

# The Communicator

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**September 2004**

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School of Family & Consumer Sciences



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## FCS Inservice

We're looking forward to the week of September 20 here in Moscow. FCS Educators from around the state will join us for their biennial Inservice, "Enhancing the Well-being of Idaho's Individuals and Families." Chair Sandra McCurdy and the Inservice committee have created an exciting program. It promises to deliver stimulating updates in food safety, individual and family development, nutrition education, and family economics. We'll have a chance to fit in an IEAFCS Association Meeting. Also included are other topics, which cut across programs regardless of their focus: "Today's Extension Audiences," survey research, and peer-reviewed publications.

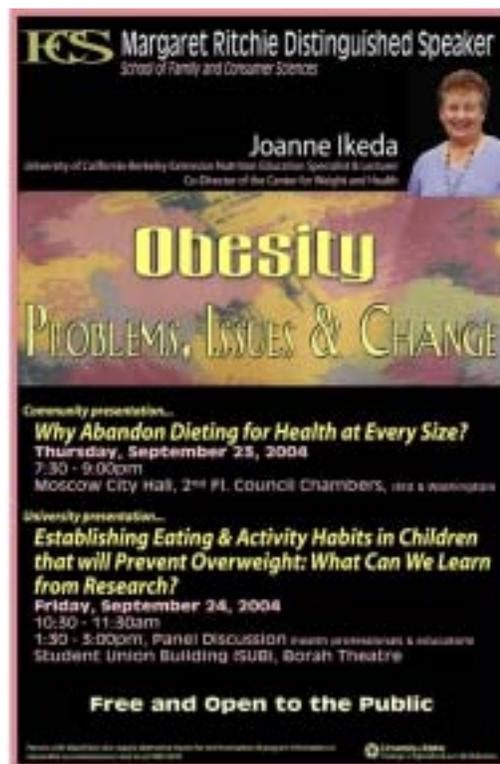
We look forward to meeting and working with all of you who can manage to get away for a few days. We have the exciting opportunity of meeting with two outstanding guest speakers. Joanne Ikeda, our 2004 Margaret Ritchie Distinguished Speaker will arrive on campus on Thursday and join us for dinner in the UI Commons before her presentation to the Moscow community. We'll meet at 7:30pm in the Moscow City Hall for "Why Abandon Dieting for Health at Every Size?"

On Friday morning our breakfast meeting will feature our second guest, Virginia Vincente, past President of the AAFCS. Her address is entitled "Strengthening Collaboration in a Culture of Competition." Dr. Vincente will meet with newly re-organized IAFCS membership later in the day on Friday. She will also be the keynote speaker for the annual FCS Alumni Brunch on Saturday.

After this morning session, you'll have time to check out of your hotel room and travel to campus for Joanne Ikeda's presentation to the campus community, "Establishing Eating and Activity Habits in Children that Will Prevent Overweight: What Can We Learn from Research?" Note the time change for this event in Borah Theatre; it will begin at 10:30am. After lunch, a panel of experts will present their perspectives on the topic of obesity. The entire week should be a professional development opportunity to reconnect with colleagues, recharge our batteries, and update our knowledge and skills. You should have received a program earlier this summer, but if you need another copy, please let us know. I look forward to seeing you there.

**Director**  
*September 2004*

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## Signature Programs, Land Grant Mission, and FCS

By now all of you have reviewed the criteria for identifying CALS Program Areas. Using these criteria, nine program areas have been selected under which all unit programs will be prioritized and teach-

ing, research and extension efforts will be focused during the next five to ten years.

The program areas most relevant to FCS are Community Development; Human Health, Nutrition and Food Safety; Individual and Family Well-being; and Youth Education and Development. During our Inservice we will have the opportunity to discuss these four broad umbrella areas and the specific programs we deliver to the people of Idaho. All of you will have had some discussion in your Districts related to these umbrella areas, but we have not discussed signature programs as a discipline. Dr. Arlinda Nauman and I look forward to this segment of the program.

With the arrival of our new President Tim White, we have a chance to re-visit our land grant mission and help articulate our statewide role. Over twelve years ago Ernest Boyer, as President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, wrote *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. Boyer (1996) was convinced that “the academy must become a more vigorous partner in the search for answers to our most pressing social, civic, economic, and moral problems, and must reaffirm its historic commitment” (p. 11) to what he called the scholarship of engagement.

For me, the key words and phrases in Boyer’s statement are “answers to...problems” and “engagement.” In 2000 the Kellogg Commission Report on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities challenged us to “rework our traditional concepts of teaching, research, and service into new visions emphasizing *learning, discovery, and engagement*” (Returning to our Roots: Executive Summaries of the Reports of the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities, p. 31). The Commission concludes that it is time to go beyond outreach and service to what it defines as “engagement,” institutions that have re-designed their traditional functions to become even more involved with their communities. The traditional concept of a land-grant institution involved translation of research from the University to the public. The engagement ideal involves a two way street of reciprocity between community and University.

Much of what we do in FCS involves community development. In fact, most of the four umbrella ar-

reas listed above are not distinct and separate, but overlap and are parts of a whole. The recent “WIN the Rockies” project is a case in point. The mission statement of the project included statements regarding the value of health, respect for body-size differences, the benefits of self-acceptance, enjoyment of physically active living, and enjoyment of healthful and pleasurable eating. Their approach was health centered and focused on developing healthy lifestyles, not just for fifth and sixth graders, but for the entire community. WIN was a great example of nutrition education in context; the broad, ecological approach to engagement. It involved individuals in the context of families in the setting of community. It was a discovery-based program involving community partners that was designed to have short and long-range impact. It typifies our land grant mission. University resources and expertise were brought to bear on local problems in a coherent way. Which umbrella area did it fit under? It was an integrated program addressing individual and family well-being as well as nutrition education in a larger context of community development.

