

As We Age



Strengthening the Journey

Harvey County Department on Aging Newsletter



Scammers Never Take a Holiday Break!

During the holiday season, the spirit is the joy, love, and generosity in our hearts. It is a time for festivities, getting together with close friends and family, and showing appreciation for all the good things in life. The holiday comes with the gift of giving and willingness to help people in need. While keeping the holiday spirit alive, let's not forget to protect ourselves and our loved ones. Scammers will play with your emotions to act now. Be skeptical and cautious of unexpected calls, text messages, social media posts, and any other irregular correspondence you might receive. There should be no sense of urgency if it is a legitimate organization.

Artificial intelligence is no longer a far-fetched idea out of a sci-fi movie.

Scammers are using artificial intelligence (AI) to clone voices, to make it sound like our loved ones are in trouble, and then scam people into sending money. They use personal information from social media profiles and other online sources to tailor the scam to you. They can create fake audio and or video clips. The scammers may know your information and the information of loved ones, such as their name, where you live, and other information they could have found on social media sites or by hacking into computers and email accounts. Also, scammers might pretend to be an authority figure, like a fake lawyer, police officer, or doctor working with your family member to make it sound more convincing, and they hope it scares you into acting hastily and not checking to see if it is legitimate.

How can you tell if a family member is in trouble or if it's a scammer using AI?

- Talk with your loved ones about AI scams and set up a safe word that only they would know.
- Take a moment to stop, evaluate, and verify the situation.
- If you're suspicious about a call you receive from someone claiming to be a loved one in distress, HANG UP.
- Do not call them back at the same number they called from. Use a phone number you know is theirs.
- If you can't reach your loved one, try to contact them through family members or friends.
- Pay attention to red flags; such as the scammer may ask you to send money in ways that make it hard to get it back. Such as wiring money, sending cryptocurrency, using quick response (QR) bar codes, gift cards, and sharing banking information are all red flags to watch for.

Always verify the legitimacy of the call before taking action. |

If you think you or somebody you know has been the victim of a scam, report it to the Federal Trade Commission, FTC at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov/identity-theft).



Positive Attitude Toward Aging



Over the past 20 years, research has revealed that having a positive attitude toward aging affects one’s mental and physical health. It affects one’s ability to fight disease, as well as one’s relationships with others, and increases overall well-being, longevity, and ability to have good health into later years.

Humans have the extraordinary gift of living longer. In the 1950s, the average life expectancy was about 47 years; in 2020, it was about 77 years, which is 30 additional years of life. Current projections are that by 2050, life expectancy will have risen to approximately 85 years old, with many more people living beyond 100.

Approaching aging with a positive outlook and optimism means accepting and adapting to changes in life. It allows one to meet both good and bad challenges with less resistance, which minimizes the impact of stress.

Here are a few more ways to develop and grow one’s positive attitude as we age:

- Maintain a sense of purpose through work and community involvement that aligns with one’s values.
- Embrace spirituality.
- Don’t grieve the aging journey; reject negative stereotypes about aging, such as inevitable frailty and poor mental and physical health.
- Stay socially engaged and active, joining clubs, associations, senior and community centers and cultivating relationships.
- Try new activities, learn new things, or teach others your skills and crafts.
- Approach life with optimism and hope.

One can change one's mindset and views regarding aging to be more positive, recognizing the value of the contributions and accomplishments of older adults in one’s community. It benefits one’s health and society's attitude toward aging.

December is Seasonal Depression Awareness Month.



During the holidays, depression seems to affect people in different ways. Keep an eye out for any mood changes and signs of sadness. Mood changes can affect one's health.

Are you or a loved one experiencing any of the following?

- Sad, anxious, or empty feelings
- Feelings of hopelessness, guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in activities you used to enjoy
- Fatigue and decreased energy
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering details, and making decisions
- Thoughts of death or suicide
- Oversleeping
- Overeating, particularly with a craving for carbohydrates
- Weight gain
- Social withdrawal (feeling like hibernating)
- Difficulty sleeping
- Lack of appetite
- Irritability and agitation

Contact your healthcare provider if you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis.

You can contact the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline by calling or texting 988 from anywhere in the country during a mental health crisis



Holiday dinner and activities in Harvey County

Newton Area Senior Center

Dinner and Ugly Sweater Contest
Monday, December 11 at 5:30 PM

Halstead Senior Center

Christmas Potluck Lunch and Nutcracker Showing
Tuesday, December 19 at 12:30 PM
Christmas Bingo and Ugly Sweater Contest
Thursday, December 21 at 1:00 PM

January is Glaucoma Awareness Month

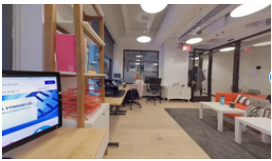
Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of vision loss and blindness in the United States. There are often no early symptoms, and that is why half of the people with glaucoma do not know they have it.

Getting a comprehensive dilation during an eye exam is the only way to check for glaucoma. There's no cure for glaucoma, but early treatment can often help prevent damage to people's vision.

