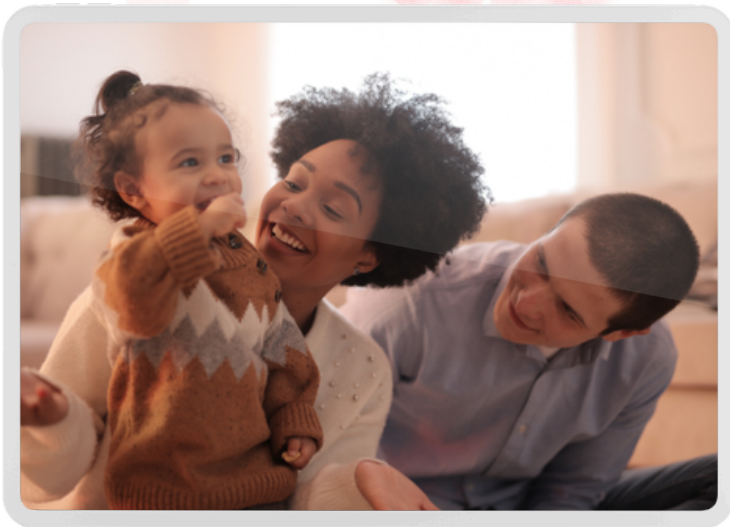


FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS & FINANCE PROGRAM MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



"Roses are Red, Violets are Blue.

Dane County Extension resources are here for you!"

About UW-Extension Human Development & Relationships Institute (HDRI)

The Extension Institute of Human Development & Relationships provides the tools Wisconsinites need to thrive as well-rounded, capable individuals and families. We support families in caring for each other in ways that promote growth and understanding. Our programs promote aging-friendly communities, coach effective parents and help families put technology, mindfulness and financial awareness to use.



UW-Extension of Dane County FAMILY & FINANCE

The Family Engagement and Relationships (FER) program at UW-Extension of Dane County support strong family engagement and other interpersonal relationships that significantly contribute to the health and well-being of individuals, communities, and economics. Extension provides well-researched, quality information and programs to further support parenting and family relationships.

The Financial Education program at UW-Extension of Dane County helps families and individuals to achieve financial well-being, reach for financial goals, planning for life's unexpected events, and build a secure financial future.

Learn more about the UW-Extension of Dane County - Family & Finance program at <https://dane.extension.wisc.edu/families-finances/>

[Learn more about our state-wide programs at https://extension.wisc.edu/family/](https://extension.wisc.edu/family/)

Share your feedback on our newsletter by scanning the QR code.



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You can also subscribe to the Dane County Extension Happenings newsletter at <https://signup.e2ma.net/signup/1905280/1906242/> and follow us on social media!

FINANCIAL NEWS UPDATES

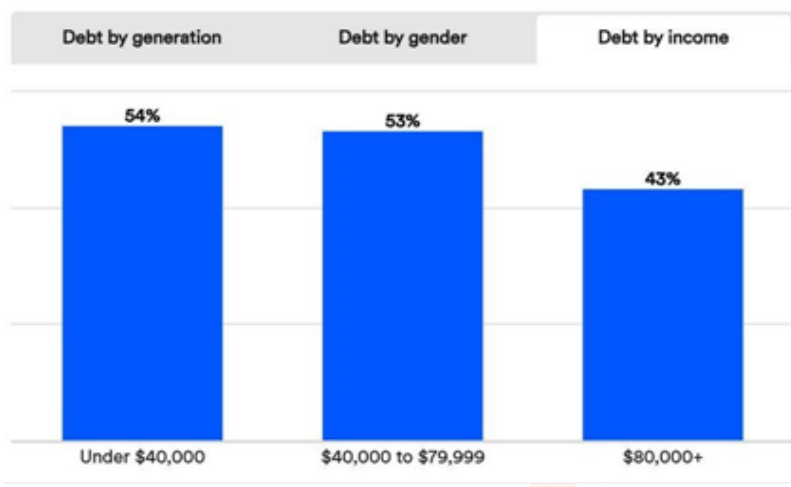
Biden Admin. Withdraws Debt Relief Plans

In late Dec., [the Biden Admin. withdrew its plans for wide scale student loan forgiveness](#) due to "operational challenges." As a result, people with federal student loan debt should look to the public service loan forgiveness plan, teacher loan forgiveness plan, and income-driven repayment plans for relief opportunities.

