

Area Bloggers



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What is 4-H? Written by Stephanie Miller

OCTOBER 17TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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What is 4-H?

Stephanie Milner, 4-H Youth Development Specialist

When I tell people what I do for a living I usually get one of two questions: “What is 4-H and what do you do?” or “I grew up in 4-H...is it still the same?” These are both difficult questions to answer and you may think why? It should be easy to describe your job and the program. I will tell you why this is difficult for me and others I work with in the 4-H program.

First, when people ask what I do it is hard to answer because it is a large range of things on a daily basis and each day changes. I usually start with informing others about the 4-H program. Youth members ages 5-18 can join the program and learn life skills needed all while having fun. In Stoddard County we have several clubs in the area to choose from and youth and families can be as much or as little as they would like to be involved. 4-H has over 40 projects to choose from and our youth do a lot of community service to help others in their area. I inform others that my job is to grow the program and promote positive youth development, which can be done in the clubs or in programs throughout the community such as school enrichment. All of this sometimes is so broad that people still do not grasp what the program does.

When I hear people have been in the 4-H program and they ask if it has changed it is hard to answer because the answer is both yes and no. 4-H still stands for head, heart, hands and health which are the four values of our volunteers, members and families. 4-H

started in 1914 when the Smith-Lever Act established Extension Service for the College of Agriculture. Two Superintendents in Iowa trained teachers in developing judging teams and exhibits of work with youth. From growing corn to compete with adults to the current 4-H model some things have changed over the years. 4-H still has the same values and ideas but we have just added more as the years have gone by. Now 4-H has over 40 projects ranging from agriculture to aerospace, robotics, and more. It is almost limitless in what you can do in the program.

So what does it mean to be a 4-H member, parent or volunteer? Everyone involved in the program is able gain from being involved. Youth are working with at least one caring adult and doing hands on activities. Members, parents and volunteers contribute time to the program and to grasp the full experience of 4-H you can spend countless hours. This shouldn't be a detourance, because you can be in the program and only spend 1-2 hours per month as well. Those more involved can participate in county, state and national events. 4-H offers so much for youth to get involved in. There are camps, judging events, teen conference, state congress and always the fun events like 4-H Day with the Cardinals! 4-H is an affordable option to many since our dues are \$20 a year and we provide scholarships to help youth attend programs throughout the year.

I could go on about 4-H for hours since the program is so broad and there is so much that members, parents and volunteers can do. If you have questions about 4-H youth development programs in the area contact Rachel Elder at 568-3344 or visit your local office at 314 S Prairie in Bloomfield, MO. There is so much to do in 4-H I hope you consider this an option for your family.

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Age Spots - Ch-Ch-Ch-Changes to Medicare Cards and Medicare Part D

SEPTEMBER 18TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Age Spots - Ch-Ch-Ch-Changes to Medicare Cards and Medicare Part D

Age Spots by Jackie Dover

New Medicare cards are coming and they will have a new Medicare ID number, no longer will your Social Security Number be on the cards. Starting in April of 2018 the new cards will be mailed out to people with Medicare. The new Medicare cards will feature a new number that is unique to each individual; this number should be safeguarded as you do your current number. The cards with new numbers are a way to help stop fraud and identity theft by protecting your Social Security number.

Important things to know about the new Medicare cards:

Make sure your mailing address is up to date. If your address needs to be corrected, contact Social Security. The new cards will be mailed to the address Social Security has on file for you.

Beware of anyone who contacts you about your new Medicare card. Medicare will never ask you to give personal or private information to get your new Medicare number and card.

The new card does not cost you anything; no one will be calling asking for banking or credit information.

Understand that mailing everyone a new card will take some time. Your card might arrive at a different time than your friend's or neighbor's. Mailings will take place between

April 2018 and April 2019.

The new Medicare numbers won't change Medicare benefits. People with Medicare may start using their new Medicare cards as soon as they get them

Protect your identity by properly disposing of your old Medicare cards.

You may not have a choice in the new Medicare cards; you do however have a choice when it comes to your Medicare Part D plans. We are coming up on Medicare Part D Open Enrollment. October 15 through December 7 is the time to evaluate your Medicare prescription drug plans for 2018. This is your chance to compare plans to see what plan covers your medicine at the best cost to you. It allows someone with Medicare to see what your out of pocket costs will be for the coming year and make changes if needed.

Starting in September people with Medicare drug plans should receive an Annual Notice of Change (ANOC) that will show the changes to their current plan for the following year. Please look this over Since Med D plans can change the premium, deductible, tier level of medicine and co-pay amounts every year. They can even change what medicines they cover.

I know change is hard for many, but the changes to the Medicare card will be a change that keeps you safer and changing your Part D plan could save you money. These changes are definitely worth the effort.

If you have questions or need assistance in reviewing your drug plan for 2018, please call Aging Matters at 1-800-392-8771, we are always happy to help.

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230th Anniversary of the Signing of the Constitution by Glynda Bates

SEPTEMBER 18TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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230th Anniversary of the Signing of the Constitution by Glynda J. Bates

Crowley's Ridge Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution supports the study of the Constitution in our seven county schools and encourages all in our communities to protect and defend the Constitution.

September 17 - 23 is Constitution Week. In 1955, the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution petitioned Congress with a resolution; this week of observance for the foundation of the American form of government was signed into law by President Dwight D. Eisenhower on August 2, 1956. George W. Bush officially declared the inception of Constitution Week in 2002. The commitment of the NSDAR is to encourage study and educate the public about the Constitution, which was adopted by the American Congress of the Confederation on September 17, 1787.

