

NICHOLAS COUNTY FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES NEWSLETTER

 Cooperative Extension Service

As we welcome a new year, it's a great time to focus on fresh starts, healthy habits, and taking care of ourselves from head to toe—including our eyes. January is recognized as Glaucoma Awareness Month, a reminder of the importance of routine eye care and early detection. On page 7, I have included information about glaucoma and want to encourage you to schedule your eye exams.

To kick off the New Year, we have quite a few programs for those of you interested in sewing. Ms. Louise will be holding a class in December that focuses on reading sewing patterns, and in January, she and I will be offering a Saturday sewing workshop where you can create a rag quilt for yourself or to gift to someone.

Homemaker Council will meet on December 11th at 10 a.m. at the office, so please make plans to attend. We will be discussing upcoming events, the International Dinner, the KEHA State Meeting, and lots more.

Lastly, if you're like me and want to kick off 2026 with a clutter-free home, join me on January 5th to learn tips and tricks on cutting the clutter. The class will be free and filled with lots of useful information, and each participant will receive a 31-day clutter-free challenge jar to help them get started.

As we head into 2026, thank you for all the work you do for Nicholas County. Happy Holidays and Happy New Year! Here's wishing you a year ahead full of health and happiness.

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Quilting Club

Our quilt pattern has been chosen for the quilt raffle. Quilting Club will begin meeting on Tuesdays more regularly to ensure the quilt is done in time. Check with the office each Monday, to see if club is meeting.



Ashley H. Vice



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Happy Holidays

Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

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Lexington, KY 40506



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NICHOLAS COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION HOMEMAKER COUNCIL

MEETINGS

Save the Date



AUGUST 28TH

OCTOBER 16TH

DECEMBER 11TH

FEBRUARY 25TH

APRIL 21ST

MAY 14TH- TENTATIVELY SET ASIDE FOR ANNUAL MEETING



Cooperative Extension Service
Family and Consumer Sciences

MINDFULNESS FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Homemaker Leader Lesson

JANUARY 22ND AT 10 A.M.

368 East Main St.
Carlisle, KY 40311

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READING Sewing Patterns Class

Calling all adults wanting to learn how to read sewing patterns to create their own apparel.

When: December 9th at 5:30 p.m.
Where: Nicholas County Extension Office
Cost: FREE

Call (859) 289-2312 to register

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Beginner Sewing

SATURDAY WORKSHOP

Come create a beginner-friendly rag quilt all while learning basic sewing machine techniques!

When: January 17th at 10 a.m.
Where: Nicholas County Extension Office
Supplies: 1-42 pc layer cake of printed fabric and 3 yards of your choosing for back

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Homebased Microprocessor Workshop

UK Martin-Gatton
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment

Save the Date

January 21st at 9 a.m.

Nicholas County
Extension Office

Cooperative
Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

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thank you

to the following businesses
for supporting Nicholas
County Homemakers!

TRACKS

LADOBEES

CARLISLE GIFTS

AND

COLLECTIBLES

WARNER SERVICE

STATION

DICK'S ON MAIN

WALNUT MARKET

STERLING GYPSY

68 WEST

J AND J APPAREL

COUNTRYSIDE

BLESSINGS

WEST MAIN TIRE

AND LUBE

DEE JAY AUTO

PARTS

YMCA-CARLISLE,

KY

EZ RIDERS PIZZA

CLEAR THE CLUTTER IN 2026

Kick-off 2026 with a refreshing New Year workshop
designed to help you reclaim your space, reduce stress,
and create a home that truly supports your goals
through clearing the clutter.



WHERE AND WHAT TO DONATE



TACKLING "CLUTTER HOT
SPOTS" IN YOUR HOME



31 DAY CHALLENGE JAR TO
JUMP START YOUR
DECLUTTERING



859-289-2312



January 5th 6-7 p.m.



Nicholas Co. Livestock
Barn

Cooperative
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FINANCIAL TIPS FOR SANDWICH-GENERATION CAREGIVERS

Approximately one in four adults simultaneously cares for someone over age 65 and raises a child under age 18, according to a 2023 report in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society. This group is called the “sandwich generation.” With average life expectancy rates increasing, many middle-aged adults now find themselves caring for both their aging parents and their dependent children at the same time.