Current Data on Month to Month Credit Card Debt

A [new report by Bankrate](#), a personal finance website, shows that 48% of about 2,500 people surveyed in November 2024 stated they carry credit card debt month to month. This number has remains consistent over the last few years and came in at 50% in June 2024 and 49% in November 2023.

Credit cardholders with debt by demographic



When to Buy a Car?

A recent [analysis of deals on vehicles](#) found that November through February are the best months to get a deal on a used car. According to the analysis, New Years Eve and New Years Day are the best holidays to buy a used car.



New Data on Holiday Spending with Debt

A [new report from Lending Tree](#) shows that consumers will have an average of \$1,181 of credit card debt from holiday spending in 2024. Parents of young children were most likely to take on debt. Of those who took on debt, 65% used a traditional credit card and 24% used a store credit card, which often come with much higher interest rates. Furthermore, 20% of consumers plan to make minimum payments on their holiday spending debt while just 14% of consumers plan to pay the debt of in one month.

2024 Report on Where Aging Individuals Prefer to Live

A recent report by AARP, [the 2024 Home and Community Preferences Among Adults 18 & Over](#) report, shows that 75% of adults age 50 & over desire to stay in their home for as long as possible and 73% prefer to stay in their community for as long as possible.

Despite these desires, 44% of those surveyed anticipate moving later in life due to a need for more affordable housing. For those who plan to maximize staying in their home, 43% expect to make changes to their home to help with physical limitations.

Senate Passes New Legislation

In late December, the Senate passed the Social Security Fairness Act, which would repeal reductions made to social security payments for workers with pensions or disability payments that did not include social security contributions. The next step is for the bill to go to the White House. Three million individuals would be effected by this change.

Extension Family & Finance Resources

Richard Dilley Tax Center

Richard Dilley Tax Center Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Site prioritizes low-income individuals and families, older adults, those with Limited English, and people with disabilities.



All appointments will be in-person with a certified, volunteer tax preparer who will prepare your return in your presence.

Free tax assistance can be found across the state in some community centers, libraries, churches, shopping malls, and retirement homes. Most VITA sites are open from February 1st through April 15th. To find the VITA or TCE site closest to you please call:

1-800-829-1040 for VITA site locations, 1-888-227-7669 for TCE site locations, or call "211" for local free tax sites.

More information about the tax center, volunteering, and registering for an appointment at the Richard Dilley Tax Center can be found on our local Dane County Extension [website](#).

Financial Education Resource

UW Extension Money Matters -

finances.extension.wisc.edu/programs/money-matters/

Online self-study course. You can learn how to create a spending and savings plan, choose health insurance, what to do when you can't pay your bills, how to get and read your credit report, manage debt, deal with student loans, choose financial services at places like banks or credit unions, plan for retirement, and much more. Five of the 14 main modules are also available in Spanish



Tweens and Teens

Being a parent or caregiver to a tween or teen can be wild. The tween and teenage years are a time of exploration and self-discovery. Everyday they are learning to become even more independent young adults, trying to discover their strengths/weaknesses, making plans for their future, and hoping for a successful adult life.



A common challenge among many parents raising tweens/teens is just getting their teen to

talk, let alone engaged in an entire conversation. Although this experience may be frustrating, it is important to remember that teens may be shifting their communication style, and at the same time still need (and want) to connect with you.

