

Empower Individuals and Families to Adapt to Changes Associated With the Aging Process: *Adult Development and Aging Program Focus Team Impacts*

The Situation

The United States is growing older. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2004), currently about 12.4% of Americans are age 65 or older, and by 2030, one of every five Americans will be 65+. Currently, 13% of Kansans are age 65+, and that number is expected to increase to 20.2% in 2030.

The aging of the population will have significant consequences with all aspects of society impacted. Changes are expected in education, health and wellness, health care, family relationships, work and home environments, agriculture, community life, politics, and the economy.

K-State Research and Extension is dedicated to disseminating knowledge and **teaching skills** to older adults, adults with disabilities, and their families to facilitate adaptive living.

Our Focus in 2010-2011:

Assistive Technology, Community Conferences for Aging Issues, and Home Modification

Additional topics related to aging were addressed periodically throughout the year. A few examples included planning for retirement, end of life issues, fraud, caregiving, arthritis and agriculture, older adults and nutrition, and finances.

Outcomes

The results reported here were gathered from surveys at various times throughout the year.

Assistive Technology (AT) [*40]

80% plan to purchase AT for self or others
90% believe AT can help self or others
95% feel more positive about AT than before

Community Conferences for Aging Issues

[*21; *32; *53]

48% increased communication in difficult issues
67% shared end of life wishes with family
90% increased vitamin D consumption

28% indicated better understanding of aging
46% implemented positive change

23% established an open dialogue with their health care provider
47% increased physical activity

Home Modification [*51]

20% completed or made arrangements to increase mobility and safety within their homes

Success Stories

Professionals are looking to the conferences as a means of receiving necessary CEUs and are passing the word about the quality of information they gain.

[Learning about dementia] really hit home with me and helped me realize that this is what my father must have. I will be making some changes next time he comes to visit. I have shared the information with other family members...

I shared information about the importance of vitamin D in our diet with my parents. They have added vitamin D to their diet and I can see a big change for the better in both of them.

In [our] area, three homes have been modified for energy and safety...at little or no cost to the owners. Three more homes are on the waiting list.

***Indicates total number of surveys completed**

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