

FACES NEWSLETTER

Family and Consumer Science



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New Year, New You: Four Tips to a Healthier You

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Happy New Year! Did you make a New Year's resolution? Millions of Americans make resolutions every January hoping to improve their health by losing weight, getting fit, or eating healthy. Make 2014 the year you and your family lead a healthier lifestyle by following these 4 tips:

Tip #1 Eat the Right Amount of Calories for You

Everybody requires a different amount of calories depending on their age, gender, height, weight, and physical activity level. To determine the appropriate amount of calories for you, enter your information into the Daily Food Plan at www.myplate.gov to receive a personalized plan

Tip #2 Build a Healthy Plate by Following MyPlate

- Make half of your plate fruits and vegetables.
- When consuming dairy foods, switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%).
- Make at least half your grains whole grains.
- Vary your protein food choices.

Tip #3 Cut Back on Foods High in Solid Fats, Added Sugars, & Salt

Consuming foods high in solid fats, added sugars, and salt may increase the risk of certain chronic diseases. Drink water instead of sugary drinks and select fruit for dessert. Add spices or herbs to season food instead of adding salt and compare sodium in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals. Eat cakes, cookies, ice cream, pizza, cheese, sausages, and hot dogs in moderation.

Tip #4 Be Physically Active Your Way

It is important to be physically active your way. Start by doing what you can and picking activities you like for at least 10 minutes at a time. To gain the most health benefits, adults should aim for at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week and youth should do 60 minutes (1 hour) or more of physical activity daily.

**If you knew these
five things you'd
probably apply
for
SNAP benefits
after all!**



Filling out an application for FNS/SNAP benefits (previously Food Stamps) may seem a bit daunting, but before you throw your hands up in the air and mutter “no way!” I’d like for you to consider five things:

#1 – YOU CAN FILL OUT JUST A BIT OF INFORMATION ...

If you’re not able to complete the entire application, for any reason, you can print just the first page; fill in your name, address and signature; then, turn it in to your county’s Department of Social Services (DSS). Including a phone number where you can be reached would also be helpful. This alone gets the process started.

#2 – YOU CAN HAVE SOMEONE YOU TRUST APPLY FOR YOU ...

If you prefer that someone you trust (and who knows your financial circumstances) applies for you instead, you can fill out a form to allow this person to apply for you – he or she is called your “authorized representative.” You can also have an authorized representative shop for you using your EBT benefit card.

#3 – YOU CAN COMPLETE YOUR APPLICATION ONLINE ...

If you prefer to complete your application online (typing), rather than by hand (writing), you can do that online. After you’ve keyed in your information, print it off, sign it, and take it to your county’s Department of Social Services (DSS). **#4 – YOU CAN REQUEST A PHONE INTERVIEW ...**

If you’re not able to attend an in-person interview at DSS, for any reason, you can request that your initial interview be conducted by phone instead. So, don’t let transportation or mobility issues get in your way! You and DSS will get the needed forms and documents back-and-forth to each other using the postal service.

#5 – YOUR BENEFITS BEGIN ON THE DATE YOUR APPLICATION IS RECEIVED ...

The clock starts ticking on the day that you turn in your application – that’s the date that your benefits will start (retroactively), if you’re approved. Your county’s DSS has 30 days to process a regular application, or 7 days to process an emergency application. So there’s no payoff for thinking about applying, or leaving a completed application sitting on your kitchen counter!

So, with all of these supports and possibilities for getting your application done, I’d like for you to now take your hands down from over your head and instead commit to “I can do this!” Here’s how to quickly find your county’s DSS while you’re in the momentum.

Helping Your Teen Decide What to Do After High School

With the start of the New Year and spring right around the corner, it's time to start preparing for high school graduation season. Helping to prepare your teen for life after high school is one of the most important tasks you'll have as a parent.

Although it can be difficult to imagine your baby as an adult, with the right approach, helping your teen make the transition into adulthood can be rewarding.

Going to college, getting a job, or taking time off are the common choices your teen will likely face. Here's how you can help your adult-to-be make the best decision.

College or Technical School

Although you may remember starting your own college search in the fall of your senior year, many teens these days need to get started earlier because of the extensive research involved and the deadlines for early admissions programs to competitive programs. In fact, many students begin as early as the fall of their junior year.

A good preparation for your teen is to sit down and start writing — this is great practice for the application process. Teens should list their goals as well as their accomplishments, even if they haven't yet decided on a field of study. Ask your teen to write down a list of:

- academic and personal strengths and weaknesses

- extracurricular activities
- awards
- grade point average (GPA)
- class rank
- SAT, ACT, or AP scores

Next, teens should think about and list the qualities they're looking for in a college: do they want to go away to school, stay close to home, or take online courses, for example?

Armed with this information, it's time to begin the research. Guidebooks, the Internet, and counselors at school are particularly helpful resources. As your teen chooses potential schools, it is advisable to start visiting campuses and talking with students who go there.

