

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS & FINANCE PROGRAM MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



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.



FINANCIAL NEWS UPDATES

PSLF Executive Order

On March 7, President Trump signed an executive order that will impact student loan borrowers participating in the public service loan forgiveness (PSLF) plan. The order directs the education secretary to draft new regulations to revise the definition of "public service" to exclude organizations that "engage in activities that have a substantial illegal purpose." The enforceability of the order is not yet clear.

Student Loans & Credit Scores

A new report by VantageScore, a consumer credit company, finds that more than 9 million federal student loan borrowers with past due loans may see a decrease in their credit score by as much as 129 points and that scores could increase by 8 points for borrowers who resume their payments.

Renters Need \$63,680 Income to Afford Typical Apartment

A RedFin study shows that renters need to earn almost \$64,000 to be able to afford the median rent for a U.S. apartment, which is \$1592 per month. Unfortunately, typical renters earn almost \$9,000 less than they need to be able to afford the median U.S. apartment. While this deficit number remains high, it is the lowest amount since March 2022, according to RedFin.

RedFin used asking rents for the last 3 months of 2024 for this study. An apartment is considered affordable if the rent does not exceed more than 30% of the renter's income.



New Affordable Housing in Wisconsin

In December 2024, Governor Tony Evers and the Wisconsin Housing & Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) announced funding details for the Vacancy-to-Vitality, Restore Main Street, and Infrastructure Access loan programs. Almost 500 new housing units will be built from more than \$9 million in funding. Locations for the development include Sheboygan County, Sawyer County, Milwaukee County, and Dane County.



Misconceptions about High Yield Savings Accounts

A recent survey of just over 2,200 people found there were common misconceptions about high yield savings accounts that prevented more than 7 in 10 survey participants from using a high-yield savings account.

The common misconceptions in the survey responses were:

- 58% did not realize they can open a high-yield savings account at another financial institution without leaving their primary bank
- 63% were unaware that many high-yield savings accounts are FDIC-insured
- 7 in 10 did not realize that money deposited in a high-yield savings accounts can be accessed within days
- 4 in 10 people did not know the interest rate on their current savings account
- 78% believed it takes 10 minutes or longer to open an online savings account, when many accounts can be opened in 5 minutes or less

Extension Family & Finance Resources

FILED YOUR TAXES? ARE YOU GETTING A REFUND?

You can get access to your tax information, make a payment, and check your refund by visiting the IRS.gov website. To use the "Where's My Refund Tool" www.irs.gov/wheres-my-refund You will need:

- Your Social Security or individual taxpayer ID number (ITIN)
- Your filing status
- The exact refund amount on your return.

To process your IRS (Federal) refund, it usually takes up to 21 days for an e-filed return, 4 weeks or more for amended returns and returns sent by mail. It may take longer if your return needs corrections or extra review, or if you qualify for the EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit). Check out Dane County website for additional tax resources and information.

Mount Horeb Senior Center supports and assists Seniors (60+) and their families by providing programs and services that promote well being, independence, and involvement in their community. On April 10, they are hosting a class called How to Avoid Scams from 1-2 pm. This class will cover topics like Dane County's current scam activity and fraud cases, as well as current fraud trends, and what you can do recognize a scam and how to react. More information on this class can be found on the [County of Dane Wisconsin website](#).



NEW - JITP ONE-PAGER RESOURCES on UW-EXTENSION'S WEBSITE!

Just in Time Parenting is a free parenting newsletter designed so that information that's relevant to your child is automatically delivered to you just in time! Check out [UW-Extension's website](#) to read our latest 1 pager information from newborn to 3 months. For more detailed information on what to expect during your child's development (0-5 years old), visit the national website at jitp.info to sign up for age-paced newsletters straight to your inbox.

Money Matters is an online program designed to improve your financial habits. Through this course, you will gain money management skills and build knowledge you can share with your family and friends. The course can be completed through online self-study only or online self-study with financial coaching by a UW-Extension educator.

Re-Entry Ready Resource is Extension's financial resource website that provides local community resource guide, tools, and information for individuals who were recently released or re-entering the community. Covered topics include housing, retrieving ID, work, income and benefits, expenses, insurance, etc.

Toddler and Literacy Skills

By age 3, your toddler should be able to understand and probably use more than 1000 words when they communicate. In addition, they are learning to be more independent. Both skills which are very important as they transition to preschool and kindergarten in the following years.

Here are a few tips and strategies parents and caregivers can use to encourage literacy skills in your toddler:

- Label things with your child's name, such as their coat, boots, toys and drawings
- Point to words as you read to your child, moving from left to right and top to bottom.
- Write out letters and words for your child to show them words can be spelled and written

More tips and strategies can be found on the Parenting Future Readers.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

April 3 - Resilient Co-Parenting: Help Children with Strong Emotions. (virtual). Time: 7-8 pm. Children experience a wide range of emotions through the transition of separation or divorce. Learn ways to support children through strong emotions, to reduce stress and build emotional intelligence.

April 8 - Focus on Fathers: Fathers Communicate with Children. (virtual). Time: 6-7 pm. For this month, explore with other father caregivers to see how fathers can help children learn about communication.

April 8, 15, 22, 29 - Triple P Seminar. (virtual). Time: Tuesdays from 9-10:30 am or 6-7:30 pm. This virtual program is for parents and caregivers of children 0 - 12 years of age, and provides parents with a toolbox of strategies to raise confident and healthy children, build strong family relationships and manage common misbehavior.

April 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24 - RENT Smart. (virtual). Time: 7-8 pm. This virtual program meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and participants will gain general tips and strategies navigating the renting process. Join all or as many as you can!

April 10 - May 22 - Planning AHEAD series. (Thursdays, virtual). Time: 11 am - 12 pm. This is a 7-session course (one hour each) that guides participants through getting started, handling financial changes, advance medical and legal directives, estate planning, choices in end of life care, final wishes, and understanding grief.

April 17 - Raising WI's Children: How Kids Develop Self Control. (virtual). Time: 1-2 pm. Toddlerhood can be a difficult time to navigate. Learn how self-control develops in children so you can better understand where your children are developmentally and how to best support them.

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

Family Fun Activities Around Dane Count

Wisconsin Film Festival

April 3 -10, 2025

We've all had our fair share of Netflix binges. Sure, they're fun, but there's something special about sitting in a theater. At the Wisconsin Film Festival, it's time to sit back, relax and enjoy the magic of big-screen shows.



Midwest Horse Fair | April 11 - 13

The Midwest Horse Fair is the top three-day horse fair in America. Every year the Midwest Horse Fair gets bigger and better.

Wisconsin Craft Cider Tasting | April 12, 2025

Taste delicious beverages from more than 20 cideries and wineries. Check out all Wisconsin has to offer during this annual event at Mershon's Cidery in Stoughton.



Sprout Spring Market | April 26 - 27, 2025

Discover handmade treasures, unique artworks, and ingenious creations, enjoy food trucks and more at this free annual celebration!

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