I’m not surprised that these programs are so successful. FCS Educators are trained to think this way, in context. “Family science is grounded in family systems thinking, which recognizes the inter-relationship between family members and their environment.” (p. 6, *Family Science: Professional Development and Career Opportunities*, NCFR, 2003). We develop programs with a unique understanding of individual behavior within the context of families. We’re also aware of the relationship of families to the workplace, to schools, churches, hospitals, and other community institutions. We know that healthy families make strong communities.

FCS professionals are uniquely qualified to use learning, discovery, and engagement to help the University of Idaho fulfill its land grant mission. We are involved in discovery. We share and disseminate knowledge. FCS Educators are experts in the application of knowledge to solve problems relevant to the people of the state. Our current challenge is to identify those programs for which we want to be known. What are the FCS programs of excellence for the next five to ten years? I look forward to the discussions among all FCS professionals in the weeks ahead.

## September is National Food Safety Education Month

### This Year's Theme Is: Be Aware When You Prepare

This year marks the tenth annual National Food Safety Education Month<sup>SM</sup>, sponsored by the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF).

The NRAEF's International Food Safety Council created this annual campaign in 1994 to heighten the awareness about the importance of food safety education. Each year a new theme and educational materials are created. In the past, government and consumer organizations and other industry groups have joined the NRAEF to focus on food safety education for consumers as well as for the food service industry. This September the focus seems to be primarily on the food service industry.

For 2004, the NRAEF has created several versions of food service back-of-the-house posters that can be downloaded from their website <http://www.nraef.org/nfsem/posters.asp> and hung up as a food safety educational tool pertaining to proper preparation. The messages on the posters include:

- **There are four acceptable ways to thaw food safely:**

1. In a refrigerator at 41°F (5°C) or lower.
2. Under running water at 70°F (21°C) or lower.
3. In a microwave oven.
4. As part of the cooking process.



- **Prevent cross-contamination.**

Wash your hands before working with each food. Use different cutting boards to keep raw and ready-to-eat food separate. Clean and sanitize equipment and work surfaces after each task.



## Food Safety

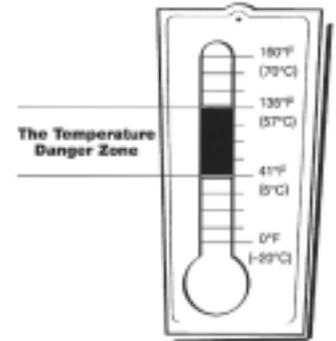
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- **Control time and temperature.**

Keep food out of the temperature danger zone of 41°F to 135°F (5°C to 57°C) as much as possible. Prepare food in small batches. Refrigerate food if interrupted during preparation. Refrigerate or cook food as soon as you are done with preparation.



- **Always cook food to its required minimum internal temperature to keep it safe.**

Check the minimum internal cooking temperature for each food with a thermometer. Temperatures will vary from food to food.



- **Cool food rapidly.**

Cool food from 135°F to 70°F (57°C to 21°C) within 2 hours and from 70°F to 41°F (21°C to 5°C) or lower in an additional 4 hours. To cool food quickly: divide the food into smaller portions, put the food in an ice-water bath, and stir regularly with an ice paddle. You can also use a blast chiller to cool the food more rapidly.



The messages are available on 8.5x11 posters (five different posters, one message per poster, in black and white) or as 18x24 and 11x17 posters, in color, each containing all five messages. Each poster contains nice illustrations, which are reproduced on the previous page.

Source: National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation, <http://www.nraef.org/nfsem>.

Key words: food safety, food service, education.



## What's Your Kitchen IQ? EN's Quiz Tests Your Food Safety Savvy

As many as 76 million cases of foodborne illness occur in the US each year. Caused by harmful microorganisms in improperly handled food, symptoms of so-called food poisoning can include mild or high fever, chills, dizziness, headache, vomiting, stomach cramps, and diarrhea. Though often dismissed as "stomach flu," foodborne illnesses can be serious—even fatal—in those who are most susceptible: infants, young children, pregnant women, the elderly and those with weakened immune systems.

While restaurant-based outbreaks make headlines, foodborne illness is far more commonly caused at home. The problem? Surveys show that most people don't always practice what they know—or think they know. See how savvy you are.

- 1. Before refrigerating cooked food, it should be cooled to room temperature.**  
True or False?
- 2. Perishable food should not be left at room temperature for more than:**
  - a) 30 minutes
  - b) 1 hour
  - c) 2 hours
  - d) 3 hours
- 3. Harmful bacteria can grow in:**
  - a) Meat, poultry, and fish
  - b) Dairy
  - c) Cooked grains
  - d) a and b
  - e) a, b, and c
- 4. Partially thawed food can be refrozen.**  
True or False?
- 5. As a general rule of thumb, leftovers should be thrown out after:**
  - a) 2 days
  - b) 4 days
  - c) 1 week
  - d) 10 days
- 6. If a cutting board is used to cut raw meat, poultry or fish, what should you do before chopping another food?**
  - a) Wipe with a damp cloth.
  - b) Rinse under hot, running water.
  - c) Wash with hot, soapy water or use another board.
  - d) Sanitize it.
- 7. Because most marinades are acidic it's okay to marinate meats unrefrigerated for short periods of time.**  
True or False?
- 8. To avoid getting a foodborne illness at work:**
  - a) Refrigerate your bag lunch as soon as you arrive at work.
  - b) Clean out the office refrigerator every week.
  - c) Don't eat perishable foods if left out for more than two hours.
  - d) All of the above.
- 9. Waterless hand sanitizers are good substitute for handwashing.**  
True or False?
- 10. Chicken and turkey breasts are safe to eat when the internal temperature reaches:**
  - a) 145°F
  - b) 160°F
  - c) 170°F
  - d) 180°F
- 11. Frozen meat and poultry can be thawed in the refrigerator, in the microwave, or in a bowl of cold water.**  
True or False?

12. **Which is most effective at curbing food-borne illness?**
- Washing hands often.
  - Keeping raw and ready-to-eat foods separate.
  - Cooking foods to the proper internal temperature.
  - Refrigerating foods promptly.

