

SUCCESS STORY

Thinking about Tomorrow for Caregivers and their Aging Relatives

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People are living longer. Kentucky's current population of seniors (65+) is 13.3%, a number that is expected to double in the next 40 years due to the aging "baby boomers." According to the U.S. Census between 2000 and 2010 Boone County, Kentucky realized a 63% increase in the population of those over the age of 65.

The Embracing Life as You Age initiative of University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Family and Consumer Sciences reflects the importance of providing education and programming to support and celebrate the aging population and their caregivers.



The Boone and Kenton County Cooperative Extension Services Family and Consumer Sciences agents partnered with University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service specialists and area professionals to provide a four-part series titled "Thinking about Tomorrow" in spring of 2015. Sixty-five unique individuals attended one or more of the educational sessions in Boone County. Topics covered included: "Leaving a Legacy," "Financial Issues and Aging," "Legal Considerations for Aging," and "Funeral Homes." Duplicate sessions were held in both the afternoon and evening to accommodate caregivers and their aging parents.

A written survey was mailed to program participants approximately three months after the last session. Survey results indicate 52% of participants have talked with their family about their own end-of-life wishes and where important documents are located. Almost one-fourth (24%) placed a payable or transfer on death designation on financial accounts as a result of what they learned in the class. More than one-third (32%) had a will made or revised after the program. Additionally, 56% have considered their own funeral and cremation wishes and several indicated they had explored costs and services at local funeral homes. Almost half (48% in Boone County and 45% in Kenton County) indicated this was their first experience with Cooperative Extension Service programming.

One couple stated that the information they gathered "...gave us other options to consider and resources to move forward." Another couple shared "...the talks made an impression on us."

Due to the success of the series, the program will be offered again in 2016.



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