

# Laughter Club

## ***A great "immune booster" for any time of the year!***

Laughter groups can promote laughing for fun, exercise, deeper breather, energy and immune system boost, and an outlet for expression. The key to facilitating a laughter therapy program is to have confidence, enjoy yourself and create a relaxed and safe environment for people to participate.

Residents who are confident, less inhibited and willing to experiment with you will help make up your successful group. Some tips are:

- \* Create a small, intimate group in a circle away from distraction
  - \* Start by slowly speaking and demonstrate some simple deeper breathing exercises
  - \* Progress to letting out breathes in short pants - such as "hah, hah, hah" and slowly turn them to laughing sounds
  - \* Experiment with different laughs such as "he he, ho ho, huh, huh!" giggles, low and high pitched laughs, occasional snorts etc
  - \* Use eye contact, match other people's laugh sounds, and keep going for as long as you can, and is comfortable. Clapping as well can help divert from feelings of self-consciousness – try clapping simple rhythms and then add a specific laugh with the clap (eg Ha! Ha!)
  - \* Regular laughter groups will encourage greater confidence and participation as time goes on. At least twice weekly is recommended, meeting at the same familiar time and place
- 🗨 Don't feel comfortable yet but would like to try? Start your program as a relaxation or breathing exercise group, and slowly introduce laughter as one of your breathing exercises. Or tell short jokes and slowly introduce extended laughing. Over time we are sure you will feel comfortable with progressing to laughter therapy, or you may wish to keep it as one of several breathing exercises. Either way, the benefits are positive and will boost energy, reduce stress, encourage friendships and improve overall wellbeing.

***Activity names: Laughter Therapy,  
Laughter Club, Laughing Gym, Laughter Yoga***

