

STRENGTHENING OKLAHOMA FAMILIES

Family and Consumer Science News

Parents who invest in themselves reap dividends

When a couple goes through a divorce, each parent may have feelings of grief, loss, anger or anxiety. To help suppress those feelings, some people try to stay busy but this can add additional stress.



One of the best medicines for parents experiencing divorce is self-care, said Katey Masri, manager of [Oklahoma State University Extension's Co-Parenting for Resilience](#) program.

“While self-care may feel selfish or even impossible, it’s one of the best gifts you can give yourself and your children,” Masri said. “When a parent invests in themselves, it means they’re taking the time to care for themselves. Think of it as depositing money in the bank and earning interest. Each deposit, whether it be for your physical, emotional or mental health, is an investment in yourself.”

It's important for parents to balance their health. One way to quickly boost your mood is to exercise. Exercise naturally produces positive hormones that can lower stress and anxiety while boosting physical, emotional and mental health. Getting enough quality sleep and eating a well-balanced diet are two more factors that affect health.

Masri said being there for your children is vital, as is socializing with a group of people with shared common interests.

“Expand your social circle and sign up for a class or workshop to learn something new,” she said. “When times are hard, it can be easy to isolate yourself and become overwhelmed by negative feelings. Being around others with similar interests will do wonders for your emotional health.”

Research has shown that meditation is another proven technique to lower anxiety, stress and depression. It also improves physical health. There are several ways in which a person can meditate, including smartphone apps, online videos and other free resources.

Masri also noted the importance of focusing on the positive aspects of your life. Find value and appreciation in the things you have instead of focusing on what you don’t have or have lost. Practicing gratitude is one of the most powerful, cheapest and easiest ways to increase happiness. Gratitude can be found in the most minute moments, and the more a person looks for it, the easier it becomes to recognize. Challenge yourself to find three different things for which to be grateful every day.

Wagoner County OSU Cooperative Extension Service

Address

30058 E 147th St S
Coweta, OK 74429

Phone

918-486-4589

Email

Virginia Stanley
virginia.stanely@okstate.edu

Social Media

Facebook:
[@wagonercountyextension](#)



Website

<https://extension.okstate.edu/county/wagoner/>



Virginia Stanley
FCS Educator & CED
Wagoner County

In this issue:

Parents Who Invest in Themselves Reap Dividends	1
Parents, cont.	
Slow Cooker AI Pastor Bowls	
7 Tips for Improving Sleep	2
Sun Safety 101	3
National Immunization Awareness Month	
National Grief Awareness Day	4
Dates to Remember	5

Most people don't think twice about being kind and compassionate to others but remember to treat yourself with the same love and kindness shown to others.

"The ability to truly love another person begins with the ability to truly love yourself," she said.

Part of self-care is bringing out your inner child with play. If you watch children play, it's easy to see the joy they're experiencing. Play brings joy and stress relief and builds connections in relationships. Make a list of things that bring you joy and select one when negative feelings challenge your motivation.

"Parenting is hard work and can bring feelings of joy and accomplishment. Being kind and compassionate to yourself will help you become the best parent possible," Masri said.

Slow Cooker Al Pastor Bowls

Yield: 8 cups

Ingredients

2 cans (7 ounces each) whole green chiles
1 can (20 ounces) pineapple chunks, drained
1 medium onion, chopped
1/2 cup orange juice
1/4 cup white vinegar
3 garlic cloves, peeled
2 tablespoons chili powder
2 teaspoons salt
1-1/2 teaspoons smoked paprika
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
4 pounds boneless pork loin roast
Hot cooked rice
Optional toppings: black beans, chopped avocado, corn, sliced radishes, lime and Mexican crema

Nutrition

Serving size: 2/3 cup pork mixture
Calories: 232 kcal,
Carbohydrates: 11 g,
Protein: 30 g, Fat: 7g,
Saturated Fat: 3 g,
Cholesterol: 75 mg,
Sodium: 512 mg

Directions

1. In a blender puree first 12 ingredients. In a 5 or 6 qt. slow cooker, combine pork and pineapple mixture. Cook, covered, on low until pork is very tender, 6-8 hours. Stir to break up pork.
2. Serve pork in bowls over rice. Add optional toppings as desired.