### Answers

- False**—Food should never be left out at room temperature to cool. Always refrigerate or freeze food promptly; today’s refrigerators and freezers can handle the task without warming up significantly. Be sure to put large portions of food, especially soups, in shallow pans. Otherwise, the interior takes too long to cool, fostering bacterial growth.
- c) 2 hours**—To keep perishables out of the “danger zone,” foods shouldn’t be allowed to sit out for longer than two hours (that includes the time it takes to eat); one hour if the temperature is above 90°.
- e) a, b, and c**—Bacteria thrive on protein and moisture, so meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, and dairy foods are prime targets for harmful microbes. But even cooked grains, fruits, and vegetables can cause illness if mishandled or cross-contaminated on the way to your table.
- True**—As long as the food still contains ice crystals and feels refrigerator-cold to the touch, you can safely refreeze it—even meat—although it may lose some of its texture and flavor. To preserve quality, try cooking first and then refreezing.
- b) 4 days**—Make it a habit to give your refrigerator a “leftover makeover” at least once a week. Expiration dates on packaged foods are not much help. They are intended as a guide for when foods can be kept before they are opened; once opened, all bets are off. For leftovers, the best rule of thumb is to toss them after four days. When in doubt, toss it out. Better yet, get in the habit of dating leftovers.
- c) Wash with hot, soapy water or use another board**—Scrubbing with hot, soapy water will remove harmful bacteria. Sanitizing (use a solution of one teaspoon bleach in one quart of

water) will ensure pathogens are destroyed, but be sure to clean thoroughly before sanitizing. Throw out wooden cutting boards that have cracks too deep to clean thoroughly.

- False**—Meat, poultry, and seafood should be marinated only in the refrigerator. And marinade can safely be used as a sauce only if it is boiled for two minutes to kill any bacteria from the meat.
- d) All of the above**—Make it a habit to refrigerate your lunch as soon as you arrive at work. Take turns cleaning out the office refrigerator on a regular day of the week (try Fridays). And think twice before diving into luncheon leftovers at 4pm unless they were refrigerated. If left out at temperatures between 40° and 140°F, bacteria can double in number every 20 to 30 minutes!
- False**—When it comes to banishing bacteria, nothing matches vigorously rubbing your hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds. (Try singing “Happy Birthday” twice to time yourself.) Hand sanitizers are very good at killing bacteria, but don’t work as well when hands are dirty or greasy. Use them when soap and water are not available.
- b) 160°**—To ensure the destruction of harmful bacteria, chicken and turkey breasts should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160°F. However, for doneness many people prefer poultry breast cooked to 170°F and legs, thighs, wings, and whole birds cooked to 180°F. Other foods like ground beef and pork should be cooked to 160° (a little pink is okay, despite old-fashioned fears of trichinosis) and leftovers to 165°. Use an instant-read thermometer either dial or digital type.
- True**—Meat and poultry can be defrosted safely all three ways. When thawing in the refrigerator (which may take a day or more), place in a large pan or on the lowest shelf to prevent drippings from contaminating other foods. Microwave thawing works well only with small portions; cook immediately afterwards. To safely thaw in cold water, place the frozen food in a leak proof bag and submerge in a bowl of cold water. Change the water every 30 minutes to be sure it stays cold. Most foods

thaw in about two hours. Never thaw on the counter in warm or hot water!

12. **a) Washing hands often**—While all of these practices are vital to avoiding food-related illnesses in the home, it's been estimated that as much as 50 percent of foodborne illness could be avoided by washing hands frequently during food preparation.

*Modified from a quiz prepared by Hillary Wright, MEd, RD*

### Rate Your Food Safety Savvy

Count your correct answers:

**10-12:** Congratulations! You are worthy to do battle against *Campylobacter*, *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, and all their queasy cousins.

**6-9:** You're not so savvy when it comes to food safety; so don't push your luck. Brush up on the questions you got wrong.

**5 or below:** You and your family are at risk of suffering from diarrhea and vomiting—hallmarks of foodborne illness. Better bone up on your food safety fast.

Source: Reprinted with permission from July 2004 *Environmental Nutrition*, 52 Riverside Drive, Suite 15A, New York, NY 10024; [www.environmentalnutrition.com](http://www.environmentalnutrition.com).

Key words: food safety, consumer, education.

## New Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act



The Food Allergen and Consumer Protection Act (FALCPA) (Title II of Senate Bill 741) was signed by President George Bush on August 3, 2004 and will take effect January 1, 2006.

According to the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN), a nonprofit organization whose mission is to increase awareness, to provide education and advocacy and to advance research on behalf of all those affected by food allergies, the new food labeling legislation will provide clear, consistent and reliable ingredient label information. This is an essential first line of defense for the 11 million of Americans who have food allergies according to FAAN. The new labeling bill will ensure that all al-

lergens are disclosed and the ingredient terms are understandable to the average consumer and not just scientists.

"This is an historic piece of legislation for the millions of Americans with food allergies. After 13 years of working collaboratively with the food industry, medical community and members of Congress, we are assured what is on the label is in the package," said FAAN CEO & Founder Anne Muñoz-Furlong. "The legislation takes the guesswork out of all the different scientific references for simple names like milk and egg."

The legislation will require food manufacturers to identify, in plain, common language, the presence of any of the eight major food allergens (milk, egg, peanut, tree nut, fish, shellfish, wheat, soy).

FALCPA also requires food labels to indicate the presence of major food allergens used in spices, flavorings, additives, and colorings, which had previously been exempt from allergen labeling. This closes a loophole that puts people at risk from "hidden" or undeclared ingredients.

FALCPA also calls on the federal government to improve the collection of food allergy data; to convene a panel of experts to review food allergy research efforts; to report to Congress on the number of allergen inspections done of food manufacturing facilities over a two-year period, and the ways in which these facilities can reduce or eliminate cross-contact; to consider revisions of the Food Code to provide allergen-free preparation guidelines for restaurants and food service establishment; and to investigate consumer preference pertaining to advisory food labeling such as precautionary "May Contain" statements.