Here are some ways to stay connected:

- 1. Don't take it personally.** Your child hasn't stopped loving you. It's normal for teens to feel in need of a little distance. They still need you and want to talk—just not 24/7.
- 2. Understand.** Children are more receptive to conversation when we can show that we understand.
- 3. Be available.** Pay attention and notice when your child seems ready to talk. Seize the moment by setting aside your activity and giving them the opportunity to share.

For more tips on how to stay connected with your tween/teen, check out [UW-Extension's Parentical articles](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Below are a list of upcoming local and state-wide events and workshops provided by the UW-Extension Family & Finance program:

February 6 - Resilient Co-Parenting series: Successful Stepfamilies (virtual). Time: 7-8 pm. *Blended families face unique challenges when it comes to parenting. Discover ways to ease the transition for your children and address these challenges effectively.*

February 4 - Triple P: Developing a Good Bedtime Routine Discussion Group. (virtual). Time options: 9-10:30 am or 6-7:30 pm. *Come fill your toolboxes with strategies to make bedtime routine easier for you young child.*

February 5, 12, 19 - Parent & Teen Night Program. Time: 6-7:30 pm. *Program will be held in-person at Madison Public Library - Hawthorne. This is a 3 days series, and parents and their teens can come to as many of the sessions. Parents will gain strategies to support their teen development and teens will learn and gain professional skills in communication, teamwork, and time management.*

February 11 - Focus on Fathers series: Fathers Teach Values. (virtual). Time: 6-7 pm. *This month's class focuses on teaching values. Fathers can help children learn to be honest, to care about others, and to make good choices by talking about morals, values, and ethics together.*

February 20 - Raising Wisconsin's Children series: Speaking Your Child's Love Language. (virtual) Time: 1-2 pm. *Come learn the 5 love languages and how it can help you connect with your child.*

February 21 & 22 - Early Learning Connections Conference. (in-person). Time 8-3:30 pm. *This is a FREE 2 day professional development conference for Early Care & Education Professionals in the Madison area. [Registration](#) closes on February 14th.*

Registration is highly encouraged for all events & workshops. All of these events can be found on our local and/or state-wide website.



February 2nd is Groundhog Day!
FUN FACT: It derives from the Pennsylvanian Dutch superstition to see if spring will arrive early or late. If a groundhog emerges from its burrow and see its shadow, then it will retreat and winter will continue for another 6 weeks. If it doesn't see its shadow, that mean spring will arrive early!

Family Fun Activities Around Dane County

February 1 - Frozen Fest: Ice Carving Demostration. Time: 10 am - 3 pm. Stop by Cannery Square in Sun Prairie to check out icy art creations, displays and live ice carving demonstration.

February 2 - Froze Fest: Sled Dog Demo. Time: 12 - 3 pm. This event will be at Wetmore Park in Sun Prairie. Come meet the Free Spirit Siberian Huskies Rescue to learn about sled dog trianing and get up close to see the incredible dog team show case their teamwork.

February 7 - Snow Ball with Hooper Sailing Club. Time: 7:30 - 10 pm. Grab your dancing shoes and dance the night away with your friends at the Wisconsin Union Snow Ball at the Great Hall, Memorial Union. Formal attire is enouraged, but dress to your comfort!

February 8 - 2025 Frozen Assets Festival. Time: 10 am - 3pm. Clean Lakes Alliance will be providing a variety of family-friendly activities on frozen Lake Mendota such as flying kites, drinking hot chocolate, ice skating, and science led demonstrations by various organizations.



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Tus Tswv Hauj Lwm Ntawm (EEO/AA), ntawm lub Tsev Kawm Ntawv Qib Siab (University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension) pab rau kev ncaj ncees txog kev hauj lwm thiab kev pab cuam, xws li nyob rau hauv Title VI, Title IX, thiab ntawm tsab cai Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) yuav tsum kom muaj thiab Feem 504 ntawm the Txoj Cai Kev Pab Rov Tsim Kho Uas Tau Teev Tseg.