and older. They will be able to connect on a toll-free call with up to 15 people, socializing and learning about a variety of topics, including local history, some interactive games and more, led by staff from the City's Older Adult Centres and guest speakers. Program schedules are posted at [www.stcatharines.ca/OAC](http://www.stcatharines.ca/OAC). Anyone wishing to participate in Seniors' Centre Without Walls is asked to register by calling 905.688.5600, ext. 1554, or email [sphelan@stcatharines.ca](mailto:sphelan@stcatharines.ca).

"It's like attending an activity or event at the centre, but it's facilitated over the phone. You're able to learn, talk to one another and enjoy some stimulating conversation," said Vanyo. "We hope residents will either take advantage of the opportunity themselves or share it with friends and loved ones who could benefit from connecting."

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**Contact:**  
Koby Vanyo  
Programs Supervisor  
[kvanyo@stcatharines.ca](mailto:kvanyo@stcatharines.ca)  
905.688.5600 ext. 1556