FALCPA is the result of a many year cooperative effort involving the food industry, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), FAAN, other consumer advocacy groups, concerned families nationwide, and bi-partisan efforts by federal legislators.

Source: "President Bush signs Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act: Historic day for the 11 Millions Americans with food allergies," Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN) press release, Fairfax, Va., August 3, 2004, [http://www.foodallergy.org/press\\_releases/falcpasign.html](http://www.foodallergy.org/press_releases/falcpasign.html).

Key words: allergy, labels.

## Raising Children: What Research Can Tell Today's Parents

The past 4 decades have produced some outstanding developmental psychologists whose careful research can offer considerable guidance on the subject of childrearing. Some major contributions include Diana Baumrind's findings on the links between parenting style and child outcomes, Urie Bronfenbrenner's ideas about the ecological context for development, Eleanor Maccoby's research on socialization, E. Mavis Hetherington's studies of divorce effects on children, and the recent research on brain development from infancy through adolescence.

Research findings such as these have been accumulating over the years, but scholars often fail to take the time to tell parents what they have found about childrearing. Laurence Steinberg closes that gap in his recent book, *The Ten Basic Principles of Good Parenting*, a research-based advice book for parents. Steinberg, a leading scholar of adolescent development, sifts the research of recent decades down to a set of ten core parenting principles. Here's what research would advise today's parents.

**1. What You Do Matters.** This principle may seem obvious, but not to those who would say that children's behavior is genetically determined, or that peers have the more influence over children than parents. Genes certainly influence children's propensities, but parents can guide those inclinations into positive directions. Similarly, peers are an increasing influence as children get older, but most kids spend far more time with their family than with their peers by the time they've grown up. That gives parents a powerful opportunity to influence their children.

And what should you do as a parent to make that time count? First, be a mindful parent—consider what your goals are for your children and how you plan to get there. If one plan of action fails, problem-solve with your spouse and other parents to develop an alternative approach. Persistence pays off in parenting—children learn that you have strong guiding principles when they get a consistent message across time.



*Family Development*  
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When you're trying to get a point across, don't forget that your children are students of your actions. Your behavior is a powerful message to children about your beliefs.

**2. You Can't be Too Loving.** "If parents would worry more about not paying enough attention to their children and less about spoiling them, the world would be a better place," comments Steinberg. Study after study shows that the best-adjusted children report the highest levels of parental love. Children get a strong sense of security from their parents' regular expressions of love. Whether rocking infants or hugging older children and teens, physical contact helps build strong bonds between parents and children. Words of love count as well, including praise for accomplishments, recognition for the things children do well, encouragement for the challenges ahead, and just plain saying "I love you."

A warm affectionate environment at home provides a safe haven in which children will thrive. Children's feelings of safety are enhanced when parents have a positive relationship with each other, when family routines increase predictability for children, and when outside stressors are minimized. Parents should feel free to limit children's extracurricular

and peer activities to make sure there is time for everyone to unwind at home. Family members need to decompress after a day at work or school, and home should be a comfortable place to do it.

**3. Be Involved in Your Child's Life.** Studies show that the strongest predictor of mental health, adjustment and happiness for children is the extent to which their parents are involved in their lives. Involved parents know where their children are at all times, meet the families their children visit, become acquainted with their children's friends, attend school events, know what music their children listen to, and who their heroes are, among other things. Parents who spend significant time with their children are better able to keep up with the changes they're going through.

Plan time together with your children, when you can focus on their thoughts and interests. Try joining them in their interests—play their favorite video game with them, or let the kids choose the music when you're in the car together.

Steinberg's research is especially clear about the importance of involvement in school. Children in junior high and high school were most engaged in their schoolwork if their parents attended school functions, talked to their teachers about their children's progress, and volunteered when the teacher needed help in the classroom or with a field trip. These parents showed through their actions that education was a true family priority. Their familiarity with the school staff also helped ensure that their children got the consideration and attention they needed at school.

Parents face a tough balancing act, since children also need to establish their autonomy as they grow up. Every child needs some areas of privacy—a parent's challenge is to figure out what those areas are. According to Steinberg, "you have to weigh the trade-off between the benefits of intervening to protect or help your child and the costs of denying him opportunities for personal growth that come from independence."

**4. Adapt Your Parenting to Fit Your Child.** Kids go through a lot of changes as they grow up and parents need to be responsive to those changes, altering their parenting style as needed. For exam-

ple, a simple request might be enough to elicit compliance from a 2 year old, but a three year old's growing sense of autonomy may result in more resistance. Minimize resistance by offering choices to your child, as long as all options are acceptable to you. For example, a child who resists getting dressed in the morning may be more cooperative if he or she gets to choose what to wear. Or bedtime may be less of a struggle if children get to choose the book for the bedtime story.

Sometimes the child behavior that frustrates parents the most represents an important phase of development, such as the tantrums of a toddler, or the argumentativeness of a teenager. Learn about children's development through books and parent education classes, so you can anticipate the changes to come, and appreciate what your child may be learning through some of their most challenging behaviors.

Children also come into the world with a temperament, which can require some resourcefulness for parents. Active children may need more monitoring to ensure their safety, while shy children may take more time to warm up to new environments. Take children's temperament into consideration as you plan routines and events. As he or she develops, stretch your child's capabilities gradually with activities just a small step beyond his or her comfort level. Sometimes this means that you'll need to treat siblings in the family differently, each according to their abilities. Children can accept this as they learn that fairness sometimes requires treating each person as an individual.

**5. Establish Rules and Set Limits.** According to Steinberg, "The most important thing that children need from their parents is love, but a close second is structure." Parents develop a sound structure for their children to grow in through rules and limits. Rules may vary from one household to the next, but they all serve the same function—to make children feel secure. Household rules offer a basic structure within which children can experiment and make choices. As children become familiar with a few basic standards of behavior, they tend to internalize them as their own. This process is the beginning of self-control, an attribute that will become more important as children get older and spend less time in the company of their parents.