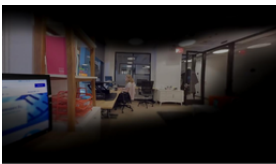
Anyone can get glaucoma, but some people are at higher risk if they have:

- Diabetes
- A family history of glaucoma
- Black and age 50 or older
- Latino and age 65 or older

Talk to your doctor if you're worried you might be at risk for eye diseases. You can take steps to lower your risk.



Glaucoma may cause vision loss by damaging the optic nerve in the back of your eye. One symptom of glaucoma is loss of peripheral (side) vision.



Eye exams can catch glaucoma early before it affects your vision. More information can be found on the National Eye Institute website www.nei.nih.gov

Closer Look at Diabetic Eye Disease Complications

Diabetic retinopathy is a leading cause of blindness among working-age adults.

These destructive blood vessels can swell, leak, and obstruct blood flow, leading to blurred vision and, in severe cases, blindness. It often affects both eyes, and early symptoms might go unnoticed. The more prolonged diabetes lingers, the greater the risk.

Recognizing the symptoms helps lead to early detection. These symptoms can include blurry vision, dark shapes, difficulty distinguishing colors, or encountering dark voids in your sight, can be symptoms.



Diabetic Retinopathy is treatable, with early detection through a yearly dilated eye exam offering the best chance for successful treatment.

Hearing Aids

Do you feel that your hearing is not what it used to be?



Have you been told you need a hearing aid(s) but don't have the funds to purchase them?

The Independent Living Resource Center has been awarded a grant from the Central Plains Area Agency on Aging with Older Americans Act and American Rescue Plan Act funding to assist with purchasing basic hearing aids under the following guidelines:

- A resident of Butler, Harvey County, or Sedgwick counties.
- 60 years of age or older
- Income at or below \$2,430 for a single or \$3,287 for a couple

If you meet these guidelines above, the Harvey County Department on Aging (316-284-6880) can assist you with completing the application.



February is Senior Independence Month

At Harvey County Department on Aging, one of our goals is to help older adults maintain their independence in the community.

Declutter: An organized environment is great for both body and soul! Clear, well-lit walkways in the home help decrease the risk of trips and falls while keeping necessary items like cell phones close at hand and readily accessible is vital in an emergency.

Upgrade: A little preventive maintenance can be a lifesaver. Have stair banisters and deck railings checked for looseness. Light up dark hallways, closets, and stairways with motion-sensor lights to prevent falls. Installing grab bars in the bathroom is also a great idea, provided they are installed before they're needed. A little foresight goes a long way!

Your cellphone can be a lifesaver: Set it up with a speed dial for your favorite contacts; it's a link to the world. Cell phones can also serve as location devices, maps, and navigation aids for emergency contacts and services. Most are even equipped with a fairly bright flashlight.

Assistive equipment and technology: Another way to help preserve your independence is to use adaptive equipment and technology that can help make your life easier and keep you safe. Discuss durable medical equipment (DME) with a healthcare provider. Medicare Part B covers medically necessary DME if the health care provider prescribes it.

National Wear Red Day Together, we will Rock our Red in a group photo for heart health!

Join us in front of the
Harvey County Courthouse
800 N Main Newton, KS 67114
**Friday, February 2, 2024
at 10:00 AM**

#WearRedDay

The photo will be posted on various social media outlets, newsletters, etc.

Event hosted by The Harvey County Department on Aging, Health Department and Wellness Team.



February is National American Heart Month

If you have any of these symptoms, call 911 and go to a hospital right away.

- Most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort.
- Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain in the center of your chest. It lasts more than a few minutes or goes away and comes back.
- Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach.
- Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort.
- Breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or lightheadedness.
- Women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting and back or jaw pain.



Regular exercise may improve heart health.

As well as sleep quality, energy levels, and self-confidence. Physical activity releases endorphins - body's natural mood lifters, and stress relievers.

The simplest way to get moving and improve your health is walking. It's free, easy and can be done anywhere, even in place.

Sign up for classes you've always been curious about, such as, tai chi, Zumba, yoga, dance, or spin, water aerobics. Some pools are heated, and the water allows you to exercise your joints without risking a fall.

If you have a health concern like heart disease, diabetes, or obesity, talk to your doctor about the types and amounts of physical activity that are right for you.

Check with your insurance plan. Some have perks, such as gym memberships, Silver Sneakers, and more.



Caregiving Corner

In lieu of gifts for the holiday, share your wish list with your family and friends.

Instead of gifts, ask family and friends to pitch in around the house with simple tasks like changing light bulbs, installing grab bars, meal prep, dusting, laundry, and decluttering, which may be the perfect way for family and friends to help.

Ask for time off from caregiving duties. Another family member can fill in while you are off, or the family can pay for a professional caregiver for your time away. If this is not possible, consider applying for respite programs through the Harvey County Department on Aging at 316-284-6880 or Central Plains Area Agency on Aging at 1-855-200-2372 for a home health care worker or a stay at a respite facility.

The bottom line is that this time is precious. Savor the moments with your loved ones and make good memories you can cherish forever.