The sandwich generation faces normal financial pressures, such as childcare and education costs, retirement savings, health-care needs and basic living expenses. What makes this population unique is that they have co-occurring responsibilities that often draw from the same limited pool of resources (i.e., time, energy and money).

Balancing dual caregiving roles can be challenging, especially with multiple competing priorities. If you are a “sandwiched” adult, consider these tips to reduce the financial stress associated with caring for an aging loved one.



Keep budgets separate

If you provide care for an older adult, it is important to keep their finances separate from yours if they plan to apply for assistance through government agencies.

When applying for benefits, don't hide or transfer a loved one's assets to qualify, as this can have negative legal consequences. Use your loved one's resources to pay for their expenses and keep detailed records.

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Explore assistance programs

Search for community and government assistance programs that can help with living or medical expenses, long-term care costs, meal delivery services, transportation to medical appointments and more. Additionally, research local free or low-cost senior programs, senior centers, adult day care options and caregiver support groups.

There are many useful state and national resources you can explore online:

- Medicaid at <https://www.medicaid.gov/>
- Medicare at <https://www.ssa.gov/medicare>
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) at <https://www.ssa.gov/ssi>
- Senior Services at <https://www.hhs.gov/programs/social-services/programs-for-seniors/>
- Kentucky Department for Aging and Independent Living at <https://www.chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dail/>
- National Aging in Place Council <https://ageinplace.org/>

Seek caregiver support

Dual caregiving can be exhausting. If you feel overwhelmed, remember you are not alone. Talking with a counselor, chaplain or friend can help. Also, consider meeting with a financial planner who specializes in eldercare. They can create a financial plan that balances everyone's needs.

Caregivers may qualify for unpaid time off under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) (<https://bit.ly/DOLbenefitsFMLA>). FMLA allows qualifying employees to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per year to care for an immediate family member. Some employers offer paid eldercare leave options; they may permit you to use sick days or personal leave to care for loved ones, or they might offer shared leave banks for caregiving needs.

ADULT

HEALTH BULLETIN



DECEMBER 2025

Download this and past issues of the Adult, Youth, Parent, and Family Caregiver Health Bulletins: <http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/health-bulletins>

Nicholas County Extension Office
368 East Main Street
Carlisle, KY 40311
(859) 289-2312

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC

DEALING WITH HOLIDAY STRESS AND ANXIETY



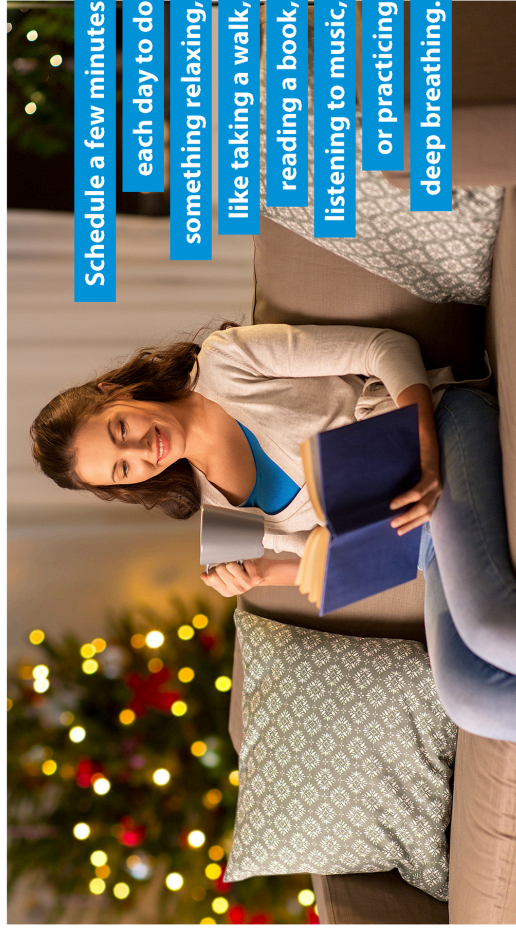
The holidays can be a wonderful time full of family, friends, and fun traditions, but they can also bring stress and anxiety. There are many ways to manage these feelings and make the season more enjoyable.

