

NEWSLETTER



DECEMBER 2024 & JANUARY 2025

THE EXTENSION
OFFICE WILL BE
CLOSED FROM

DECEMBER 25
to **JANUARY 1**

WE WILL REOPEN ON
THURSDAY, JANUARY 2.

happy holidays

Marla Stillwell

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Tips to Keep Safe During Winter

#WINTERREADY

According to FEMA, it is important to be prepared for the risks and dangers associated with winter. If you are an older adult or care for an older adult, winter storms, cold weather, and power outages can make staying safe and getting proper health care a challenge. FEMA suggests following these tips to help you assess your needs and develop your plan to be sure you are #WinterReady.

- **Prevent Falling.** Avoid icy or snowy sidewalks, use delivery services, when possible, dry the wheels of your mobility device(s) when coming in from the outdoors, use doors or entrances with the least amount of snow or ice, keep sidewalks shoveled and sanded, arrange for snow removal to reduce risk of heart attack, wear non-skid, rubber-soled shoes, use railings.
- **Prevent Hypothermia.** You are at risk of hypothermia if you are exposed to cold temperatures and your body temperature drops below 95 degrees. This is a serious condition that can cause organ damage and irregular heartbeat. Signs and symptoms include slow or slurred speech; feeling tired, angry, or confused; pale skin; swollen face; and cold hands and feet. If you or someone you know has signs of hypothermia, call 911, move to a warm place, warm up with blankets, and drink warm beverages.

continued

- **Take Note of How Certain Medicines and Medical Conditions React in Cold Weather.** Certain medications and medical conditions, including diabetes, thyroid problems, Parkinson's, and memory loss may need extra attention during cold temperatures. FEMA recommends that people with medical conditions talk to a health-care professional about what conditions impact body heat and what you can do.
- **Stay Warm During Power Outages.** Make a plan for power outages. This includes staying informed with a battery-powered radio for updated emergency information, assigning an emergency contact and communication plan, and learning generator safety and the risks of carbon monoxide poisoning if using one. Preserve heat by closing curtains and doors to rooms not being used, eat regularly, drink warm liquids if possible, dress in layers of loose-fitting clothes. Cover your head and feet.
- **Create an Emergency Plan and Toolkit.** Assess your needs before a crisis. Assign a contact person and communicate with them regularly. Be sure at least one person in your network has a key and access to your home, knows where you keep emergency supplies, and can use lifesaving equipment or administer medicine. Use FEMA's worksheets and checklists to help make your plan.
- **Stay Warm Indoors.** Set your thermostat at 68 degrees, use towels or draft stoppers to prevent cold air leaks, use blankets to keep warm, wear loose-fitting warm layers, cover your head and feet, stay active to generate heat, eat hot meals and snacks, and drink warm fluids throughout the day. To warm up your hands and feet, use heating pads or hot water bottles

All of this information and additional details can be found online. Go to FEMA's 7 Winter Safety Tips for Older Adults at <https://www.fema.gov/blog/7-winter-safety-tips-older-adults>

Reference: FEMA. (2024). Programs for Older Adults. FEMA. (2024). Winter Safety Tips for Older Adults. Retrieved 10/10/24 from <https://www.fema.gov/blog/7-winter-safety-tips-older-adults#:~:text=Set%20your%20heat%20to%20at,fitting%2C%20lightweight%2C%20warm%20clothing>

Source: Amy F. Kostelic, Associate Extension Professor, Adult Development and Aging

Homemakers News & Notes

Friends and Family Homemakers Meeting – 1st Thursdays at 1pm

South Fork Homemakers Meeting – 3rd Tuesdays at 10:30am

Lesson for January 2025 - Mail Out - Strong Bones for Life: Preventing Osteoporosis

Floral Hall Project Update – Donations are still being accepted for continued improvements to the Floral Hall Building at the Fairgrounds. Lots of work has been completed including a new roof, new windows and doors & fresh paint on the exterior.

Homemaker Council – Monday, January 13th at 10:30 am.

Extension Leadership Banquet Catering Fundraiser - January 27th at 6:30 pm - Check with your respective homemaker club to see how you can help

Lesson Leader Training - January 30 at 10:30 am - Inspiring Grandchildren to Become Grand Cooks

LaRue County Homemaker Cookbooks NOW AVAILABLE! Stop by the Extension Office or see any Homemaker member to purchase a copy for \$15.00.