A MATTER OF BALANCE
MANAGING CONCERNS ABOUT FALLS

This class helps to reduce the fear of falling and increases activity levels among older adults.

Call the Harvey County Department on Aging for more information 316-284-6880

Classes are limited to 12 participants, so sign up quickly.

A Matter of Balance classes are made possible through grants from the Central Plains Area Agency on Aging, with federal funds from the Older Americans Act.

Connect with other caregivers.

Other caregivers feel many of your emotions, even when others don't understand. Connect to share your feelings and get tips for holiday survival.

Caregiver Support Groups

A monthly caregiver support group can be a lifeline, providing a place in person, on the phone, or online to hear and share caregiving experiences confidentially:

NMC Health – South Conference Room
600 Medical Center Dr. Newton, KS
Emergency Entrance
The last Thursday at 6 p.m.

Hesston Wellness Center - Creative Arts Studio
701 S. Main St. Hesston, KS
Third Tuesday 2:30 p.m.

Kansas Christian Home
1035 S.E. 3rd St. Newton, KS
Third Wednesday 10 a.m.

Central Plains Area Agency on Aging
271 W. 3rd St. N. Wichita, KS
Third Wednesday 6 p.m.
Virtual and in-person
1-855-200-2372

Contact the Harvey County Department on Aging for more information on caregiver programming and support at 316-284-6880.

I Am A
CAREGIVER

I Can't Promise
TO FIX ALL YOUR PROBLEMS
But I Can Promise
YOU WON'T HAVE TO
Face Them Alone

Some programs utilize grant funds from the Older Americans Act, the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services, and the Central Plains Area Agency on Aging.

RSVP MLK DAY OF SERVICE

The Harvey County RSVP Martin Luther King project food drive is set for January 20th at Dillons locations in Newton from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The items will be taken to The Salvation Army to benefit those in need within Harvey County.



Volunteer Opportunities

Companionship

Would you be interested in sharing your art or talents with other seniors? You can visit your local senior center and ask about teaching opportunities.

This will help older adults develop new skills and combat social isolation.

Share your time and touch another older adult's life.

Store-to-Door Shopper

If you cannot go grocery shopping for health reasons or lack of transportation, would you like a volunteer to assist you? If you are interested in helping other older adults in need, consider volunteering to shop for them.

Book Reviews is searching for extra clerks to assist in it's charity store, which donates back to the community. Putting in a little time can go a long way in helping charities make a difference.

New Jerusalem has several volunteer opportunities available, including positions at the front desk, assisting with lunches and dinners, and landscaping. They need volunteers to fill these positions.



Harvey County RSVP completed its annual 9/11 Day of Service project on Sept. 16, accumulating food donations at Dillons locations in Newton. The total collected netted 1,083 pounds of goods, equal to \$1,624.50 economic impact. The items were taken to The Harvey County Salvation Army to benefit those in need.

Welcome New Volunteers

Elizabeth Ann (Betsy) Buller Larry Buller
Sheryl Fuqua Feisa Jahay
Robyn McCollum Debbie Orpin
Carolyn Wohlgemath



** Volunteer time sheets are due by the 7th of each month **

A friendly reminder that all time sheets are due at the RSVP office by the 7th of every month.

Call RSVP for more information at 316-284-6881.

**Meet
the
Staff**



Lona Kelly, Director

**Christy Estrada,
Program Specialist**



**Karen Kaufman,
Transportation
Coordinator**

**Mary Wilson,
AmeriCorps RSVP
Coordinator**



**Paula Whillock,
RSVP Customer
Service**

Interurban Drivers



Frenchy



Ed



Jerry



Wayne



Lenny

**Harvey Interurban
316-284-6802**

**Office Hours Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
(excluding county-approved holidays)**



Harvey Interurban provides transportation for Harvey County residents to cities in the surrounding counties, such as Wichita, McPherson, and Hutchinson, for medical and personal appointments. We also provide transportation to and from the Wichita airport.

- \$20 fare for out of county
- \$12 fare in the county
- \$8 within Newton for non-ambulatory persons
(For ambulatory persons needing transportation within Newton, call OT Cab Company at 316-283-2960.)
- Eisenhower National Airport, Wichita. Transportation is \$25 for an individual or \$35 for two people.

Interurban also offers an AVI shopping trip on Tuesday afternoons to ensure our rural communities can access affordable transportation to come into Newton for shopping. The AVI fare is \$6 for a round trip.

Reservations for appointments and non-emergency medical transportation are on a first-call, first-serve basis with a minimum of 24-hour advance notice. A resident making reservations for Mondays must make them on the prior Friday and all reservations may be made up to a year in advance. All Harvey Interurban vehicles are ADA-accessible.

For Harvey Interurban monthly recreational trips, visit:
www.harveycounty.com/departments/transportation

**This project funded in part by the KDOT Public
Transportation Network.**



HarveyCounty

As We Age
Strengthening the Journey

Department on Aging

800 N Main, PO Box 687
Newton, KS 67114



Sign up for our

As We Age

Strengthening the Journey

NEWSLETTER

Harvey County Department on Aging

316-284-6880

800 N Main, PO Box 687

Newton, KS 67114