Of course, children will test whatever rules are set—it's just part of the natural process. A parent's job is to enforce the rules consistently until they become accepted. As children become more mature, parents can alter the ground rules in recognition of their new skills.

As children begin to spend time away from home, parents need to take an active role in monitoring their whereabouts. At any given time a parent should know where their children are, who they're with, and what they're doing. After school hours can be especially challenging to working parents, but younger children should have adult supervision in an after school program or at a neighbor's house. Older children and teenagers may be fine on their own, but parents should make contact by phone when they get home. Parents can plan with their children a set of permissible activities that are safe when they're home alone.

**6. Help Foster Your Child's Independence.** As your children spend more and more time out of your home, they'll need a strong sense of self-direction for the choices they make when they are on their own. Parents can foster that strong inner compass by allowing their children increasing autonomy as they are ready for it. Children need a mixture of freedom and constraints, and it is up to each parent to figure out where to draw the line between the two.

Parents can help their children develop decision-making skills by allowing some self-direction at home. Whenever possible, allow your children to make the choices that concern them. For example, you might allow children to choose what school clothes to buy within certain limits (e.g. price, decorum). With younger children start by selecting several outfits that are acceptable to you, then allow your child to make a choice among them. As your children get older, they'll be making more important choices—e.g. choosing their elective classes in high school, again within certain constraints (e.g. meets college requirements, doesn't conflict with core courses). Help your child think through the consequences of decisions—an important skill for when they are on their own.

Children and adolescents learn a lot from their successes and their mistakes in decision-making. A

parent's role is to constrain choices to alternatives within safe limits, so the mistakes a child makes are not disastrous to self or to others.

**7. Be Consistent.** Parents can take a lot of the strain and confrontation out of parenting by making good behavior a habit for their children. They can do this by being consistent in their expectations and rules for children. Children accept a rule more easily if it is a constant in their life—they may even forget there is a rule and behave accordingly out of habit. According to Steinberg, "It is amazing how rapidly children's misbehavior turns around once their parents make a conscious effort to enforce their rules in a reliable fashion."

Family routines can help children establish positive patterns of behavior. For example, bedtime confrontations can be minimized by establishing a standard bedtime. If bedtime is at 7:30 on a regular basis, children will begin to wind down and get tired at that time. A special bedtime routine may make the bedtime concept more readily accepted. Once a strong pattern has been established, parents can make an occasional exception as needed.

Keep in mind that rules can be changed as children grow and mature. Rule adjustments may also be necessary if parents see that they have misjudged their children's skills—family rules may be asking too much (or too little) of a child.

**8. Avoid Harsh Discipline.** Many parents equate discipline with punishment, but it is only a small part of the process of guiding children. The function of punishment is to stop children from doing something that is forbidden or that may harm them or others. Punishment is most effective when used consistently, whenever the misbehavior occurs, and when it immediately follows the behavior. Punishment works when your child can expect consequences for misbehavior every time.

There is no need for punishment to be harsh to be effective. In fact, parents who rely on harsh punishments such as spankings are often inconsistent in their response to misbehavior, since they dread administering it. Spanking also has the unfortunate side effect of modeling the use of physical force on others; a lesson research shows that children learn all too well. Choosing a mild punishment that is a

consistent consequence is much more effective for changing children's behavior. Possibilities include a brief time-out, or some "think" time alone.

Five elements to punishment can increase its effectiveness:

- Clearly state the behavior that was wrong.
- Identify the impact of the behavior.
- Suggest alternative behavior.
- State what the punishment will be.
- Tell the child that you expect better behavior the next time.

Parents should keep in mind that punishment should be just a small part of their discipline plan. Developing family routines and setting limits will play an important role in positive behavior for children. Be sure to take every opportunity to comment when your children's actions meet (or exceed) your expectations. Children love to hear words of approval from those they love.

**9. Explain Your Rules and Decisions.** Be clear in your rules, so the children know what is expected of them. Talk about your reasoning, so they think of the family rules as a logical system for behavior. Explanations need to be simple for younger children, but can be more elaborate as they get older. Remember that you want the children to adopt the rules as their own, which they're much more likely to do if they understand the reasons behind them.

If your children have an opinion about the rules, listen to their side of the subject. Their view is likely to be different from yours, and may be an important window on their world. They may have a point you have failed to consider, in which case you may want to modify the rules accordingly.

**10. Treat Your Child with Respect.** Parents need to remember that they serve as powerful models to their children through their attitudes and behaviors. Parents who treat family members with respect teach their children how they want to be treated. According to Steinberg, "Treating your child with respect is not only the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do. Your child will be more likely to cooperate with you if he is treated kindly."

Parents develop strong positive relationships with their children by establishing a norm of two-way conversation. When researchers ask children and adolescents what they would like to be different in their family life, one of the most common requests is that their parents would spend more time just talking to them. Most likely the kids are not asking for more lectures from Mom and Dad. Instead they want more truly interactive conversation, in which parents show interest in what they have to say.

Such conversations don't tend to happen at planned family times. Instead, children open up to Mom and Dad when family members are just hanging out together, maybe taking a walk, clearing the table after dinner, or driving in the car. Parents can take advantage of time together by actively soliciting their children's opinion and listening to their response without interrupting.

As a final word of advice Steinberg notes, "Your relationship with your child is the foundation for her relationship with others. If you treat your child with compassion, kindness, and respect, she will grow up to be a concerned, caring, and considerate person. If you are uncaring, aloof, and dismissive, that's how she's likely to turn out when she grows up."

When children grow up and have families of their own, they'll need to know how to nurture their children. The daily events and habits established when they were children will be the strongest blueprint they have for their family life. Parents today can have a positive impact on generations to come through thoughtful parenting practices. Decades of research in child development and family life offers considerable direction to parents as they work through the daily challenges of child rearing.

