

HEALTHWORD
Putting Health Promotion Back in Motion

June 2006

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HEALTHWORD is a monthly e-mail newsletter produced by the American Society on Aging's Live Well, Live Long project, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Live Well, Live Long provides education and resources to professionals in the field of aging to help them improve health promotion and disease prevention efforts aimed at older adults. Current and past issues of this newsletter are available on the Live Well, Live Long website at <http://www.asaging.org/cdc/HealthWord.cfm>.

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FEATURE:
FITTING CARS TO THEIR OLDER DRIVERS

By Jeff Finn

Studies suggest that many older adults outlive their driving ability by eight to ten years. Older adults are as aware of this possibility as their family members are. Most could improve their safety on the road, and extend their time behind the wheel, by making small but effective changes to their driving habits as well as their vehicles.

Enter CarFit, an educational program developed by the American Society on Aging in partnership with AAA, AARP, and the American Occupational Therapy Association. CarFit brings the car club together with occupational therapists to conduct a quick but comprehensive check of how safely older adults and their cars work together. In CarFit, older drivers bring their automobiles to designated sites, where a trained staff member or volunteer asks each driver a series of simple questions and completes a 12-point checklist checking the driver and the vehicle. The entire process takes about 15 minutes. The driver

leaves with recommended car adjustments and adaptations, a list of resources such as local occupational therapy and driver-safety courses, and greater peace of mind.

After a year of pilot-testing the program, which involved more than 300 older adults in 12 cities, program designers found that the majority of drivers needed to make at least one change to their vehicle. The most typical adjustment was to position the mirrors correctly. When given a follow-up survey, the vast majority of participants reported making one or more changes to their vehicle, using safety devices (such as safety belts) in the car more frequently, or having a conversation about their driving with family or friends.

In January 2006, AAA held its first CarFit train-the-trainer session, and several months later, AAA clubs nationwide began working with local aging-services organizations and occupational therapists to conduct CarFit checkups in their communities.

ASA will launch a new website (www.asaging.org/carfit) on July 1 to provide information on the program and upcoming CarFit events. For more information on older-driver wellness and safety issues, visit “Road Map to Driving Wellness” on ASA’s Live Well, Live Long website at www.asaging.org/cdc. To find additional online resources on older drivers, visit <http://www.asaging.org/drivewell>.

TOOLS YOU CAN USE:
RESOURCES ON HIV/AIDS AND AGING

This year, National HIV Testing Day will be held on June 27. The National Association of People With AIDS sponsors this day to encourage everyone -- at every age -- to seek out education, counseling, and testing for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Help the elders you work with better understand the virus and how to protect themselves from getting it. A few resources on HIV and aging:

* National Institute on Aging: Age Page on HIV, AIDS, and Older Adults
<http://www.niapublications.org/agepages/aids.asp>

This website provides a basic overview of AIDS in the older adult population, including transmission rates, prevention strategies, and demographic facts, plus national information and referral sources.

* Ageism and HIV
<http://www.rubbaboyz.net/Articles/ageism.aspx>

Published on the website of Project HOPE, of the AIDS Council of Northeastern New York, this article by Randy Viele gives a brief overview of social, epidemiological, health, and treatment issues for older LGBT people with HIV/AIDS.

* HIV Wisdom for Older Women
<http://www.hivwisdom.org/>

Website of a U.S. organization that provides advocacy, support, and prevention training for women ages 50-plus who are dealing with HIV/AIDS issues.

* National Association on HIV Over Fifty

<http://www.hivoverfifty.org>

NAHOF is an association for professionals and advocates who work with HIV/AIDS issues in older adults. The site offers a newsletter, an extensive bibliography, a resource guide, and conference extracts.

* Safer Sex Promotion for Elders

<http://www3.bc.sympatico.ca/eddyelmer/Artics/hivsfu.htm>

Online article by Eddy M. Elmer, a psychology undergraduate student at Simon Fraser University in Canada, that surveys the literature on safer-sex education for older adults.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Event: Conference of the Society for Nutrition Education

Dates: July 15-18, 2006

Location: San Francisco

The 39th annual conference of the Society for Nutrition Education will address the ever-changing world of nutrition and health on both the global and local levels. It will highlight leading-edge research, programs, and policies in the areas of nutrition, food safety, and health across the life cycle. For more information, visit

<http://www.sne.org/conference/index.html>

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Event: National Association on Area Agencies for Aging Annual Conference

Dates: Aug. 6-10, 2006

Location: Chicago

The 2006 N4A conference will bring the aging network and other professionals together to exchange ideas about shaping communities for a maturing America. Health promotion preconference sessions include "Take Advantage of New Avenues and Opportunities to Promote Health Among Seniors," "Creating Livable Communities for all Ages: The View From Three Award-Winning Programs," and "Keys to Mobility: The Aging Network's Role in Promoting Older Driver Safety." Visit

<http://www.n4a.org/2006conf/chicago2006.cfm> for more details.

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Event: 2006 Florida Conference on Aging

Dates: Aug. 14-17, 2006

Location: Tampa, Fla.

This conference will include outstanding keynote speakers, a “leadership academy,” and more than 50 workshop sessions. Sessions of interest include “Smart Homes to Support Independence as We Age,” “A Yoga Chi-Gung Based Program for Falls Reduction, Mood Stabilization,” and “Aleppo: A New More Affordable Approach to Community-Based Aging in Place.” The conference website:
<http://www.fcoa.org/Conf2006/conf2006.html>.

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2007 Health Vision Community Awards
Application Deadline: Aug. 31, 2006

The National Eye Institute, part of the National Institutes of Health, has announced the application deadline for its 2007 Healthy Vision Community Awards. The awards provide funding for the implementation of health education and health promotion activities that support the Healthy Vision 2010 objectives and the Healthy People 2010 goals to reduce health disparities and improve quality of life. Nonprofit organizations are encouraged to apply. Applications for 2007 must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service no later than Thursday, Aug. 31, 2006. For details on the awards, visit www.healthyvision2010.org/news/hvca.

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For more educational offerings in the field of aging, visit the searchable “Events in Aging” calendar on the ASA website: <http://www.asaging.org/calendar>.

Have an event related to health promotion and aging that you would like to tell your colleagues about? Please submit your event, call for papers, or grant announcements to Betsy Dorsett at betsyd@asaging.org. Include the title, organization, date and time, location, contact information, and a short description of the event.

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