Cook Together, Eat Together

Families in the Kitchen COOK TOGETHER EAT TOGETHER



Cook with your family



kids ages 4-18

Please Pre
REGISTER

- Get tips that make cooking fast, fun and delicious
- Learn how to make a vegetable “taste as good as a french fry”
- And so much more

Where: LaRue County Extension Office
807 Old Elizabethtown Road
Hodgenville

When: 3:30 on Fridays
(see the dates below)

For More Information Contact:
Susan Riggs at (270)358-3401 or
susan.riggs@uky.edu

SAVE THE
Dates

1/10

1/24

2/14

2/28

3/14

3/28

4/11

This work is supported by the
Expanded Food and Nutrition
Education Program from the USDA
National Institute of Food and Agriculture.



UK Martin-Gatton
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment



USDA
Supplemental
Nutrition
Assistance
Program

This institution is an equal opportunity
provider. This material was partially
funded by USDA's Supplemental
Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP.

Cooking Through the Calendar

Don't forget to join us for our monthly Cooking through the Calendar program on the 2nd Friday of each month at 12:00 noon at the Extension Office! A demonstration of the recipe will be provided as well as sampling.

2025 KYNEP Calendars NOW AVAILABLE! Stop by during office hours for your free copy or get one when you attend the Cooking Through the Calendar program.



Follow our LaRue County Cooperative Extension Service Facebook page for more info and to view the demonstrations LIVE!

Upcoming FCS Extension Events

- **December 18** at 9 am – Laugh & Learn Playdate Program, “Gingerbread”
- **January 8** – Quilt Club at 10am at the Extension Office
- **January 10 at 12:00** - Cooking Through the Calendar “Split Pea Soup”
- **January 13 at 10 am** - Open Sewing at the Extension Office (Note - date change for this month only)
- **January 15 at 9 am** - Laugh & Learn Playdate Program, “Snow & Winter”
- **January 27 at 6:30 pm** - Extension Leadership Awards Banquet
- **January 30 at 10:30 am** - Inspiring Grandchildren to Become Grand Cooks

***Building strong families. Building Kentucky.
It starts with us. [#UKfcsext](#)***

Walking Challenge & Walking Club

Congratulations to our Walking Club participants for recently completing their 12-week challenge! We had over 15 participants walk at least once or more with us during Walking Club and over 21 participants have been tracking their steps and movement at home. Stay tuned for the final results as we are still tallying all the data! Keep moving!

Pictured :Debra Speck, Betsy Tucker and Kathy Demarco at one of our recent Walking Club sessions in 20 degree temperatures!



January is Mental Wellness Month

January is Mental Wellness Month, a perfect time to focus on your mental health and well-being. It's like giving your mind a fresh start, just like you might give your home a deep clean after the holidays. You may be wondering, "but what is mental wellness?" Mental wellness is a state of well-being in which individuals are functioning as their best version, they are able to realize their strengths, build on their weaknesses, can cope with stress, and have an overall balance between their emotional, physical, spiritual, and mental selves. There are several activities that individuals can participate in to ensure they are taking care of their mental wellness.

Here are some fun ways to boost your mental wellness:

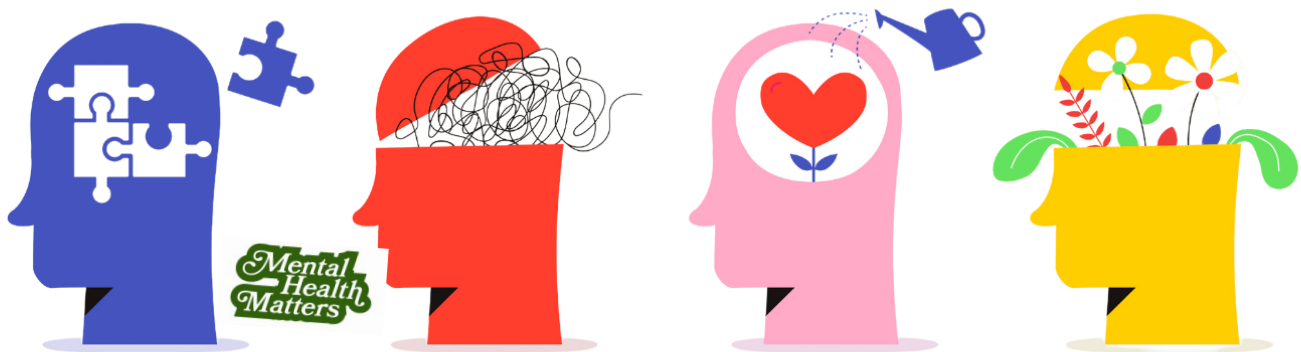
Try something new: Pick up a hobby you've always wanted to try or rediscover an old one. Maybe you've always wanted to learn to play an instrument, paint, or write. Or, if you used to love a particular activity, give it another shot. Sometimes, revisiting old hobbies can bring back a sense of joy and fulfillment.

Learn and Grow: Engage in activities to better yourself such as reading self-help books, seeking therapy services, and engaging with a health and wellness coach.