Source: Written by Harriet Shaklee, based on: *The Ten Basic Principles of Good Parenting* by Laurence Steinberg, NY: Simon and Schuster, 2004.

Key word: parenting.

## Refined Grains Go to the Gut

Researchers at Tufts University have found that people who eat refined grains (e.g. white bread) are more likely to have a larger waist size. For three years, they tracked the eating habits of 459 people whose grain consumption varied. Some ate whole grains while others ate refined grains where the bran and germ had been removed.

They found that calories from refined grains settled at the waist. Each year the belt size of the individuals who ate refined grains expanded about one-half inch. At the end of the three-year study, the refined grains group had three times the whole grain group's gain at the waist.

Why would calories from refined grains go to the waist? The theory is that it is linked to how easy the body can break down carbohydrates in the refined grains into simple sugars. The result is an increase in blood sugar level, which causes insulin levels to increase and help store the sugars in cells as fat.

Source: *Am J Clin Nutr*, 2003; 77(6):1417-25.

Key word: grain.

## Splenda Sugar Blend for Baking

Many people are familiar with Splenda, the brand name of the substitute sweetener sucralose, the non-calorie substitute made from sugar. It is currently contained as an ingredient in approximately 3,500 products worldwide. And now it hopes to find a niche as a baking product that is part sugar part sucralose.

When people have tried to use sugar substitutes in their baked products, the results have not been very satisfactory. According to McNeil, the company that produces sucralose, that is about to change. They claim that their hybrid product called *Splenda Sugar Blend for Baking* will be able to do everything baking sugar does such as browning baked goods. McNeil states that a half-cup of this hybrid sweetener equals a cup of sugar in recipes.

The price of this new product is higher than regular sugar. It is expected to be on store shelves in Au-



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gust in 2-pound bags with a recommended price of \$6.29 to \$6.49, which is approximately three times more expensive than sugar but cheaper than the original Splenda.

Source: <http://www.splenda.com/index.jhtml>.

Key word: sweetener.

## Acids in Drinks Erode Tooth Enamel

The next time you grab a beverage to drink, look at the ingredient list. If the product contains malic, tartaric, citric or phosphoric acid, then it can be corrosive to the tooth's protective enamel coating. In the past it was thought that sugar was the culprit, but according to Dr. von Fraunhofer, a professor of dentistry, "Sugar does cause problems, but it's nowhere near as injurious as the acids." These acids draw calcium out of tooth enamel.

Dr. von Fraunhofer conducted a study on the effects of a variety of popular drinks on exposed dental enamel. He found that some artificially sweetened drinks were more damaging than their sucrose- or fructose-sweetened counterparts and that non-colas were worse than colas. In addition, the sodas and flavored teas were tougher on enamel than plain brewed tea, coffee, and root beer.

The researchers recommend that if you have a soft drink, than it is better to have them with a meal rather than sipping them without food, which prolongs the exposure to acids.

Source: [www.agd.org/library/2003/dec/gd.html](http://www.agd.org/library/2003/dec/gd.html), *General Dentistry*, July/August 2004.

Key word: soda.

## Decaf Coffee Beans Grown Naturally

Many individuals find that decaffeinated coffee doesn't have the same flavor as regular coffee. That is because during the decaffeination process, some of the key flavor compounds are also removed. There may someday be a flavorful decaffeinated coffee available on the market. Brazilian scientists have found a naturally decaffeinated coffee plant called *Coffee Arabica*. It may be awhile before this product is on your shelf because this decaf Arabica plant, which is from Ethiopia, has not been grown commercially and it is unknown as to how productive this plant will be.

Source: *Nature*, [www.nature.com](http://www.nature.com), June 24, 2004.

Key word: caffeine.

## Acrylamide Is Not a Risk

Acrylamides are a family of chemicals that have been found to cause cancer in rats. In the year 2000, Swedish researchers found acrylamide in baked and fried carbohydrate foods.

U.S. and Swedish researchers conducted epidemiological studies to see if people who eat more foods containing acrylamides have higher rates of cancer. In January 2003, their results showed that there was no link between acrylamide consumption and the risk of bladder or kidney cancer. The researchers concluded that people do not consume enough acrylamide to get cancer.

The report was commissioned by the National Toxicology Program (NTP) of the National Institute of Environmental Sciences.

Source: <http://ntp-server.niehs.nih.gov>.

Key word: cancer.

## Liposuction Doesn't Improve Health

It is known that people who have abdominal fat are more likely to develop heart disease or diabetes. But does removing that abdominal fat using liposuction decrease the risk of developing heart disease or diabetes?

A study published in the June 17, 2004 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine* followed obese women who dropped up to 23 pounds of belly fat via liposuction. The women's blood chemistry and blood pressure (which reflect the risk of diabetes and heart disease) were compared before surgery and about three months after. Even though the women were slimmer afterward, their medical profiles were almost identical.

Lead study author Dr. Samuel Klein stated, "It's not how much fat you remove, but how you remove the fat that is really what is more important. We have to go back to the same old traditional recommendation of losing weight and being more physically active."

Source: [www.nejm.org](http://www.nejm.org).

Key word: obesity.

## Iron Deficiency Impairs Women's Mental Function

Feeling a little forgetful? A paper presented at the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) reported that even **moderate** iron deficiency can impair memory, attention, and cognitive ability in women ages 18-35 years old.

The women who scored the best on the mental tests had the best iron status and those with low iron levels improved after receiving iron supplementation. Researchers noted that none of the women with low iron levels were anemic.

Source: Murray-Kolb. Paper at FASEB meeting, New York, 2004.

Key word: minerals.

## Market Your Educational Program With Local Media

The Idaho Statesman, Idaho's daily newspaper with the greatest circulation, and the University of Idaho Extension recently embarked on a new partnership. The newspaper launched a six-month story series examining Idaho's loss of jobs providing good pay with full benefits, and consequences for Idaho residents. Idahoans are increasingly being squeezed by unemployment, lower wages, and uninsured medical bills. The impacts are staggering:

- The average Idaho household has \$10,000 in credit card debt;
- One of every 55 Idaho household filed for bankruptcy last year, the 9<sup>th</sup> highest in the nation; and
- The number of payday loan offices in Idaho increased more than 15 percent last year, charging interest rates that can exceed 600 percent.

