

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

University Extension

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Extension Family Insights Jan. - Feb. 2010

Bits & Pieces



One of the most popular New Year Resolutions is to lose weight or develop a healthier lifestyle. You, your family, friends and co-workers can do this by participating in Live Healthy Iowa.

The Live Healthy Iowa 100 Day Wellness Challenge is a fun, easy and affordable way to engage Iowans in healthy behaviors. This team-based physical activity, nutrition and weight loss program is designed to promote positive changes leading to a healthier lifestyle.

The program runs from January 14 – April 23. Live Healthy Iowa encourages you to set realistic goals and make informed decisions about your health. No matter where you are on your journey, the Live Healthy Iowa program can be your place for information and motivation for 100 days of wellness.

Change Your Choices. Change Your Life. For more information on how you can participate contact Washington County Extension at (319)653-4811 or go to the website at www.livehealthyiowa.org

Winter Gardening Fair



Join other garden enthusiasts at Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids on Saturday, February 13, for the Winter Gardening Fair. This event is presented by ISU Extension Linn County Master Gardeners and offers a wide variety of classes and workshops. Topics range from lawn maintenance, tree care, beekeeping and organic vegetable gardening to plant propagation, using herbs, rain barrels, ponds and dealing with pests. Classes are filling fast, register today by calling 800-332-8833.

Tuition is \$49 for all day and includes a boxed lunch. Some classes have additional charges for materials and will be collected in class. If you have questions you may call the Linn County Master Gardeners at (319)447-0647 or Linn County Extension at (319)377-9839. Go to this link for registration form and a complete list of workshops <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/linn/news/Winter+Gardening+Fair+2010.htm>

****NOTICE:** If you would like to be taken off the Extension Family Insights newsletter mailing list or would like to receive the newsletter electronically, please contact us at 319/653-4811 or e-mail Nancy Adrian at nadrian@iastate.edu. This newsletter was prepared by Nancy Adrian, Washington County Extension Administrative Assistant

Gene Mohling, Regional Extension Education Director

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Family Matters

January-February 2010

A new year is always about beginnings and endings and this year is no exception.

For me, there's a big ending. I will be retiring at the end of January after more than 32 years of ISU Extension employment. I join many other co-workers who accepted the retirement incentive option offered by the university.

I began my work for Extension in 1977 as a two-county extension home economist, serving Muscatine and Louisa Counties. I became a Family Life field specialist in 1992 during a major reorganization.

I am so grateful for the many opportunities to learn grow and serve the people of southeast Iowa. I look forward to new experiences and am sure I will use the skills I have gained in my Extension work.

I plan to spend more time gardening and volunteering for organizations that are promoting local food and sustainability. I hope to also find some parttime work but look forward to being closer to home with less driving.

Many thanks to everyone for their support of my family life programming over the years. With the state budget cuts, there is uncertainty about filling vacant positions but my co-workers will do their best to meet the needs of our local families and groups.

May 2010 be a year full of blessings for each of you!



Mary Crooks
Field Specialist/Family Life

Attitude is key to enjoying life

Times are tough for many Iowa families, yet other families are doing OK. Could this just be one of those mysteries of life?

No one knows the reason that some families struggle while others seem to thrive. However, attitude seems to play a role in whether someone enjoys life."

Here are some questions to identify your own general attitude toward life:

- Are you basically happy and content with who you are?
- Are you happy with your work, your home and your relationships?
- Do you believe you have control over many things in your life?
- Do you believe you can change some things to make life better?
- Do you have hope for the future?

According to Kathy Bosch, an extension family life specialist with the University of Nebraska Panhandle Research and Extension Center, a person's attitude is a critical factor in determining how he or she perceives things that happen during the day, the week and ultimately throughout life.

It isn't that we must be happy-go-lucky all the time, nor live as though we have no cares, because that simply isn't practical. With economic hardships, drought conditions and war in the Middle East, families are experiencing difficult times. These difficult times are not to be ignored because they are a reality. But it is how we deal with our reality that will make a difference to how we handle life.

