



Extension Caregiving

<http://aging.tamu.edu>

Helping Texans
Better Their Lives

Relevance

- More than 10% of the population in Texas is older than 65. Between 2000 and 2010, the 65 and older population grew faster than the total population, and the 85 and older population increased.
- Falling continues to be one of the leading causes of accidental death in the U.S. among older adults.
- Families provide an estimated 80% of care to older adults, with the remaining 20% provided by formal community agencies and institutional facilities.
- Estimates show that Texas has approximately 2.1 million caregivers, who provide more than 2.2 billion hours of care valued at over \$22 billion.

Response

Eldercare Conferences. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (AgriLife Extension) continues to sponsor and/or actively participate in eldercare conferences throughout the state. Conferences exist on a county or multi-county basis, often offering continuing education units to attendees. Participants in these conferences report learning new information and skills related to eldercare as a result of attending.



Improving Health Literacy. *Healthy People 2020* defines “health literacy” as the ability to “obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.” Individuals confront decisions about their health and well-being daily and in all situations and settings: retail stores, workplaces, health providers’ offices, hospitals, and in their own living rooms. *The ABCDs of Medicare, Talking with Your Doctor, Medication Management – The Prescription for a Healthier You!*, and *Lifestyle Choices and Your Health* are programs that help older adults and their caregivers understand the importance of taking an active role in their own health. Training for this program and all materials associated with it are available by emailing Andy Crocker at: ABCrocker@ag.tamu.edu.

Grandparents Raising Grandkids. AgriLife Extension, in partnership with multiple agencies throughout Texas, provides education and support to grandparents rearing their grandchildren. In counties across the state, AgriLife Extension sponsors or helps to coordinate conferences and workshops on a variety of topics, including parenting skills, legal issues, social support, and support groups (<http://fcs.tamu.edu/families/aging/grg/>).

Fall Prevention in the Home. The *Fall Prevention in the Home* program includes an AgriLife Extension-produced video in English and Spanish. Scenes in the video feature elders in their homes in six high-risk situations, as well as effective ways to make slight modifications to the home environment to reduce the risk of falling. (Fall Prevention in the Home: Changes for Healthy Living [DVD in English or Spanish]: <http://fcs.tamu.edu/families/aging/fall-prevention/>.)

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eXtension – a National Initiative. AgriLife Extension is a partner with the other land-grant colleges and universities and their Extension agencies supporting the national eXtension initiative. Specifically, through partnership with the Military Families Learning Network, AgriLife Extension is supporting helping professionals who work with returning service members, their caregivers, and veterans through the Military Caregiving Concentration Area. More information regarding this effort can be found at: <https://militaryfamilies.extension.org>.



Results

In 2016, AgriLife Extension caregiving programs reached more than 1,550 educational contacts, providing more than 3,500 contact hours. Specifically, AgriLife Extension provided primary leadership and/or speaker support for caregiving conferences that targeted professionals. AgriLife Extension also conducted a “Virtual Learning Event” to provide a conference experience without the need for travel: 10% of the total contacts and 13% of the total hours were online only. In a random sampling of 147 Virtual Learning Event attendees, 98% indicated that they intended to provide the information they learned to their work.

In 2013, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service began offering *A Matter of Balance*, an evidence-based fall risk-reduction program, in partnership with several Area Agencies on Aging. *A Matter of Balance* acknowledges the risk of falling, but emphasizes practical coping strategies to reduce this fear. Findings of the participant outcome evaluation indicate that there were significant improvements for participants regarding their level of falls management, falls control, level of exercise, and social limitations with regard to concern about falling.

Selected Data from 2016 <i>A Matter of Balance</i> Evaluations			
Statement	Response (N = 64)		Percent Change
	Pre-Series	Post-Series	
	Scale: Very Sure (4), Sure (3), Somewhat Sure (2), Not at All Sure (1)		
I can find a way to get up if I fall.	2.83	3.27	16%
I can find a way to reduce falls.	2.65	3.63	37%
I can protect myself if I fall.	2.29	2.95	29%
I can increase my physical strength.	3.14	3.44	10%
I can become more steady on my feet.	3.00	3.36	12%
	Scale: Extremely (5), Quite a Bit (4), Moderately (3), Slightly (2), Not at All (1)		
During the last four weeks, to what extent has your concern about falling interfered with your normal social activities?	2.37	2.26	(5%)

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.