



Birthday Celebration – All About You

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One of the things that we at our community feel is a "best practice" is making our residents feel special as individuals. We want our residents to feel special every day, but especially on their birthdays. This birthday best practice includes our interdisciplinary staff, volunteers, residents and their loved ones. On each resident's birthday we celebrate; making the day 't all about you' the birthday guy or gal. We gift the birthday resident with a wreath on the door, balloons, cards, song, and a special meal (or small gift for those who are unable to eat).

Our Best Practice addresses our residents as individuals not forgotten. It serves to remind them that no matter what changes in life, circumstance and environment have occurred they are still remembered, loved, and valued!

Our interdisciplinary staff, volunteers, other residents and family members join together to celebrate each resident's birthday. We list the month's birthdays on bulletin boards and celebrate on each individual's day, as well as during a large group activity at the end of every month. At the large group activity, we celebrate all birthdays that occurred during the month with cake and a party. Each birthday celebrant's family members are sent invitations to the party. Throughout the month, on the resident's birthday, our staff places a "birthday wreath" on the resident's door, sings a happy birthday song to the resident, and helps to provide a special meal of choice. Our dietary department either prepares the special meal or staff will go pick something specific up for the resident depending on the preference of each individual. If a resident is not able to eat, the facility will provide a small gift to the birthday guy/gal which has been donated to the facility by local volunteers. The special meal is served to the resident in each person's preferred setting.

Being able to watch the joy on a resident's face, seeing them know they are loved & that they feel special and remembered is all the evidence we need to know we are doing our best to serve & celebrate them as individual people. The hugs and thanks we are given by our residents are worth more than any amount of money we could be paid to celebrate life!

Difficulty we have experienced in this celebration of life has been almost nonexistent. It has been "difficult" when we have had more than 3 birthdays at once, but that is rare and absolutely workable, just a little time consuming.

Our social services department made, provided and keeps up with the "birthday wreaths" we hang on the resident's doors. Our activities staff provides and blows up the balloons for each birthday. Gifts are donated to the activities department by volunteers. Other volunteers provide birthday cards to each celebrant. Our dietary staff orders & prepares for the special meals. These things have certainly not negatively impact our budget. Caring is free!

We consider this a best practice because we feel that this is just one way we promote a feeling of individualism, dignity, worth and love to each resident. We feel that this celebration of life is a great way to let the residents know they are indeed special to us, and not just a "body in a bed" or a number to us!