



NEWS RELEASE – Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

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**AAA7 and Shawnee State University “Fall-Free Fridays”
Episode Features Information About Footwear and Falls**

According to the National Council on Aging, falls remain a leading cause of injury for people aged 65 and older. Falls threaten older adults’ safety and independence and generate enormous economic and personal costs. The good news is that they are preventable and there are proven steps people can take to reduce their risk.

The Area Agency on Aging District 7 (AAA7) recently began featuring “Fall-Free Fridays”, a live, weekly interview with two Shawnee State University (SSU) Occupational Therapy graduate students who provide community education on a falls-related topic and information about falls, risk factors, and helpful prevention tips. The series takes place every Friday at 10:00 am through December 4th on the AAA7 Facebook page.

The last episode on October 2nd featured the topic “What’s On Your Feet Matters!” presented by SSU Master of Occupational Therapy students Jerrit Croiser and Gabby Ingram.

The students shared information about what occupational therapists do and what their goal is in helping people of all ages live as safely and independently as possible in their daily lives.

The education focused around proper footwear and how it can help individuals stay safe and independent. Choosing the right footwear is important as feet are your connection to the ground. The right footwear inside and outside the home can help prevent falls, slips and trips, which is the leading cause of injury for older adults.

Unsafe shoes include a soft or stretched-out heel that allows the foot to slide around in the shoe, the lack of fasteners or shoelaces to tighten the shoe, too high of a heel which causes instability, and shoes that are slippery or worn that can especially cause an issue in wet weather. Safe shoes feature a firm heel collar to provide stability, laces to help hold the foot in place, a thin and firm mid sole to help you feel the ground beneath you, a beveled heel to help catch the ground when walking, a broad and wide heel to help maintain contact, and a textured sole to help from slipping.

Other types of shoes to avoid include ones that are more than one inch of a heel which creates a greater chance of falls as it moves your center of balance forward. Ill-fitting shoes can also increase the risk of falls, and slip-on shoes do not provide as much support. Also, avoid going barefoot as it creates a greater risk for falls since there is no protection or added grip and

stability that a shoe can provide. Socks with grips on the bottom can help from slipping when inside.

Another point that was shared is that feet can spread out as we age which may cause older adults to prefer wearing shoes without fasteners. A suggestion that was offered to help with putting shoes on includes a long-handled shoe horn. Shoe buttons or elastic laces can also be beneficial.

In summary, the students shared the reminder to avoid going barefoot, and to find a shoe that fits you well, has good fasteners and traction, and a low heel.

The AAA7 and SSU OT students are also offering Falls Prevention Coaching for anyone who is interested. To learn more about the coaching, please call Hannah Hollingshead at the AAA7 at 1-800-582-7277, extension 247 or e-mail info@aaa7.org. The coaching can take place over the phone or through a virtual format.

If you missed the live broadcast on October 2nd, a recorded version is available on the AAA7 Facebook page or a dedicated page on the AAA7's website for the Fall-Free Fridays education. To find the educational information, log on to www.aaa7.org, click on the "Fall-Free Fridays" box mid-way on the Home Page, and find the date you are looking for.

The next Fall-Free Fridays episode on Friday, October 9th at 10:00 am will feature a discussion about your health and falls. Two new SSU Master of Occupational Therapy students will present on the topic and be available for questions during the live presentation.

For more information about Fall-Free Fridays, call the AAA7 at 1-800-582-7277 or info@aaa7.org, or Dr. Christine Raber with the Shawnee State University Occupational Therapy Program at (740) 351-3530 or craber@shawnee.edu.

Your local Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. provides services on a non-discriminatory basis. These services are available to help older adults and those with disabilities live safely and independently in their own homes through services paid for by Medicare, Medicaid, other federal and state resources, as well as private pay. The AAA7's Resource Center is also available to anyone in the community looking for information or assistance with long-term care options. Available Monday through Friday from 8:00 am until 4:30 pm, the Resource Center is a valuable contact for learning more about options and what programs and services are available for assistance.

Those interested in learning more can call toll-free at 1-800-582-7277 (TTY: 711). Here, individuals can speak directly with a specially-trained Resource Specialist who will assist them with information surrounding the programs and services that are available to best serve their needs. The Agency also offers an in-home assessment at no cost for those who are interested in learning more. Information is also available on www.aaa7.org, or the Agency can be

contacted through e-mail at info@aaa7.org. The Agency also has a Facebook page located at www.facebook.com/AreaAgencyOnAgingDistrict7.

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Fall-Free Fridays
with the Area Agency on Aging District 7 and
Shawnee State University Occupational Therapy Program

**Fridays at 10:00 am
from September 11th
through December 4th**

AAA7 Facebook Page



FALLS
Prevention
Awareness

The poster features a red border and a background with a faint map of Ohio. The text is arranged in a clear, readable layout, with the main title in a large, bold font. The logo on the right includes a stylized figure falling, with the word 'FALLS' in large, colorful letters and 'Prevention Awareness' in smaller text below it.