One helpful step is to plan ahead and set realistic expectations. It can be easy to feel pressure to make everything perfect, from meals to gifts to decorations. Instead, focus on what is most important to you. For example, if spending time with family matters more than having a perfectly decorated house, let go of some of the decorating stress. Make a simple to-do list and plan your time so you do not feel rushed ahead of the

Continued on the next page



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Schedule a few minutes each day to do something relaxing, like taking a walk, reading a book, listening to music, or practicing deep breathing.

Continued from the previous page

gathering. Space out your errands or cooking tasks to help you stay calm and organized. This can also allow you to enjoy time with loved ones more.

Asking for help is another way to reduce stress. You do not have to do everything by yourself. If you are hosting a holiday meal, ask guests to bring a dish or to come early to help set up. If shopping feels overwhelming, see if a friend can go with you. You can also divide your shopping list among family members. Even small acts of teamwork can make things easier and more fun.

It is also important to take breaks and make time for yourself. The holidays can be busy, and it can be easy to forget your own needs. Schedule a few minutes each day to do something relaxing, like taking a walk, reading a book, listening to music, or practicing deep breathing. These short breaks can help you recharge and keep your stress levels down.

Staying healthy can also make a big difference. Try to eat balanced meals, get enough sleep, and stay active. When we are tired or eating too many sugary holiday treats, it is easier to feel irritable or anxious. A short walk after dinner, a few stretches in the morning, or a fun family activity can help your body release stress and boost your mood.

Sometimes, family gatherings or social events can feel overwhelming. It is okay to set boundaries. You can politely say no to events that don't fit your schedule, or take a short break if things feel too loud or tense. For example, stepping outside for a few minutes of fresh air or going to a quiet room to breathe deeply can help you feel calmer. If you see your child or another family member feeling stressed, invite them to do the same to help ease tension.

Finally, remember that it is normal to feel stressed sometimes. You are not alone. The holidays do not have to be perfect to be meaningful and special. Be kind to yourself, focus on the good moments, and appreciate the little things, like laughter, music, or a cozy evening at home. By caring for your mental and physical health, you can enjoy the holidays in a way that feels more peaceful and fulfilling.

REFERENCE:

<https://www.samhsa.gov/blog/supporting-your-mental-health-during-holiday-season>

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Stock images: Adobe Stock



MONEYWISE

VALUING PEOPLE. VALUING MONEY.

DECEMBER 2025

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: USE A VISION BOARD TO REALIZE YOUR GOALS

Are you looking to jump-start your motivation to work toward a goal? Try creating a vision board. A vision board is a collage of images and words that depict your goals in ways that are meant to inspire or motivate you to achieve them.

ENVISION YOUR FUTURE

Researchers agree that writing down goals increases our chances of success. Similarly, creating a vision board brings goals to life in a visual way, upping the likelihood of turning them into reality. Vision boards often contain positive images and words that represent desired outcomes. A vision board can help motivate us to take action steps toward achieving our dreams.

MAKE YOUR GOALS SMART

Vision boards and goal setting go hand-in-hand. Goals provide purpose and give us something to strive toward. Also, having a specific plan can help us persist through setbacks. Goals can be short-term (less than one year), medium-term (one to five years), or long-term (more than five years).

Goals should be exciting and tangible (i.e., something specific that is worth working



toward). General goals such as “financial security” may be difficult to plan or to track progress. Creating SMART goals will help you set milestones you can reach.

Specific: Strong goals should be clear and precise. It should answer who, what, when, where, why. *What are the specific details once you break down the goal?*

Measurable: Know exactly “how much” you need to reach your goal. This allows you to track your progress. For example, saving for a vacation? *What is the total cost of the trip, and how much money should you set aside each month to reach this amount?*

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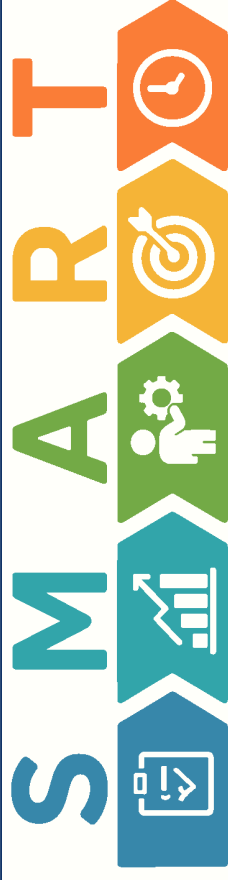
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YOUR GOAL SHOULD BE ATTAINABLE AND REALISTIC, EVEN IF IT IS CHALLENGING