tasteofhome.com

7 Tips for Improving Sleep

It's estimated that more than one-third of adults in the U.S. are getting less than seven hours of sleep daily. Prolonged lack of sleep can lead to serious health consequences, including immunodeficiency, increased risk of hormone abnormalities, obesity, and cardiovascular disease. It also contributes to decreased cognitive function, impaired reaction time, poor performance at work, and higher levels of stress. Try these tips to help improve your sleep:

1. Be deliberate in planning your bedtime routine. Going to bed at the same time every night and having the same routine beforehand can train your brain to relax and prepare for a good night's sleep.
2. Make sure your room is set up for restful sleep. Opting for blackout curtains or adding fans/white noise machines can help minimize outside distractions or sleep disturbances.
3. Disconnect from electronic devices at least 30 minutes prior to going to bed. Disconnecting an hour prior is typically recommended. Devices such as a phone or computer can disrupt your body's production of melatonin, which can hinder your ability to fall asleep.
4. Avoid large meals before going to bed. Lighter, healthier meals can lead to easier digestion as you sleep. If you need to snack before bed, opt for a light option like fruit or Greek yogurt.
5. Refrain from caffeine and alcohol too close to bedtime. Both can suppress the early stages of sleep and lead to lower sleep quality.
6. Practice relaxation techniques to "turn off" your mind. Breathing exercises, meditation, or even low-intensity activities like journaling can help you relax and prepare for sleep.
7. Be consistent. Consistency is key when it comes to developing good sleep habits, and consistent sleep leads to consistent results!

Innovator Newsletter

National Immunization Awareness Month

For more information on National High Blood Press



National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM) is an annual observance held in August to highlight the importance of routine vaccination for people of all ages.

Family & Consumer Sciences helps communities, families, youth and individuals address issues of health, wealth and well-being through research-based Extension education and programs that are proven to work.



Oklahoma Home & Community Education, Inc. is a local and statewide partner with Cooperative Extension which brings the best knowledge from OSU to its members. Join a local OHCE group and enjoy programs that help make Oklahomans be their best.

Oklahoma State University, as an equal opportunity employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding non-discrimination and affirmative action. Oklahoma State University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all individuals and does not discriminate based on race, religion, age, sex, color, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, disability, or veteran status with regard to employment, educational programs and activities, and/or admissions. For more information, visit <https://eeo.okstate.edu>.

National Grief Awareness Day



National Grief Awareness Day is observed annually on August 30th to recognize the experience of coping with loss and to promote resources for healing.

The day's mission is to:

- Educate people about grief
- Create space for loss
- Offer resources for those experiencing grief
- Provide an opportunity to share stories of grief
- Let others know they are not alone
- Recognize that the time it takes to heal from loss doesn't have a prescribed course
- Remind people that closure comes in many forms

Strengthening Oklahoma Families is a bi-monthly publication of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service. The information given herein is supplied with the understanding no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by Cooperative Extension is implied.

Dates to Remember

July

7th-9th – OHCE State Meeting
19th – OHCE Craft Day
23rd – Co-Parenting for Resilience

August

14th – OHCE Executive Meeting, 10am
16th – OHCE Craft Day
28th-31st – Fall County Fair*
30th – “Best of Wheat” Bread Baking Contest*

September

2nd – Office Closed Labor Day
20th – OHCE Craft Day

October

9th – OHCE Executive Meeting, 10am
23rd – Fall Council
18th – OHCE Craft Day

*Call the office if you need information on the Fall County Fair or the “Best of Wheat” Bread Baking Contest.

Wagoner County OHCE Groups

In-Towners

2nd Tuesday of the Month, 10 a.m.
Yorkshire Village, Wagoner

Shahan

3rd Wednesday of the Month, 10 a.m.
Wagoner County Fair Building

Starlight

1st Thursday of the month, 7 p.m.
Individual homes

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director of Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma. This publication is printed and issued by Oklahoma State University as authorized by the Vice President for Agricultural Programs and has been prepared and distributed at a cost of .40 cents per copy.