

FSHS Update

Excerpt Highlights:

...something can be true but not real.

...signs should raise concern about nation's young people.

...is that magical thing going to happen?

...they construct their identities and relationships....

...an opportunity to explore...for current and future needs....

Articles:

- Parent and Child 1
- Positive Youth Development 2
- Financial Best Practices ... 4
- Connections 5
- SageAdvice 6

This newsletter is for KSRE agents and is not intended for general distribution.

Parent and Child

Truth Be Told

One of the most frequent concerns parents have is "My child lied to me. How should I react?" Lying, being deliberately untruthful to mislead another, diminishes trust, a critical element in relationships. Lying demonstrates a failure of integrity that is a part of character. But is lying the same thing across all ages?

What seems like a "lie" may actually reveal a hidden truth. Something can be true but not real. A three-year-old who calls her parents into her room during the middle of the night crying about monsters under her bed is describing what *feels true* to her. She is not deliberately attempting to deceive her parents. She is frightened about something in her life and needs to express it in a way that makes sense to her.

Her parents can try to impress on her that no monsters are really under her bed or in

the closet. But this appeal to a child's cognitive reasoning is going to take a back seat to a child's emotional truth. During the preschool years what the child *feels* is true is more powerful than rational thought. Understanding the truth in what the child says is the starting point for helping them manage their feelings.

What seems like a lie might be children's desperate attempt at wishful thinking. The emotions of the moment may urge young children to protect themselves.

A four-year-old takes a scoop of birthday cake icing and leaves chocolate smeared on his face. His father arrives, sees the cake, and with sharp eyes and harsh tone demands, "Did YOU take that icing!" The four year old responds, "No, Daddy." Another child's preschool

teacher tells parents that their son bit a classmate. When they get in the car, the father demands, "Did you bite Chloe this morning?" The child shakes his head no.

Part of the problem here is how emotions can shape both young children's memory and perception. Not wanting or wanting to do something strong enough can make it seem to young children that they did or did not do something.

So how do we react?

Do not entrap children. If you see chocolate on his face, you know he's been in the icing. Talk to the child about what he or she did. Deal directly with what you know. Don't ask a question when you already know the answer.

Ask yourself what the child's statement tells you about what the child is thinking and feeling. What is the hidden truth behind children's words



*"We can reason
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that will help you better understand them?

We can reason with older children about the consequences of deliberately misleading us. Being flexible in some of our rules depends on trust. For

example, the child who claims that he rode his bike directly home from school when he did not may face the consequences of his deception by losing the use of the bike for a period of time. We can also express

our sadness and disappointment in how being untruthful hurts our relationship.

-Charles A. Smith, Ph.D.
<http://www.k-state.edu/wwparent>

Positive Youth Development Generation Recession - Are Youth Impacted?

It's not surprising that foreclosures, job loss and economic struggle have negative impacts on family health and well-being. A recent study by the National Council of La Raza and the Center for Community Capital at the University of North Carolina (2010) revealed that when families experience foreclosure parents report that their children have more academic and behavior problems in school, more conflicts at home and withdraw more from family and friends.

Recently, mass media has used the term "Recession Generation" to describe America's young people. For 2.5 million young people the recession has meant chronic unemployment, loss of part-time, summer jobs and training programs, dwindling opportunities

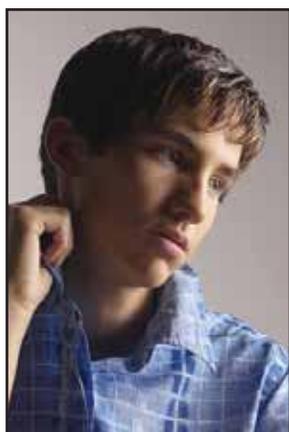
for apprenticeships or to attend colleges and universities. Young people who are growing up in the recession are also likely to experience shattered beliefs and strained civic connections. A National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) report by Giuliano and Spilimebergo (2009) revealed that individuals who experience large scale economic shifts between the ages of 18-25 are less likely to trust government institutions. Though the authors determined that young people impacted by "macroeconomic shocks" may have decreased confidence in government at all levels, those shocks did not effect an individual's trust in others.