PREAMBLE

"We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do

ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

The Preamble is the opening statement of the Constitution that gives American citizens, not the government, the power of rule. The 55-word Preamble explains the purpose of the laws set down in the Constitution.

"In Order to Form a More Perfect Union" tells us why the Constitution was written. In "Establish Justice" we are guaranteed that we will all be treated fairly, "Insure Domestic Tranquility" promises that we can live together in peace. "Provide for the Common Defense" says that the citizens of the United States will be protected from any and all enemies. "Promote the General Welfare" states that everything will be done for the common good of the country and its citizens, and "Secure the Blessings of Liberty" simply means that we are a free people. This guarantee of freedom is the cornerstone of democracy.

Submitted September 17, 2017

by Glynda J Bates

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Age Spots by Jackie Dover - Look Out Below

AUGUST 22ND 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Age Spots by Jackie Dover - Look Out Below

Look Out Below

Did you know that Missouri has the highest rate of injuries due to falls and the 4th highest prevalence of falls in the country? I didn't and that news shocked me. This is certainly not a designation that we want here in Missouri. Luckily there is the Show Me Falls Free Missouri coalition which is dedicated to changing that statistic and educating Missourians on falls prevention. Their website is www.preventmofalls.org. Please check it for information and tips on how to avoid falls. Also, National Falls Prevention Awareness Day is September 22, this will be the 10th such day and the theme is 10 Years standing Together to Prevent Falls.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), each year millions of older people-those 65 and older-fall. In fact, 1 out of 4 older people falls each year, but less than half tell their doctor. Falling once doubles your chance of falling again.

Some quick facts about falls from the CDC:

One out of five falls causes a serious injury such as broken bones or a head injury.

Each year, 2.8 million older people are treated in emergency departments for fall injuries.

Over 800,000 patients a year are hospitalized because of a fall injury, most often because of a head injury or hip fracture. Each year at least 300,000 older people are hospitalized for hip fractures.

More than 95% of hip fractures are caused by falling, usually by falling sideways.

Falls are the most common cause of traumatic brain injuries (TBI).

Adjusted for inflation, the direct medical costs for fall injuries are \$31 billion annually. Hospital costs account for two-thirds of the total.

There are things we can do to protect ourselves.

?

Talk to your doctor about your concerns and have them review your medication to see if anything you take might make you dizzy.

Also ask your doctor if taking Vitamin D supplement would be helpful.

Get exercise, specifically things that improve your balance or makes you stronger, such as Tai Chi.

Have your eyes checked at least once a year and update your glasses as needed.

Make your home as safe as possible. Remove rugs and other obstacles you can trip over.

Add grab bars inside and outside the tub or shower.

Add extra lighting in areas of your home that are too dark to see well.

Ask your doctor if an assistive device such as a cane, would benefit you.

Falls education is very important and prevention is key. As always if you need more information, please call Aging Matters at 1-800-392-8771.

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Age Spots by Jackie Dover - Medicare's Mental Health Benefit

AUGUST 09TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Age Spots by Jackie Dover - Medicare's Mental Health Benefit

Medicare's Mental Health Benefit

When we talk about mental health many people feel uncomfortable. It is easy in many cases to see if someone is sick physically, but it is harder to tell if they are suffering from a mental illness, and when they are we don't know what to say or how to help.

Good mental health is as important as good physical health. Good mental health contributes greatly to an overall feeling of well-being. Untreated mental health disorders in older adults can lead to diminished functioning, substance abuse, poor quality of life, and increased mortality. Research shows mental illness can even slow healing from physical illnesses.

According to Mental Health America (MHA) approximately 1 in 5 adults have a mental health issue. With so many people in need it is good to know that Medicare covers many mental health services.

According to the Medicare and Your Mental Health handbook, Medicare Part A covers mental health services you receive while inpatient in a hospital. It can be a psychiatric hospital or a general hospital. While an inpatient Medicare will pay for room, meals, nursing services, therapy and lab tests. You are still subject to the Medicare Part A deductible which is \$1316 for 2017.

Medicare Part B covers outpatient services, including visits to psychiatrist, psychologist and nurse practitioners. Part B also covers psychiatric evaluation and testing to determine if current treatment and services are helping, individual and group psychotherapy and family counseling if the main purpose is help with your treatment. You are subject to the Medicare Part B deductible (\$183 for 2017) and coinsurance.

Medicare Part D plans cover antidepressant, anticonvulsant, and antipsychotic medications, which may be necessary to keep you mentally healthy. Each drug plan has a formulary of drugs they cover; it is a good idea to check that your medicine is covered by a plan before joining. We also recommend that you check every year during Open Enrollment to ensure the plan you are on will continue to be the best one for you.

Some signs to watch for if you are concerned about your or someone else's mental health:

- Memory loss
- Change in personal appearance or cleanliness of person or home
- Social withdrawal from friends and family
- Mood changes or sadness or depression
- Unexplained fatigue or sleep changes
- Loss of weight or change in appetite
- Feelings of helplessness

If you or someone you know needs immediate help call 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Number at 1-800-273-8255. If it is not an immediate threat then speaking to your physician can get you started on the path to good mental health. Remember that you are not the only one, many people struggle and need help, all you have to do is ask.

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