SPECIFIC **M**EASURABLE **A**CHIEVABLE **R**ELEVANT **T**IME-BOUND

Achievable: Your goal should be attainable and realistic, even if it is challenging. *Is it possible to reach this goal within your budget?*

Relevant: A goal should be important to you, and it should support or complement other priorities in your life. *Is it worth putting in the effort and hard work?*

Time-Bound: Have a clear deadline (i.e., a finish line) for accomplishing a goal. *When do you need to reach this goal?*

Once you have created at least one SMART goal, you are ready to design a vision board.

CREATE A VISION BOARD

Your board should be a visual display of the goal you want to achieve. Each item you place in the collage should represent something that will help you go from dream to reality. You can use computer software to create a digital vision board, or you can use paper materials to cut-and-paste your collage. Consider using items such as photographs, images from websites or magazines, inspirational quotes, poems, stickers, graphics, or draw or write your own.

In addition, you could write out and include a goal statement. If needed, a quick internet search may offer examples of vision boards.

Your collage should be positive and personal to you. Display the board prominently where it can be a regular reminder of the SMART goal(s) you want to achieve. Hang a paper vision board where you will see it daily, or set a digital vision board as the wallpaper on your computer or phone. Envisioning your future each day can help you make choices that match your goals without even thinking about it.

EXPAND YOUR “VISION”

You can apply these principles to your life in other ways besides financial goals. You could create a vision board for self-improvement in areas such as leadership, career/skill building, family life, and more. There are many other aspects of your life you can “envision” and improve.

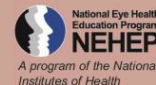
REFERENCES

Burton, L., & Lent, J. (2016). The Use of Vision Boards as a Therapeutic Intervention. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health, 11*(1), 52-65.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2015.1092901>

December is recognized as Glaucoma Awareness Month!

January is Glaucoma Awareness Month

Make eye health a New Year's resolution.
Get a dilated eye exam.

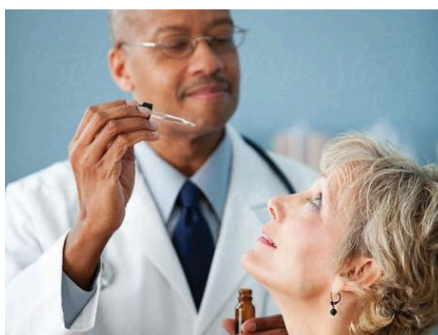


Make a resolution to learn more.

Every New Year, you make a list of things you will do to stay healthy so you can feel your best. But, did you realize that *feeling* your best includes *seeing* your best too? January is Glaucoma Awareness Month – the perfect time to spread the word about the disease. So, this year, add learning about glaucoma to your list! Your eyes will thank you for it.

1. Glaucoma can cause vision loss and blindness, which can't be reversed.

Glaucoma causes fluid to build up in your eye, causing pressure that can damage the optic nerve, which transfers visual images to your brain. But, you can save your vision with early detection and treatment.



2. **There are no early symptoms.** Glaucoma often has no early warning signs. No pain. No discomfort. No blurry vision. Only advanced glaucoma will affect your vision. Don't wait for symptoms to visit your eye doctor!

3. **In the United States, half the people who have glaucoma don't know they do.** Nearly 3 million Americans have glaucoma. Half don't know it. Lack of awareness and the absence of symptoms are preventing people from detecting the disease early. You can change that! Find out if you have glaucoma.

4. **Some people are at higher risk than others.** African Americans over 40, adults over 60 – especially Hispanics/Latinos, and people with a family history of glaucoma are at higher risk, making early detection especially important. Are you at higher risk? Talk to your family about glaucoma.

5. **There is only one way to know if you have glaucoma.** Getting a comprehensive dilated eye exam is the only way to find out if you have glaucoma. During the exam, an eye care professional places drops in your eyes to widen the pupils and looks for signs of the disease in the optic nerve.

