

## Community awareness

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# Finding health and happiness in the shed

**F**IRST AND foremost, a Men's Shed is a place for men to knock around with a group of mates. The shed is a place for friendship, for a sense of purpose; a place to belong and contribute.

Since the 1990s over one thousand Men's Sheds have sprung from a humble grassroots movement to an international phenomenon, all in the name of getting blokes together – resulting in key health and wellbeing benefits.

Whilst Men's Sheds might seem to be all woodwork and manual crafts, the shed environment offers men from all walks of life the opportunity to participate meaningfully in their community.

"Around the world men – particularly older men – are finding themselves much healthier and happier through involvement in Men's Sheds," says the Australian Men's Shed Association Executive Officer, David Helmers.

Men's Sheds make a positive contribution to the Australian community through the prevention of social isolation,



**Australian Men's Shed Association**  
SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

the promotion of positive health and wellbeing and the opportunity for men to participate in their local community. When it comes to older Australians, the influence of social interaction (or lack thereof) on mortality is comparable to well-known risk factors such as smoking and excessive alcohol consumption.

"Community and social engagement are important for men at every age, but they become particularly important for men who are not working or don't have a strong network of people around them," said Mr Helmers.

The health of the increasing number of older Australians is an important economic challenge facing Australia – extending the lifetime of good health enables Australians to continue to contribute socially, culturally and economically to the wider community.

*Visit [mensshed.org](http://mensshed.org) to find your local shed or follow the Australian Men's Shed Association on Facebook.*

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