Take a few moments to do a personal attitude check.

- Are you taking care of yourself?
- Are you nurturing relationships with your partner, family and friends you love?
- Are you around other people who are a positive influence on you?

Perhaps it's time to make some changes to take care of yourself and your attitude. Remember, your attitude can make the difference in how you see the world and how the world sees you. You are your own best asset.

Food for Thought

2010 – seems a short time ago the calendar turned over to 2000! With the beginning of a new decade and year, it's a good time to assess the past year and consider what changes we want to make in our health and wellness. Be grateful for what you have (and have not) received!

Patty Steiner

Jan-Feb 2010

What's on the menu in 2010?

Your favorite restaurant may include more locally grown produce and meats, more nutritious kids' meals, and more half-portions in 2010. These are among the hottest trends according to the annual National Restaurant Association survey of 1800 professional chefs.

Other trends: farm-branded ingredients, food-allergy conscious meals, regional ethnic cuisine. Check out the full listing at: www.restaurant.org/

Eat smart and move more

Eating smart and moving more is the cornerstone of a healthy lifestyle and a solid foundation for children and youth to succeed in school and in life.

Good nutrition and physical activity nourish the brain and body, resulting in students who are present, on-time, attentive in class, on-task and likely to earn better grades.

Research also points to key behaviors that can help children and adults live healthier:

1. Prepare and eat more meals at home
2. Choose to move more every day
3. Right-size your portions
4. Re-think your drink
5. Enjoy more fruits and veggies

Save the date! ...and attend the Healthy Lifestyles Conference April 21, 2010 at the Comfort Suites in Burlington. A day of motivational speakers promoting a healthier way of life. Request a flyer.

Eat your colors!

Eat plenty of brightly colored fruits and vegetables for beneficial phytochemicals that may protect against common health problems such as heart disease and diabetes.

Rather than tracking every food and nutrient you eat, just eat the brightest, most varied fruits and vegetables in all forms as often as you can. Toss chopped green pepper and tomatoes on the pizza. Keep ready-to-eat baby carrots on hand. Add broccoli to spaghetti sauce. Make it easy to grab healthy snack as you head out the door.

When the power goes out

- ❖ Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
- ❖ Do not put food out on the snow – the sun may cause warming.

Once power is restored

- ❖ Check temperatures in freezer and refrigerator and determine how long foods were at that temperature.
- ❖ For frozen foods, look for ice crystals and temperature.

Do not refreeze

- ❖ Food that has thawed completely -- especially meat, poultry and seafood
- ❖ Prepared, cooked foods such as pizza or stew
- ❖ Thawed vegetables
- ❖ Melted ice cream



Safe to refreeze

- ❖ Foods that still contain ice crystals
- ❖ Bread, cake, cookies, plain doughnuts
- ❖ Nuts, flour, cereal

For more information

- ❖ ["When the Home Freezer Stops"](#) - PM 1367
- ❖ Food Safety Website/emergency preparedness: www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsafety/consumers/

Consumer Choice

January/ February 2010

Dear Readers,

On November 6th a new law went into effect that extends the first-time homebuyer credit five months and expands the eligibility requirements for purchasers. First-Time Homebuyer credit is now extended to April 30, 2010; some current homeowners now also qualify.



Mary M. Weinand

Family Resource Management Specialist

The Worker, Homeownership, and Business Assistance Act of 2009

...extends the deadline for qualifying home purchases from Nov. 30, 2009, to April 30, 2010. Additionally, if a buyer enters into a binding contract by April 30, 2010, the buyer has until June 30, 2010, to settle on the purchase.

The maximum credit amount remains at \$8,000 for a first-time homebuyer — that is, a buyer who has not owned a primary residence during the three years up to the date of purchase.

