Preparing your senior for Daycare

Need help in preparing your loved one for senior daycare? Here are some tips!

1. **It is NOT a daycare centre.**
   While getting your loved one to attend a day programme might be reminiscent of preparing a toddler for his first day at childcare, refrain from using the term ‘daycare centre’. In the same frame of reference, your senior might feel offended at being compared to a toddler.

   At their club or class, there may be yoga, music, movies, art and crafts projects, plus snacks and meals – using snazzier terms like ‘day club’ or ‘exercise class’ might pique your senior’s interest.

2. **Fun, fun, fun!**
   Perhaps he enjoys chess, or she enjoys karaoke. Find and focus on an activity offering at the day club aligned to your senior’s interest, and pitch it to them.

3. **Getting them to volunteer**
   If your senior is able to volunteer and would find purpose in being able to contribute, let them know that ‘they could really use your help at the club’ – but do check in with the day club for suitable volunteer opportunities and arrangements first.

4. **Get a professional to help**
   If you just cannot seem to get your senior to attend a day club, you may wish to reach out to a third party for help. Your mother or father may go willingly if a doctor or a social worker offers the suggestion.

   At Hua Mei EPICC, the social worker and nurse will always make a home visit to do an initial assessment and to encourage the senior to attend – after a period of adjustment, the senior is often always happy to come.

5. **Avoid causing undue anxiety**
   The prospect of any change in their daily routine might be daunting to some seniors, and like children not wanting to go to school, they might act up differently – not getting out of bed, complaining of a stomach ache, or even refusing to take breakfast or medication. It might be better not to bring up the matter of attending a day club, to your senior too early.

   On the flipside, your senior might do well with enough time to prepare him/herself emotionally and mentally – do actively discuss well beforehand the prospect of attending a day club with them and hear their opinions out.

6. **Start short.**
   If it is your senior’s first day at the day club, don’t ask him/her to stay too long, but make it short and easy.

   Arrange with the day club to allow your senior to come for fewer days a week at the start, to allow your senior to adjust at his/her own pace. After your senior is more comfortable, you can work up to more hours and more attendance days over time.

   If a day programme is a positive experience for your loved one, be upbeat and positive and encourage him or her to attend.

7. **Complaints – expect some**
   Give your loved one time to adjust at the day club, but expect some complaints too! They might complain about many things – the food not being to their liking, the music being too loud or that...
there are too many old people there – to which you could reply ‘they sure could use someone younger like yourself!’

It often takes several visits over a month or two before they start to feel comfortable in the day club and its routine. Be patient during the adjustment period – your loved one might even require your presence at the day club with them to help them ease in; you would be their one familiar comfort in a new and unfamiliar environment. Be prepared to do that.

8. (Re)Consider...
If your loved one cannot seem to get adjusted to a day programme, perhaps he/she is not in the right place. Continue to be patient. Withdraw your senior from the day programme, and wait a month or two and try again – consider a different day programme, or even another care alternative.

References:
https://www.nextavenue.org/how-to-convince-a-parent-to-attend-an-adult-day-center/?__cf_chl_captcha_tk__=f1287bd99e553e5b7aa640f9e810d641c6d34b9-1615183649-0-AXn6CIY2mEF4Nm19DPoQ7BF-O0DFqyZ6GF87ECXXKf6gOxHSn86gLUW1Qk5spZGE-ICkF2z1nHY78cu6Qmpi-AKZOxPSz7To3CAue10IM_eJDTP-Fk0eNM6tSuK2CNXHjF9qzoTk9syMv6bcbDpXdDwAcBSEiCy3P9lI4kNO7R8ZFF9CFtllZklBMFgrslLoT-XII313no5INZ6WsoqCGSo-X6krsfuUSTtSZ-7mYmtM-Md9fko8WZnOM45P9lC151X13zEicQrlqJfB42wKpc9rzCcr-7mGjW7JrNz4shbHvp-4ft0PqLPRjCXr0H7d3po6QGRV5MR4M-djFvn6VnhKyaMrj04rcB2c94eB3iy16za2PBIF6uzzDLHh6qX-J8wtswHPEIJGosCixSo_VC6ippgqtxCn16Mz72P4-1RmxncwNohlQo-BCCorrGb2KH2EhSOnQpXj2lslBF9mCH7ohv_NDyXB1yvaQ2VQP950kRk24_0l26N1WKh1G7I4Bgsa5Plvb_QrzB7b4l0F2152of6XBIvBvhYCzhZ2TT6s4HGX3XoccvvO2h9bljrc_drc4NolUJenFDbb_qMhidOqSWdImG