

Senior Series

*The Ohio
Department of
Aging*



**Senior Series - Ohio State University Extension and Ohio Aging Networks
Working Together to Address Older Adult Issues**

Senior Hotline

**... a newsletter for older adults or
those who care for an older adult**

Volume 7, Issue 6

Care Choice Ohio

Americans are living longer and our population is aging. "The graying of America" is a phrase used to describe the rapid growth of older adults in our communities. When the baby boomers begin turning 65 in 2011, numbers will sky rocket.

Long before this group of individuals needs long term care services, they can find out about options available in their communities through a free, in-home consultation.

Care Choice Ohio is a state-wide program available to all Ohioans. Care Choice Ohio professionals can meet with individuals and their families to discuss a variety of concerns and refer them to appropriate sources for further assistance.

Through Care Choice Ohio, you can learn more about:

- public benefits
- legal matters, such as living wills
- financial affairs, such as reverse mortgages and financial planning
- recreation, education and volunteer opportunities
- health and long term care insurance
- long term care alternatives including nursing homes, home care and community-based services
- caregiving concerns
- health related issues
- housing options

Care Choice Ohio will provide you with information to help you explore your options; the ultimate decisions are always yours to make. To schedule a Care Choice appointment call your local Area Agency on Aging office.

Submitted by: Lynn Dobb, Education Manager, Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging

The Ohio Department of Aging,
Ohio's Aging Network,
The Ohio State University,
The United States Department of Agriculture
and County Commissioners Cooperating.

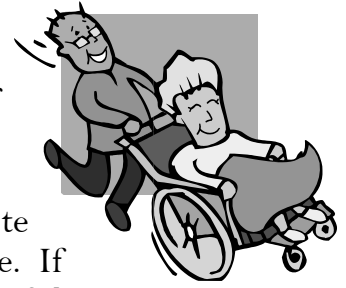
Caregiving Challenges—Resolving Family Conflict

Every family is unique. Family history and dynamics are formed over a lifetime. Each person will react differently to difficult situations such as caring for a loved one or end-of-life issues.

Recognizing that each one of us comes to the “caregiving table” with our own concerns and needs from the onset can be a positive initial step. Caregiving is an experience that can be both rewarding and overwhelming at the same time. It is natural to have a mix of conflicting feelings of love, frustration, fulfillment, and exhaustion when we find ourselves in a caregiving role. An important part of being a caregiver is to know your limits. Each family member must do this for themselves and also recognize and respect other family members’ limits as well. Together, with an understanding that everyone has limits, a family can work together to meet the needs of their loved one.

Common sources of family conflict can wreak havoc at a time when family members need to

be coming together. A history of poor relationships, feelings of guilt or grief, unequal divisions of labor, and resentment can contribute to stress during this time. If you are confronting any of these issues, one solution might be to hold a family meeting where open discussion can take place.



Conflict in families can make difficult decisions even harder and such families may make poor decisions as a result. Seeking outside help from a social worker or other professional who may be able to mediate and help resolve conflicts is an option.

For additional information on caregiving issues and challenges contact your local Area Agency on Aging or Ohio State University Extension Office.

Submitted by: Lynn Dobb, Education Manager, Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging

Life Legacies Part 3—The Gift of Your Life Story

Today's families are often separated geographically or by hectic schedules. Taking time to share family history from one generation to another has all too frequently gone by the wayside. So this year, give the gift of your life story. Reestablish the connection between generations; it will help both the young and the old.

Begin with a life review— see if you can find any photographs, family journals, books, and scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, or other keepsakes. Allow the images and memorabilia to take you down memory lane. Reflect on your childhood, memories of your parents, grandparents,

and other extended family members. Where did your parents meet? When did they marry? What are some of your best childhood memories? How did your parents wash clothes? What was school like for you? How did you get there? What were your favorite subjects?

Describe some fun activities you did while in school. What games did you enjoy as a child? What is the best present you ever received? As you reminisce, think about how you felt and what else was going on at the time.

After you have gathered information in a life review, choose an appropriate method to record it. Ideas include scrapbooks, audio

Holiday Gifts on a Budget

The holidays are a time of giving. But many people feel a lot of pressure to buy nice gifts that they cannot afford for family members and friends. If you want to avoid paying for gifts months after the holidays have passed, here are some ideas to help you reduce or eliminate your holiday debt and have financial peace of mind:



If you have a large family or several friends to buy gifts for, draw names and put a dollar limit on the amount of the gift.

Consider giving homemade gifts. These are often less expensive than store-bought gifts and are more cherished.

Look for inexpensive containers that you can use for creative packaging. Baskets purchased from thrift or dollar stores filled with homemade baked goods get an especially warm welcome during the holidays. Other ideas include:

- **Develop a holiday budget.** This is the amount of money that you will be able to afford for holiday expenses. Set a dollar amount and stick to it.
- **Create a gift list.** Think of the people for whom you will be purchasing a gift. Don't feel pressured to buy something for everyone you know. Try to limit your gift giving to family members and close friends.
- **Stick to your list.** Considering the budget that you have set, decide how much you can spend on each person. Keep the list with you when you shop.
- **Save all receipts.** Know store return policies.
- **Pay with cash if you can.** Avoid putting charges on your credit card. If you must use credit, use a card with the lowest interest rate. Pay off the bill as soon as you can.
- **Watch for sales ads.**
- **Shop early.** Avoid impulse purchases for last-minute gifts.

- Coffee mug filled with coffee mixes or teabags and a pretty spoon.
- Some recipes on 3" by 5" cards tied with a pretty bow.
- Pasta basket that includes a jar of prepared pasta sauce, a selection of specialty pastas and a pasta spoon.
- Jar layered with dry beans and your favorite bean soup recipe.
- Freshly baked loaf of bread on a bread board with little jars of jams or jellies.