Experts suggest narrowing the choices to a diverse mix of about six to 10 schools where the odds range from low to high for gaining admission. Applications should be filled out completely and neatly, including the essay, which your teen should revise until confident that it's his or her best work. Many schools offer help in these areas.

And don't cross college off the list because you're afraid the tuition will be too steep. Many kids can receive financial help. For info about scholarships and other programs that may help, ask:

- the school counselor
- the colleges' financial aid offices
- your employer, who might offer scholarship programs

- Federal aid programs are also available and can be researched online

Other Options

If college isn't an option or your teen needs extra time to earn money for tuition, going directly into the work force offers many choices and benefits, such as health insurance and tuition reimbursement programs. Getting a job immediately after high school remains a good choice.

Teens who go this route need to learn how to search for employment, write a resume, and develop interviewing skills.

Many companies reimburse their employees for continuing education in areas related to their employment. Your teen should ask about this benefit through the human resources departments of potential employers.

Entering the military can be an excellent choice for a teen who feels uncertain about the future.

Discipline, earning money, saving for college, learning a trade — all of this is often possible in the armed forces. Veterans are also entitled to many benefits both while in the service and after.

However, your teen should carefully explore all the pros and cons of a military career. After all, if teens don't like the service or if the thought of going to war seems too scary, they can't easily drop out. If your teen wants specific training through the

military, make sure the contract he or she signs includes that.

Another option is an internship. Over the course of a year, your teen could potentially participate in two or three internships to explore career choices. But most internships are unpaid, so planning ahead is crucial if your teen needs to save money for living expenses.

Internships provide participants with the opportunity to learn about many facets of a particular career. They're also a great way to make contacts and develop mentoring relationships.

Taking Time Off

For some teens, taking a year off between high school and the "real world" can be beneficial. This can be a good time to travel, do community service, or even live in a foreign country before the responsibilities of life make it harder to do so.

Community service organizations offer a wide variety of choices that teens can match with their skills and interests. AmeriCorps, for example, offers hundreds of programs across the United States with a small stipend, plus a chance to obtain money for college or vocational training. Many religious organizations provide community service programs as well.

However, teens should keep in mind that a brochure may look different from reality, such as with work and

service camps in developing countries. They should expect difficulties but know that the rewards of community service often outweigh the hardships — and can actually change the direction of a person's life. Speaking with previous participants should give a more realistic view than promotional material.

And taking time off doesn't necessarily put a teen at a disadvantage for college admission. For many teens — especially those who choose an internship or international service — it can actually be an advantage. While researching colleges, find out if they have delayed admissions programs. If not, ask the colleges what their stance is on students who take time off and a teen's chances of getting in if he or she reapplies.

16 Ways to Make Over Your Closets

Perhaps your new year's resolution was to clear out some clutter and make your closets more manageable. With a few simple tools and organization gadgets and the ideas here, you can keep that resolution and improve your sanity!



1. Use Proper Hangers Proper clothing care calls

for appropriate hangers: satin padding for more delicate items and sturdy wood hangers for tailored jackets.

2. Mount a Pegboard Pegboard mounted inside a closet door creates an inexpensive mini-dressing station.

3. Stack Shoe Boxes

Slim plastic shoeboxes stack compactly, while hanging canvas shelves offer an inexpensive alternative to built-ins.



4. Store Accessories in Clear Plastic Drawers Clear plastic drawers make perfect storage quarters for neatly rolled scarves, underwear, and belts.

5. Customize Drawers One smart solution to a storage crunch: a customizable unit of wire drawers.

6. Hang Bags on Hooks Durable hooks keep large bags from slumping and losing shape on shelves.

7. Capitalize on Every Inch Even tight closets can be kept in check with helpers like bins and hanging shelves.



8. See Your Shoes A slanted plywood platform lets you take in your shoe collection at a glance.

9. Hang a Shoe Shelf A shorter version of the traditional hanging shoe shelf is perfect for double-hung closet rods.

10. Stow Out-of-Season Pieces Use large canvas boxes to store away neatly folded winter sweaters.

11. Keep Clothes From Stretching Canvas shelves or canvas drawers, hold sweaters, T-shirts, and other clothing items that might stretch on a hanger.

12. Gain Extra Space Gain extra space in small closets by using slim hangers and stackable bins with pull-out drawers.

13. Hang A Mirror A walk-in closet becomes a dressing area with the simple addition of a mirror.



14. Start Labeling Employ gold plates and a label maker for the ultimate closet organization.

15. Turn to Shelf Dividers Shelf dividers prevent leaning towers of cashmere and keep unruly items in their place.

16. Categorize Clothing

Group clothing by category—dress pants, jeans, casual shirts, work tops—to make putting together outfits easier.

Next Issue: 15 More Tips!



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