Now that you've got the facts about glaucoma, make a resolution for healthier vision. Schedule a comprehensive dilated eye exam today! And encourage your friends and loved ones to do the same.

To learn more about glaucoma, visit www.nei.nih.gov/glaucoma.

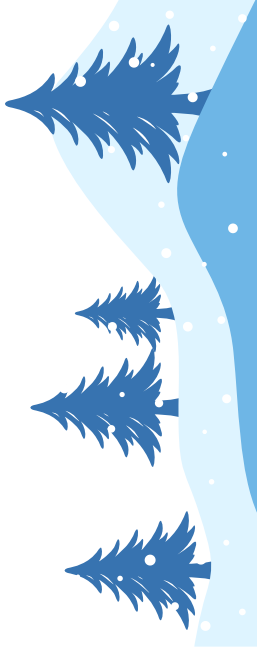
To learn more, visit www.nei.nih.gov/glaucoma



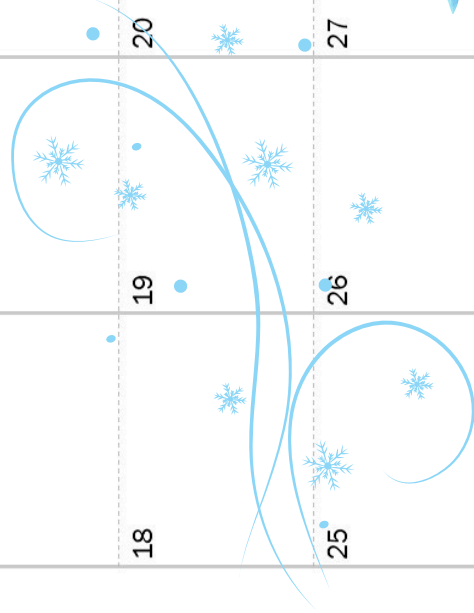
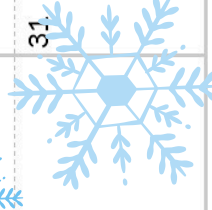
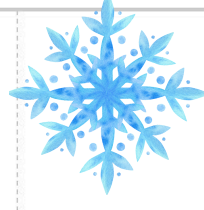
December 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 	3 Headquarters	4 Ellisville Moorefield	5	6 Carlisle Parade and Tree Lighting 
7	8	9	10	11 Homemaker Council Meeting at 10 a.m.	12	13
14	15	16 Reading Sewing Pattern Class	17	18 	19	20
21 	22 	23	24 	25 Extension Office Closed December 24th– January 2nd	26	27 
28	29 Extension Office Closed December 24th– January 2nd	30 Extension Office Closed December 24th– January 2nd	31			

January 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
			Extension Office Closed December 24th– January 2nd			
4	5 Decluttering Workshop	6 Headquarters	7	8 Moorefield Ellisville	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17 Beginning Sewing Class for Adults at Office
18	19	20	21 Homebased Microprocessing Certification Class	22 Leader Lesson	23	24
25	26	27	28	29 Disasters Don't Stand a Chance Pilot event	30	31





Cushaw Pie

2 cups cooked and mashed cushaw squash	½ cup brown sugar	½ teaspoon nutmeg
¼ cup butter	2 eggs	¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
¼ cup sugar	1 teaspoon lemon extract	1 9-inch graham cracker pie shell
	1 teaspoon vanilla extract	

1. To prepare squash: Wash and remove rind from the squash. Cut flesh into 1 inch squares.

Steam squash cubes until tender. Drain and mash.

2. Preheat oven to 400° F. In a large bowl, mix together the cushaw, butter, and sugars. **Add** eggs, lemon extract, vanilla extract, nutmeg and cinnamon. **Mix** until smooth.

3. Pour mixture into pie shell.

4. Bake 15 minutes at 400° F.

5. Reduce oven temperature to 350° F and bake pie for an additional 45 minutes or until filling sets.

Yield: 8 slices

Nutritional Analysis: 250 calories, 13 g fat, 5 g saturated fat, 2.5 g trans fat, 70 mg cholesterol, 140 mg sodium, 33 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 3 g protein.

Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.