Submitted by Jennifer Even, FCS Agent, OSU Extension, Hamilton County. Sources:

Avoiding the Holiday Debt Blues (2000), Nigel B. Taylor, Consumer Affairs Dept. of the Financial Planning Association, Santa Monica, CA.

CCCS Offers Tips for Avoiding Excessive Holiday Debt, Consumer Credit Counseling Service of the Gulf Coast Area, Inc., Houston, TX. (Nov. 10, 2000).



Life Planning: It Begins With Communication

As our society ages and people live longer and more productive lives, eldercare is a growing issue affecting families across the country. Most of us are immersed in our daily lives and may not address the “what ifs” that may face us down the road.

We all want our loved ones and ourselves to be healthy and live happily ever after. No one wants to think of a family member or dear friend becoming seriously ill. The thought of this makes us sad, possibly depressed and uncomfortable. The truth is that advanced planning can help ease some of the additional pain and stress one is bound to feel when the unexpected or undesired occurs. There are several tools available to help you address life planning so that you and your family can communicate on the important issues that families face when this occurs.

We know that the majority of Americans want to die at home surrounded by family and friends, but most end up dying in a hospital or nursing home, cared for by strangers. Sick people have come to fear losing their dignity or burdening their families more than they fear death.

The Personal Profile, developed by Senior Series, a collaborative effort between



professionals in The Ohio State University Extension and Aging Network was designed to assist you should you or your family or friends become incapacitated, declared incompetent or die. This document is broken down into several key categories: personal relationship information, professional relationship information, professional addresses, document information, financial information and personal choices. This tool can be filled out by all family members and updated annually to ensure that critical information is documented before the crisis occurs.

It is suggested you use care when deciding where to keep this document or who to give it to for safekeeping since it does contain some confidential financial information. It is suggested you do not place this document in a safe-deposit box since it contains some information that would be needed immediately after someone dies.

To receive your copy of the a Senior Series Personal Profile Fact Sheet call Judy Hardy at The Ohio Department of Aging 614-752-9676, your local county Extension office or download the resource from the web at www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~seniors.

Submitted by: Lynn Dobb, Education Manager, Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging. Sources: Senior Series Personal Profile Fact Sheet #SS 169-99-R01

Holiday Safety Follow these tips to keep your family safe during the holidays...

- Never use lighted candles on or near the tree or other evergreens. Always use non-flammable holders and place candles where children and pets cannot knock them over.
- Do not burn wrapping paper in the fireplace as flash fires may result.
- Keep fireplace screens in place at all times.
- Live trees should be green, needles hard to pull from branches. Check the water level daily. Place trees away from fireplaces and radiators.
- Check for frayed cords, bare wires, loose connections, and broken plugs or sockets on lights. Never use more than 3 sets of lights per extension cord.
- Turn all tree lights off when no one is home or when everyone is sleeping.

From Univ. of Missouri Outreach & Extension Consumer Economics Update website: <http://outreach.missouri.edu/ceupdate/scripts/1999/12/holisafety.htm>; Source: Helpful hints to keep your holiday safe. (1999, November). Connected: A Newsletter for Energy Customers, 5.

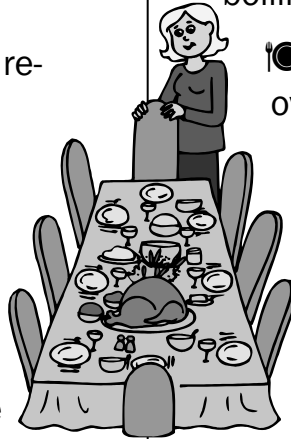


Holiday Food Safety Tips



The holidays are just around the corner! Usually holiday festivities include meals with family and friends. Keep these tips in mind when planning or helping with family holiday meals.

- Buy a fresh or frozen turkey. Pre-stuffed turkeys are not recommended.
- Turkeys should be thawed in the refrigerator. Allow 24 hours per 5 pounds.
- Other safe thawing alternatives include:
 - ⇒ in the microwave (check the manufacturer's instructions for the size turkey that can be defrosted) and cook immediately after thawing
 - ⇒ in a sink of continuously running cold water (in the original unopened wrapper), allow thirty minutes per pound.
- Refrigerate leftovers as soon as possible in small, shallow containers.
- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. The danger zone for foods is 40-140° F. Foods need to be served below 40° F or above 140° F.
- Never leave food out at room temperature for more than two hours. This includes travel time.



- If traveling long distances, be sure to use an insulated ice chest or container.
- Leftover turkey and stuffing should be used within 3 to 4 days and gravy within 1 to 2 days. When reheating leftover gravy, be sure to reheat it to boiling.
- Store large amounts of leftovers in meal size portions in the freezer.
- Pumpkin and custard pies should be refrigerated. They contain eggs and need to be carefully stored. This goes for ice cream too. If you are making homemade ice cream, use a recipe that calls for cooked custard and not raw eggs. Raw eggs are a potential source of salmonella bacteria. Only thorough cooking kills this bacteria.
- Serve only pasteurized or cooked eggnog. Fruit juices should also be pasteurized.

Help make your holiday meals one that your family and friends will long remember by serving food safely!

Submitted by: Cindy S. Oliveri, SW District FCS Specialist, OSU Extension. Sources: Occasional Quantity Cook-One Time Food Functions Factsheets, "Let's Celebrate" by Cindy S. Oliveri and "Holiday Food Safety" by Becky Collins. Ohio State University Extension. Reviewed by Sharron Coplin, Human Nutrition Extension Associate.

Happy Holidays

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Senior Series

Sincerely,

**Extension Agent,
Family and
Consumer Sciences**

For More Information,

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