Additionally, the Forum for Youth Investment, through their national Ready by 21 initiative,

contends that only 4 in 10 young people are prepared to enter college, work and community life by the age of 21. Specifically, 43% are doing well in productivity, health or connectedness with the remaining 57% doing poorly in school, work, health, relationships and community engagement (Gambone, M.A., Klem, A.M, & Connell, J. P. 2002).

These signs should raise concern about the status of our nation's young people. But how are Kansas youth doing?

The results of the 2009 Kansas Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) will be reported out this April and those results will reveal the social, physical and mental health of Kansas high school students. Unfortunately, the Kansas YRBS survey



doesn't let us know how young people who have dropped out, who are home-schooled or who are in middle school

“Young people who are growing up in the recession are also likely to experience shattered beliefs”

are doing. Listed below are sources of useful information about Kansas youth. Instead of simply labeling young people as the “Recession Generation” this information gives a clearer understanding of the impact that the recession, job loss, and family struggle may have on the 604,313 people living in Kansas who are between the ages of 10 and 24.

[Check out these Kansas information sources:](#)

Kansas School Dropout (Graduation Rate): www.edweek.org/apps/maps/

Kansas School Dropout Reports (KSDE): www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=1870

Kansas School Reports (KSDE): <http://online.ksde.org/rcard/>

Robert Wood Johnson County Health Rankings (2010): www.countyhealthrankings.org

YRBS for Kansas High Schools (KSDE and KDHE) 2007: www.kshealthykids.org/

Youth Tobacco Survey (KDHE): www.kdheks.gov/tobacco/tobacco_facts.html

Kansas Kids Count (state and county data sheets via Kansas Action for Children): www.kac.org/kac.aspx?pgID=886

Kansas Afterschool data (National Afterschool Alliance): www.afterschoolalliance.org/policyStateFacts.cfm?state_abbr=KS

Connect Kansas (access Communities That Care local data): www.connectks.org/beta2/

Kansas Health Institute: Kansas County Health Rankings 2009: www.khi.org

Interactive comparison maps: <http://atlas.khi.org/carto.php?>

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Gambone, M. A., Klem, A. M., & Connell, J. P. (2002). *Finding out what matters for youth: Testing key links in a community action framework for youth development*. Philadelphia, PA: Youth Development Strategies, Inc. and the Institute for Research and Reform in Education.

Giuliano, P., & Spilimebergo, A., (2009). *Growing up in a Recession: Beliefs and the Macroeconomy*. National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER): Working Paper No. 15321.

Foreclosures Shown to Erode Stability of Latino Children and Families (2010). National Council of La Raza: www.nclr.org/content/news/detail/61727/

More Than a Third of Homeowners in Foreclosure Suffer from Major Depression, Penn Study Shows (2009). Univ. of Pennsylvania School of Medicine: www.uphs.upenn.edu/news/news_releases/2009/08/foreclosure-health-risks/

-Elaine Johannes, Ph.D.
<http://www.youthboost.org>



“... young people impacted did not effect an individual's trust in others.”

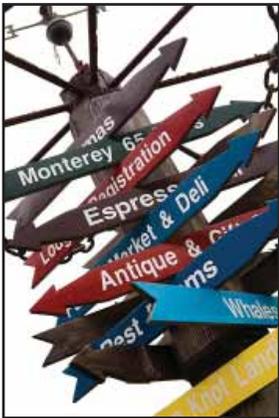


Financial Best Practices for a Secure Financial Future

Are You Financially Secure?



“Choices ... are bound by our financial means.”



Experiencing financial security isn't really about the amount of money we have. It's about having enough money to buy the things we need when we need to buy them. Financial security is achieved by creating income and spending within the limits of that income. It is achieved by managing our money so we have enough to meet our basic financial needs as they arise today and tomorrow.