The Idaho Statesman asked the UI Extension system to support the project by offering free classes for local residents. Beverly Healy, Ada County Extension educator, and Marilyn Bischoff, Extension Family Economics specialist, provided information to the Business and Features editors for recent news stories. The Extension professors developed classes to target critical financial problems.

The efforts were met with great success. Healy taught a "Gaining Financial Fitness" class on August 10. Because of promotion by the newspaper, 97 people registered for the class. Due to demand and classroom space limitations, an additional class will be offered. Bischoff taught a "Take Control of Debt" class on August 31. This class also generated a huge response and a second session was scheduled to accommodate registrants.

Marsha (Hawkins) Lockard experienced success with a local television station. She provided information on Identity Theft for HomeWise, Extension news articles written and distributed to media in Idaho by CALS Educational Communications department. After reading the HomeWise article, a Twin Falls television station interviewed Marsha for a news feature story. It ran on the 6:00 and 10:00pm news to about 28,000 viewers.



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The media provides invaluable educational marketing assistance, enabling Extension to educate thousands of Idaho residents through print, radio, and television. If you want to learn more about working with media and attracting audiences to your educational programs, attend "Today's Extension Audiences: who are they and what do they need?" on September 22, 10:45-11:45am during the Extension FCS In-Service in Moscow. Credit and Debt education resources will be distributed at the "Credit Cents" presentation on September 23, 8-10am.

Key words: marketing, financial education, debt, identity theft.

## Checklist for Surviving Family Members

### Eight Steps for Handling Financial Issues After Losing a Loved One

No one likes to think about death. In the past two months, my aunt and a friend lost loved ones. Both deaths occurred when the deceased was far from home. During a time of grief and stress, their families had to make numerous decisions. I recently received the following checklist of essential things a family needs to do. I hope you and your clients will find it useful. I'm storing the checklist with my important papers. This checklist will help family members of a deceased person manage during a very vulnerable time.

Here are some of the most important steps to take:

**1. Gather important documents.** You'll probably need the following documents right away. Keep them in a centralized location, because you'll refer to them often.

- Will and any trusts
- Insurance policies
- Death certificate: Get 10 to 25 copies
- Social Security numbers
- Marriage license
- Birth certificates for your children
- Financial statements for IRAs, bank accounts, brokerage accounts, and company-sponsored retirement plans
- Company benefits booklet
- Military discharge papers

**2. Collect life insurance benefits.** Most insurers will cut you a check relatively quickly following the death of a loved one. You will need to call your insurance company and let them know what has happened. Don't feel compelled to invest this money immediately. Most insurance companies will let you keep the proceeds from a life insurance policy in a cash account until you have a plan for investing it.

If you know your loved one had a life insurance policy, but you can't find it, contact the American Council of Life Insurers [www.acli.com](http://www.acli.com), which offers guidance in tracing missing policies.

**3. Contact the deceased's employer.** Many companies make every attempt to help the families of their employees after a death. They may cut you a check right away for wages owed, vacation pay, sick pay, and life insurance benefits. If the death was the result of an accident on company time, there may also be accidental death and dismemberment benefits.

Contact a human resources (HR) representative of the company for help with retirement plans. A surviving spouse will be able to roll over money from the deceased spouse's retirement plan into his or her own IRA. In most cases that will make sense, but if you are considerably younger than your spouse, you may want to keep the assets in your spouse's retirement plan. That may allow you to tap into those assets at a younger age without penalty.

Talk to your HR representative about what happens to your insurance benefits. Most important is health insurance for the family. Company policies differ on what benefits may be available, but most people will be eligible for COBRA coverage—essentially, an extension of the employee's health insurance policy—for 18 months.

Typically, if an employee has vested stock options with a company, there is a window of time in which the family must exercise them. You may want to consult a financial professional to help you think through your alternatives.

**4. Apply for Social Security benefits.** Surviving families with children younger than age 18 may be eligible for benefits. You should contact your local Social Security office to apply. You can also learn more about these benefits at <http://www.ssa.gov> or by calling 800-772-1213. As a widow or widower, you may be eligible for Social Security retirement benefits as early as age 60.

**5. Don't overlook other sources of death benefits.** Credit card holders may be eligible for death benefits and/or accidental death and dismemberment benefits. If you've lost a family member in a plane crash, the airline may pay relief funds.

Military veterans can be buried for free in one of the national cemeteries. The Veterans Administration will provide a flag for the memorial service and a headstone for the grave. You may also be eligible for several hundred dollars to help with burial expenses. For more information go to <http://www.va.gov>.

**6. Start to settle the estate.** Once you've located the will, contact an estate attorney to help you settle the estate. The will and/or trust will indicate the name of the estate's executor. That person will handle the administrative responsibilities of the estate, so you need to contact him or her right away. If your loved one had a safe-deposit box, you should have the executor of the estate go with you to take an inventory of its contents.

You'll also need to file an estate-tax return and a final income-tax return. The estate-tax return must be filed within nine months from the date of death. You can value the assets in the estate as of the

date of death or six months after death (if you haven't disposed of the assets).

**7. Handle other miscellaneous details.** Eventually, you'll need to take care of other issues, such as retitling ownership of the house, car, safe-deposit box, brokerage accounts, credit cards, bank accounts, and other assets. You will need to write a letter to each entity to request a change in ownership, and enclose a death certificate.

If you have children in college, you should contact the school's financial aid department to see if your children are eligible for any additional financial assistance due to a change in circumstances.

**8. Consider creating a lasting memorial.** One of the most healing experiences for survivors is to find a way to honor the people they've lost. Whether it's through a brick paver in a memorial walkway, a scholarship in the name of your loved one at his or her alma mater, or a donation to a favorite charity, creating a tangible remembrance is an important part of paying tribute to those who have blessed our lives.