Connect with others: Volunteering or spending time with friends and family are shown to enhance your mental health.

Find your peace: Try participating in activities that will calm your mind and enhance your mental health such as meditation or yoga.

So, this January, let's make it a month of feeling great! By incorporating these activities into your routine, you can improve your mental wellness and overall well-being. Remember, it's important to be patient with yourself and to find what works best for you.



mini cheese ball bites

Ingredients:

- 8 ounces Neufchatel cream cheese
- 1/2 cup reduced-fat shredded cheddar cheese
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/4 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce (optional)
- 36 pretzel sticks

Directions:

1. Wash hands with warm soap and water, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds.
2. In a medium-sized bowl, add cream cheese and mix with a spatula until smooth.
3. Fold in shredded cheese, garlic powder, onion powder, and Worcestershire sauce, if using.
4. Scoop 1/2 teaspoon of mixture and roll into a small ball and place a pretzel stick in the middle, continue until the mixture is gone. If mixture is too soft, refrigerate for 10-20 minutes before rolling.
5. Enjoy! Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Tips:

This recipe can be used as a base to make other flavors of mini cheese ball bites. See below for some inspiration.

- Other add-ins: finely chopped bell peppers, pimentos, pickle relish, fresh herbs such as parsley or dill, finely chopped lunchmeat
- Other roll-ins: finely chopped nuts or chives, dried fruit, paprika, crushed pretzels, crushed crackers, low-fat shredded cheese
- Pumpkin Cheese Ball: instead of making mini cheese ball bites, make one large ball and roll in shredded cheese. Use a straw to make indents around the entire ball so it looks like a pumpkin. Use a top of a bell pepper or anything you would like to make a stem. Add jack-o-lantern eyes with olives.

Nutrition Facts Per Servings: 60 calories; 4g total fat; 2.5g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 15mg cholesterol; 115mg sodium; 2g total carbohydrate; 0g dietary fiber; 1g total sugars; 0g added sugars; 3g protein; 0% Daily Value of vitamin D; 4% Daily Value of calcium; 0% Daily Value of iron; 0% Daily Value of potassium.

Source: Jean Najor, Program Coordinator II, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service



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ADULT

HEALTH BULLETIN



JANUARY 2025

Download this and past issues of the Adult, Youth, Parent, and Family Caregiver Health Bulletins: <http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/health-bulletins>

LaRue County Extension Service
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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC

STEP INTO NATURE: WINTER EDITION



Winter can feel like a dreary time of year — it is often cold, and wet, and gets dark early. Many people struggle with winter blues. There's bleak weather and emotional letdown after the holiday season. There are many reasons people might struggle with mental health during the coldest, darkest months of the year. Weather conditions in combination with low mood can deter people from spending time outdoors. But resist the temptation to hibernate. Instead choose to go outside. It can help your body and mind.

There are many fun outdoor winter activities, from sledding in the snow to skating on ice. But simply going for a walk or taking your daily workout routine outdoors has advantages. You can take a stroll around the block or spend an afternoon exploring a trail at a local park. Exercising outdoors can add variety to

Continued on the next page →

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Lexington, KY 40506





Take a stroll around the block or spend an afternoon exploring a trail at a local park. Exercising outdoors can add variety to your routine and help you feel even better.

➔ **Continued from the previous page**

your routine and help you feel even better.

Exercise in general is known to help reduce stress and promote emotional regulation. Exercising outside has the added benefit of regulating sleep-wake cycles. That can help our bodies feel ready to sleep at night and wake in the morning. Many people experience disrupted sleep cycles in winter because of prolonged darkness and fewer hours of sunlight. To reset your body's sleep-wake cycles, try spending time outside in the morning after the sun has risen or in the afternoon before the sun goes down. Limit intense physical activity and screen time in the last two hours before bed. Instead, opt for calming activities like reading, crafting, stretching, meditation, puzzles, or talking with a family member or friend.

Exposure to natural sounds like birds chirping, rustling leaves, and the blowing wind can also help lower blood pressure and reduce negative thoughts. Exercise outside in places with reduced noise pollution and access to natural sounds. This can help your brain process your emotions more easily and regulate your breathing. The Japanese practice of forest bathing, or spending quiet time in heavily wooded areas, emphasizes the importance of time immersed in nature. Those who practice regularly often have lower stress and blood pressure and more stable blood sugar levels.

If you struggle with brain fog and staying on-task in the winter months, breathing in cold, brisk air is also good for mental stimulation, concentration, and mental focus. If you spend lots of time indoors at work in the winter, take breaks outside or walk around your building to help sharpen your focus.