How much money do we need to be financially secure? We need enough to keep a roof over our head; buy food; provide heat, water, and electricity; buy clothes; provide transportation; meet our health care needs; pursue our hobbies, and share with others. Choices for providing these life necessities are bound by our financial means. We need a sufficient reserve to cover emergencies, seasonal expenses, and provide for future goals such as retirement.

To achieve financial security, we need to take the action to make it happen. We need to earn enough money to buy the things we need;

and we need to be clear about what it is we really need.

Are we buying to meet a real need? Or are we buying to satisfy an impulse that we really haven't thought through and considered how it will impact our financial bottom line?

We need to balance our spending so that it is within the limits of the income we create. We need to pay the taxes on the income we earn. We need to take care of ourselves financially without excessive spending or excessive stock piling.

These actions seem so simple but they can be difficult for us to do. What seems so simple when we say it in words isn't always what we do when we stop to take a look at what we really do with our money. We know we need to earn income to cover the expenses we create, but some of us find ourselves underemployed or have trouble getting to work or just saying "NO" to ourselves and/or others.

We know we need to spend within the limits

of our income, but we see that great price on that large screen television so we buy it using a credit card. We don't have the extra income today to pay for it. We don't have an extra job to help make more income to pay for it when the credit card payment is due. So if we don't have the money to pay for it today, why do we put it on the credit card? If we don't have the money today, we won't have the money tomorrow unless something magical happens. In reality, is that magical thing going to happen?

For some of us, the annual tax refund is the magical thing. But if we rely on the refund to pay for the previous year's debt, it can't help us with this year's wants and goals.

A first step in achieving financial security is recognizing that whatever financial state we are in today is a result of actions we have taken. If we don't like where we are, then we can stop and take a look at what we are doing. How much do we have coming in? How much do we have going out?

How much do we owe? If we don't take a look, we can't answer these questions.

If we have excessive debt, what different actions can we take so that we can increase income and put the brakes on spending? To turn things around, we have to have the desire to change.

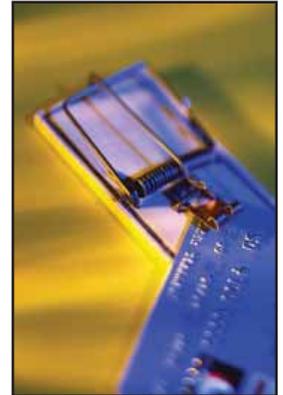
Until we have the desire to change and choose to change, nothing changes. Choosing to change can start with one simple step. Don't spend money that exceeds the limits of your income. Don't spend money for things you or others don't really need. Making more than we spend,

spending less than we make, and saving the balance is how we progress toward financial security.

-Esther Maddux, Ph.D.,
CFP®, AAPS, KCGC

<http://www.ipfp.k-state.edu/research/extension-publications.php>

<http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/financialmanagement>



Connections

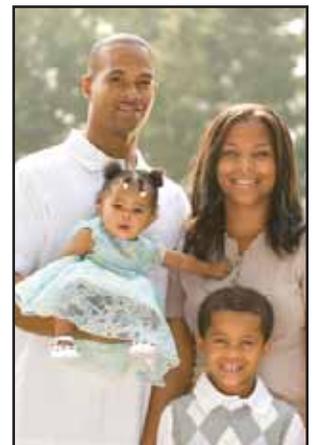
What Has Been Learned about Stepfamilies in the Past Few Years?

Stepparents have a ready-made family from the very beginning and do not have the same parenting path like parents in a first time married family. Children most likely are sharing two households or the biological parent is totally absent in their lives. Couples in stepfamily living situations are likely to encounter surprises that they did not anticipate for maintaining their relationship with each other, but two well-known researchers, Lawrence Ganong and Marilyn Coleman from the University of Missouri, have been pioneers in helping us understand stepfamily dynamics, development, and interventions for successful stepfamily living. Here is a sample

of what they have learned over the years from stepfamily scholarship:

1. In remarriages, women seek more power and control than they had in their first marriages. Consequently, remarried couples are somewhat more egalitarian in their decision-making processes than first married couples are.
2. The nature and quality of the stepparent-stepchild relationship are contingent on several factors (such as) how much the stepparent invests in the relationship... the stepchild's willingness to have a good relationship with the stepparent...the nonresidential and residential parents' relationships with the child... and time (as step relationships change over time).
3. Stepchildren generally are at greater risk for problems than are children living with both of their parents, but most stepchildren do well in school and do not have emotional, social, or behavioral problems.
4. Parents love their children more than other people do; children love their parents more

"... the special relationship between parents and children is at the heart of understanding stepfamily relationships"





“Norms are being established for stepfamilies - norms that are not merely watered down versions of nuclear family norms.”

than they love other adults.... The special relationship between parents and children is at the heart of understanding stepfamily relationships.

5. Stepfamilies function successfully in several different ways.
6. Stepfamilies define themselves – they construct their identities and relationships.
7. Norms are being established for stepfamilies...norms that are not merely watered down versions of nuclear family norms.
8. Western societies still stigmatize stepfamilies.

9. Stepfamilies are more complex than we knew.
10. Researchers have broadened their approaches (Ganong & Coleman, 2004, pp. 227-232).

These findings will be reflected in our Extension program, *Stepping Stones for Stepfamilies*, as it is revised in the upcoming year. Extension agents are invited to share the tools and resources that would be most helpful in community programming as the scholarly information is updated. The original program was based on a series of self-study booklets with a FCE lesson, video, and other resources for group

presentations. That was several years ago... what do you need now? Please forward your responses to Charlotte Shoup Olsen, 785-532-5773, or colsen@ksu.edu. Thanks much.

Reference:
Ganong, L. H., & Coleman, M. (2004). *Stepfamily relationships: Development, dynamics, and interventions*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.

-Charlotte Shoup Olsen, Ph.D., CFLE
<http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/families>

SageAdvice

May is Older Americans Month Age Strong! Live Long!



Did you know that in 1963, a particular month was set aside as a time to honor the accomplishments of older adults? Much has changed since then, including the use of the term “older adult” instead of “senior citizen.” Past themes also demonstrate differences in how aging is viewed. *Plan on Living*

the Rest of Your Life and Community Action Begins with You: Help Older Americans Help Themselves were selected in 1986 and 1992 as declarations representative of the aging community (Administration on Aging, 2010). Today, Older Americans Month provides individuals and organizations an

opportunity to recognize the contributions of older adults in their communities. This year’s theme, *Age Strong! Live Long!* “...recognizes the diversity and vitality of today’s older Americans who span three generations” (Administration on Aging, 2010).

The continued celebration of Older Americans Month since 1963 gains further meaning in light of the aging of American society: the populations of the United States and the state of Kansas are growing older.

In 1900, life expectancy at birth in America was 47.3 years; in 2005, that increased to 77.8 (National Center for Health Statistics, 2007).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2004), currently about 12.4% of Americans are age 65 or older. By 2030, nearly 23 percent of the total American population will be 45-64 years of age, and one of every five Americans will be 65 years of age or older (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). These percentages are reflected in the predictions for the state of Kansas: approximately 23 percent will fall within the ages of 45-64, and 20.2 percent will be age 65 or older in 2030 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005).

This aging of the American and Kansan populations provides an opportunity to explore, design, and prepare for current and future needs of older, fellow Americans

and Kansans. Older Americans Month may be one way to begin this conversation in your local communities.

If you would like to celebrate Older Americans Month in your county, you can find promotional items and ideas at the Administration on Aging's web site at: http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Press_Room/Observances/oam/oam.aspx. One excellent way to get started is to contact your local Area Agency on Aging. You can find yours here: <http://www.agingkansas.org/aaa/findbycounty.htm>.

Remember too, that you can show your support for older Americans and Kansans by making an individual promise to yourself to *Age Strong! Live Long!* in 2010.

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-Debra Sellers, Ph.D.
<http://www.aging.ksu.edu>

<http://www.TBoptions.ksu.edu>



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