But the new law also provides a “long-time resident” credit of up to \$6,500 to others who do not qualify as “first-time homebuyers.” To qualify this way, a buyer must have owned and used the same home as a principal or primary residence for at least five consecutive years of the eight-year period ending on the date of purchase of a new home as a primary residence.

For all qualifying purchases in 2010, taxpayers have the option of claiming the credit on either their 2009 or 2010 tax returns.

A new version of Form 5405, First-Time Homebuyer Credit, will be available in the next

few weeks. A taxpayer who purchases a home after Nov. 6 must use this new version of the form to claim the credit. Likewise, taxpayers claiming the credit on their 2009 returns, no matter when the house was purchased, must also use the new version of Form 5405. Taxpayers who claim the credit on their 2009 tax return will not be able to file electronically but instead will need to file a paper return. A taxpayer who purchased a home on or before Nov. 6 and chooses to claim the credit on an original or amended 2008 return may continue to use the current version of Form 5405.

Income Limits Rise

The new law raises the income limits for people who purchase homes after Nov. 6. The full credit will be available to taxpayers with modified adjusted gross incomes (MAGI) up to \$125,000, or \$225,000 for joint filers. Those with MAGI between \$125,000 and \$145,000, or \$225,000 and \$245,000 for joint filers, are eligible for a reduced credit. Those with higher incomes do not qualify.

For homes purchased prior to Nov. 7, 2009, existing MAGI limits remain in place. The full credit is available to taxpayers with MAGI up to \$75,000, or \$150,000 for joint filers. Those with MAGI between \$75,000 and \$95,000, or \$150,000 and \$170,000 for joint filers, are eligible for a reduced credit. Those with higher incomes do not qualify.

New Requirements

Several new restrictions on purchases that occur after Nov. 6 go into effect with the new law:

- Dependents are not eligible to claim the credit.
- No credit is available if the purchase price of a home is more than \$800,000.
- A purchaser must be at least 18 years of age on the date of purchase.

For more details on the credit, visit the [First-Time Homebuyer Credit page](#) on IRS.gov.

For more information about this newsletter or to schedule financial presentations, contact Mary Weinand, FRM Specialist, ISU Extension, 319/ 931-5087 mweinand@iastate.edu

Online Training Opportunities for Family Professionals

- 1) **ONLINE Partnering with Parents (PWP) Training** (11 interactive modules focused on designing, delivering and evaluating parenting education)

This program is designed for professionals who work with parents. By participating in this program you can increase your knowledge and sharpen your skills in facilitating parenting education and gain new ideas and resources to use with parents you work with. Partnering with Parents consists of a series of 11 interactive training modules based on principles of family centered practices and parenting education theory and research. In addition to professional development, each module contains activities and other resources you can download and use in your work with parents. The National Extension Parent Education Model (NEPEM) and the National Extension Parenting Educators' Framework (NEPEF) are incorporated in this training. A Parenting Education Certificate of Completion is available from ISU Extension. Explore Partnering with Parents [evaluation findings](#).

For more information go to this website www.extension.iastate.edu/pwp

Dates: **Jan 19 -June 18, 2010**

Register at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/pwp/registration.html>

- 2) **ONLINE Family Development Certification Training (FDCT)** (8 interactive modules focused on helping families achieve self-sufficiency)

This training is offered by the Family Training and Development Project, [Iowa State University Extension to Families](#). This comprehensive training and development program uses an empowerment approach to provide front-line workers with basic skills and competencies to help families identify and reach their goals.

For more information go to

http://www.extension.iastate.edu/homefamily/relationships/family_development.htm

Dates: **Feb 8- May 28, 2010**

Register at <http://www.ucs.iastate.edu/mnet/fdct/home.html>

Individuals can earn a Family Development Certificate, Parenting Education Certificate of Completion, Social Worker Hours, Iowa teacher renewal credits, ISU CEUs, and undergraduate or graduate credit.

Visit the URLs above for more information, or contact Kimberly Greder kgreder@iastate.edu