When exercising outdoors, always remember to dress for the weather:

- Wear layers to prevent overheating and allow for temperature regulation. Choose wicking layers closest to your body that will pull moisture away from your skin to keep you dry.
- When the air is especially cold or windy, limit your skin exposure. Keep your hands and head covered. Wear a hat, hood, or ear warmers, and gloves.
- Remember your feet. Wear warm, dry socks, and shoes or boots with good grip and traction to prevent slips or falls.

REFERENCE:
<https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/sour-mood-getting-you-down-get-back-to-nature>

**ADULT
HEALTH BULLETIN**

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Adobe Stock



MONEYWISE

VALUING PEOPLE. VALUING MONEY.

DECEMBER 2024

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: BEING A RESPONSIBLE CONSUMER OF INFORMATION

With the introduction of online sources for news and current events, the opportunity for misinformation has become a growing concern. When newspapers, radio, and television were the primary sources available for news, most providers recognized that their service was a “public good.” As such, they had a responsibility to verify the accuracy and reliability of their content. With more sources of information at your fingertips, accuracy sometimes becomes diluted or even nonexistent as anyone with an opinion, whether factual or not, can publish online.

GOING VIRAL

Just like viral infections start with tiny germs and spread quickly in your body to make you (and others) sick, viral stories use online hosts to make “copies” of the original post to spread it quickly. Within a very short time, many people might believe something to be true, just because they have seen it repeatedly. The accuracy of the information was not verified, even though it was shared millions of times.

STOPPING INTERNET “GERMS”

What can you do to prevent the spread of viral online “germs”? The News Literacy Project has



identified five key factors that you can apply to any story to weed out misinformation: authenticity, source, evidence, context, and reasoning.

First, ask yourself, does this even seem reasonable or credible? Is it **authentic**? If the headline and the story do not match, that is a red flag. If the story seems too outlandish to be true, that could be another reason to question whether it is true. Be aware that pictures, stories, videos, and even people’s voices can be manipulated through artificial intelligence (AI), so you should carefully evaluate everything you see and hear.



“IF IT SEEMS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, IT PROBABLY IS”



Second, is the **source** trustworthy? Most reliable news outlets are transparent with where they get their information. They also might publish their ethics policies. Check out a publication's sources and policies to see if you are comfortable with their ethical standards. No sources? Another red flag.

Third, is there **evidence** that supports any claims that were made? If statements are made without evidence, you should hesitate before believing them. Even if evidence is presented, follow up to see if the evidence is credible.

Next, does the **context** make sense? If things seem out of place or are in conflict, dig deeper. Remember, not all sources are reliable.

Finally, is it supported by solid **reasoning**? If the story goes against common sense, trust your instincts and question the story.

BUYER BEWARE

You can also apply these factors to financial consumer awareness. Consider **caveat emptor**. This Latin phrase means, “Let the buyer beware.” When you buy a good or service, it is your responsibility to do your

due diligence to ensure that you pay a fair price and get a good product. While we now have consumer protection agencies and laws that look out for consumers' best interests, applying the five factors of misinformation can save you lots of time, money, and aggravation.

Various types of **scams and frauds** from “bait and switch” to “phishing scams” (addressed in previous MONEYWISE newsletters) might be more easily recognized if you consider the misinformation factors. Looking at anything you “consume” (from news to purchases) with a critical eye will help you better recognize scams and fraud. The old adage, “If it seems too good to be true, it probably is,” holds water. Contact your local FCS agent for more information on becoming an informed consumer.

RESOURCES

American Psychological Association. <https://www.apa.org/topics/journalism-facts/misinformation-interventions>

News Literacy Project. <https://newslit.org/>

The Role of Consumer Protection Agencies. https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/moneywise_june_2024.pdf

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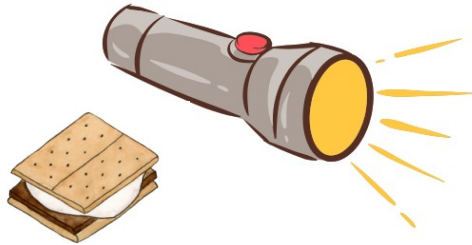
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KIDS KÖRNER

WINTER FAMILY ACTIVITY: INDOOR CAMPING

When outdoor camping isn't an option, bring camping indoors. This can be the perfect experiences for the whole family.



- Build a blanket fort
- Make indoor s'mores
- Add ambiance with nature sounds
- Watch a winter movie
- Make shadow puppets





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Bobby McDowell Award of Excellence



If you would like to nominate an individual or group for the annual Bobby McDowell Award of Excellence for leadership or community service, nominations are due by **January 10, 2025**. Nomination forms are available at the Extension Office or on our website,

https://larue.ca.uky.edu/sites/larue.ca.uky.edu/files/B%20M%20Award%20of%20Excell%20Nominee%20Form%20for%20Jan%202025_0.pdf .

 **Deadline**
01/10/2025