Before a death occurs, make sure you have sufficient cash reserves on hand. One of the biggest concerns immediately following a death in the family is making sure the survivors have enough cash to meet their current expenses as well as funeral costs. You may want to take part of your life insurance proceeds or other death benefits and increase your cash reserves. Try to have at least six months' worth of living expenses covered in a money market account or another very liquid account. This will help ensure that you are not rushed into making other major financial decisions right away.

Source: Adapted from Stevens, S., Morningstar Inc., September 4, 2003 [www.morningstar.com](http://www.morningstar.com).

Key words: mortality, record keeping, financial security.

## Family Economics Resources

### Help Teens Develop Personal Finance Skills

Teenagers spent an estimated \$175 billion in 2003 according to Teen Research Unlimited, a market-research firm focusing on youth.

While they yield immense spending power, many teenagers lack the financial know-how necessary to manage their money wisely. Teens are in need of reliable and relevant financial information. The National Endowment for Financial Education® (NEFE®) provides teenagers with an online resource for learning basic personal finance concepts, as well as obtaining practical money-management tips on topics such as saving for college, purchasing a car, and filing taxes.

The NEFE Teen Resource Bureau<sup>SM</sup> (NTRB) web site, located at [www.ntrbonline.org](http://www.ntrbonline.org), has been updated recently to include new content regarding money personality. The new material explores how different types of individuals manage their money and helps teens define their own financial traits. New additions include a story about one girl's journey to discover her fiscal personality, a quiz to learn more about one's own money-management style and answers to frequently asked questions regarding approaches to personal financial planning. All content is available in English, Spanish, and text-only versions.

In addition, the site has been updated to include changes in navigation. A site map has been added, as well as a feature that allows users to peruse past content by topic. This feature is located on the "Fast Financial Facts" web page.

This site will be a useful supplement to the NEFE High School Financial Planning Program and the 4-H Financial Champion's project.

Source: NEFE Press Release, National Endowment for Financial Education, Englewood, CO, July 2004.

Key words: technology, teens and money, financial literacy.

## Top 10 Web Sites for Seniors

Older people get overwhelmed surfing the Internet for good reason—one that has nothing to do with age. Consider this: There are more than 6 million web sites that mention the words "Social Security," another 6 million-plus containing the word "Medicare," and more than 35 million with the word "sen-

ior." So what sites might seniors add to their information staples list?

**AARP** [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org). AARP offers the grandest of all web sites for people over 50. You'll find tips on developing a financial plan, driving safely, being a grandparent, and choosing housing options. Plus, you can chat with other seniors in its online community. The site also has a bevy of free newsletters, including those that address health and wellness, computers and technology, financial planning and travel, for which you can sign up.

**Social Security Online** <http://www.ssa.gov>. Whether you need to know the age at which you can receive full retirement benefits, the most popular baby names in 2003 or how safe is Social Security, the Social Security Administration's site has it all. Among the highlights: You can calculate your benefits and apply for them as well. What's more, you can sign up for a free electronic newsletter that keeps you abreast of all things Social Security.

**Medicare** <http://www.medicare.gov>. Among other things, the official U.S. government site for Medicare recipients includes the names of drug-discount card providers and a calculator to compare prescription drug prices and savings. You can also search for Medicare- and Medicaid-approved nursing homes, home-health agencies, and physicians. Plus, you can compare and contrast various Medigap and Medicare + Choice health insurance plans.

**BenefitsCheckUp** <http://www.benefitscheckup.org>. This service of the National Council on Aging helps people age 55 and over find programs that pay for some prescription-drug, health-care and utilities costs, as well as other essential items or services. To benefit fully, you'll have to fill out one or two online questionnaires, one of which takes about 15 minutes to complete, the other, seven minutes. Doing so could well be worth the effort. There are, says the site, millions of Americans eligible for benefits who are not receiving them.

**Department of Veteran Affairs** <http://www.va.gov>. This site features online access to the VA's most requested forms, including the application for health benefits and the request for military records. It also has online search tool for VA facilities, a health-education library and information about life insur-

ance, cemeteries, vocational rehabilitation, pension benefits, education benefits, home loans and health benefits.

**Alzheimer's Association** [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org). This site helps visitors better understand the disease that currently affects 4.5 million Americans. It describes risk factors, warning signs, diagnosis, treatments, and stages. The site also addresses the myths commonly associated with Alzheimer's, including the suggestions that memory loss is a natural part of aging, that Alzheimer's is not fatal, and that there are therapies available to stop the progression of the disease.

**EyeCareAmerica** <http://www.eyecareamerica.org>. This site sponsored by the American Academy of Ophthalmology provides free educational materials about eye disease and care and offers eye-care programs to seniors who qualify. For instance, seniors who've not seen an ophthalmologist in three or more years may be able to receive a referral for eye care at no out-of-pocket cost for up to one year. And those who've not had an eye exam in the past 12 months and are at increased risk for glaucoma may be eligible to receive a referral for a glaucoma screening.

**VolunteerMatch** <http://www.volunteermatch.org>. This site helps seniors find places to volunteer. They simply enter their ZIP code and up pops all the local volunteer opportunities posted by nonprofit groups throughout the U.S. I found 82 listings for the Boise area! VolunteerMatch says it has helped thousands of nonprofits attract nearly 1.5 million volunteer referrals since 1998.

**SeniorDiscounts** <http://www.seniordiscounts.com>. This site boasts that it helps seniors find gold in their golden years. It offers more than 125,000 discounts for people over 50 who simply enter their zip code for breaks on airline tickets, hotels, restaurants, movie theaters and golf, to name just a few. Seniors and others can sign up for a free weekly newsletter that features hundreds of dollars worth of discounts and a chance to win a vacation.

Source: Powell, R., CBS MarketWatch.com, Boston, MA, August 17, 2004.

Key words: technology, seniors.