

SMiles – Senior Miles

A Program Created By
Blount County Community Action Agency's
Office on Aging
Maryville, TN



Helping People.
Changing Lives



Why SMiles is Needed

- * Quality of life influenced by availability and convenience of transportation options
- * Large increase in senior population
- * In order to remain at home, seniors need affordable, dependable transportation
- * We're all one stroke or broken leg away!
- * Rides change lives, improving emotional, social, mental and physical well-being of seniors



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Neighbors driving Neighbors

SMiles Transportation

- * Launched in Blount County October, 2014
- * Sustainable
- * Senior-friendly
- * Rides within Blount County for essential trips
- * Membership program, NOT public transportation
- * Volunteer drivers using personal vehicles



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What's “senior friendly”?



- * Available
- * Acceptable
- * Accessible
- * Adaptable
- * Affordable

About the SMiles Program

- * Residents age 60+ purchase \$25 annual membership
- * Cost is \$6 per round-trip and prepaid
- * \$49 for membership and 4 rides
- * Riders call 3 days in advance to request rides
- * Monday through Friday only, at this time
- * Trips within county only, at this time
- * Neighbors driving neighbors
- * Door-through-door service – help with groceries and assist rider when entering & exiting vehicle, house and destination



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SMiles Drivers

- * SMiles believes in Blount County's volunteer spirit
- * Drivers recruited to drive personal autos
- * One-on-one, door-through-door accompanied service
- * Drivers attend 4-hour training prior to first ride
- * Drivers self-assign rides online using Assisted Rides software
- * Minimum age of 21
- * SMileage (gas reimbursement) available at 20 cents per mile



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Driver Criteria

- * Valid driver's license and proof of insurance
- * Interview and references
- * Safe driving record, no criminal history
- * Vehicle liability insurance meeting TN law (100/300/100 recommended; umbrella policy encouraged)
- * Access to cell phone (computer/internet a plus!)
- * Commit to drive at least three hours a month



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Insurance & Liability

- * Address this issue up front when recruiting volunteers
- * Personal Auto Insurance is always primary
- * Volunteer insurance policy provides excess auto, liability, medical coverage (CIMA)
- * Insurance rates determined by miles driven, not who is in the vehicle
- * Covered by our agency's general liability insurance
- * Volunteer senior transportation programs proven to be a safe activity over 50-year history



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Rider Criteria

- * 60+ who do not drive
- * Ambulatory with assistance of cane or walker
- * Capable of basic self-care
- * Able to communicate & understand
- * Able to afford membership & rides



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Rider Comments

- * “A very critical and wonderful program for the elderly – will be 86 this summer. Thank you!”
- * “How SMiles benefits me:
 - * **Reliability** – I don’t worry about the driver cancelling at the last moment or forgetting to come
 - * **Convenience** – one call sets this up. I don’t have to call around hunting for a ride, possibly inconveniencing friends
 - * **Appointments** – I can make appointments on the spot with doctor, dentist, hairdresser, etc, know I can come whenever it’s convenient with them. This program is a veritable godsend for me. Thank you!”
- * “Everyone has been very courteous, friendly and kind! Thank you very much for this much needed service. You are an answer to prayers!”

Driver Comments

- * “Love being able to schedule myself!”
- * “The software (Assisted Rides) is very easy to use.”
- * “Every rider has been very appreciative.”
- * “I am thrilled that our county has this program available to its residents”
- * “I really love participating in SMiles and have met some wonderful and interesting people.”

SMiles Funding

- * First-year expenditures: \$58,000
- * Sustainable through diverse funding & income from riders
- * Three grants for first year
- * Rider contributions far exceed driver SMileage of 20 cents/mile
- * Fundraising to expand program in future
- * Second-year budget: \$78,000



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Assisted Rides Software

- * Highly recommend for ease of use & capacity
- * Online product
- * Equivalent of full-time person
- * Volunteers assign themselves rides online
- * Complete driving directions & mileage
- * Riders call office to schedule rides
- * Tracks each client account
- * Best of all – the reports!
- * Visit www.alternetrides for more info



SMiles after 12 months...

3,100 trips

120 members – average age 80

58 volunteer drivers – average age 66

20,096 miles

2607 volunteer hours

\$44,319 in volunteer time

44% of trips for medical



Neighbors driving Neighbors

County Aging Summit December 4, 2012



Representatives from...

- Government
- Nonprofits
- Churches
- Businesses

4-hour gathering, 120 people

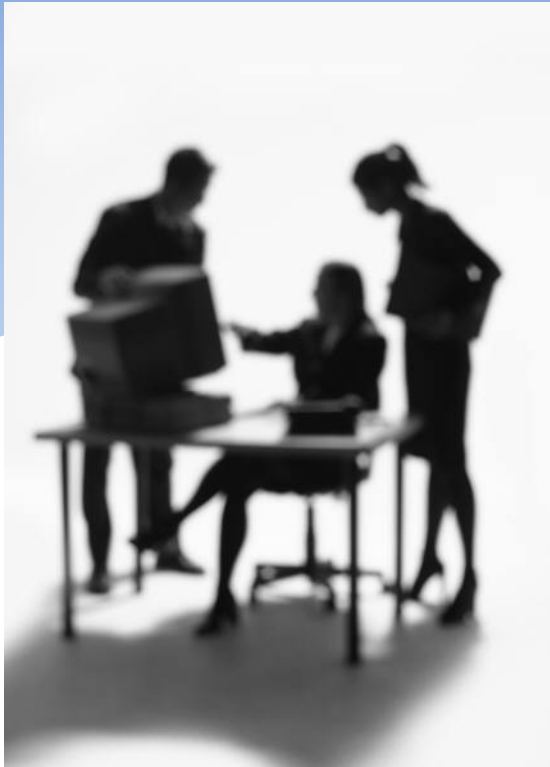
Keynote, small group discussions

Summary emailed to all invited



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Senior Action Council



- ❖ Identified prospective council members
- ❖ Representatives of four key groups
- ❖ Movers and Shakers in county
- ❖ Recruited 10 people for 1-year commitment
- ❖ First meeting in March, 2013

- ❖ Task: address local senior issues
- ❖ Top priority: senior transportation
- ❖ Basic model presented
- ❖ Council urged to research
- ❖ Model refined, budget developed
- ❖ Seed money secured

Valuable Websites

www.blountcaa.org/programs/SMiles

www.beverlyfoundation.org

www.alternetrides.com

www.seniortransportation.net

<http://quickfacts.census.gov>

Thank you!



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