

Older Adults Have the Power to Prevent a Fall

United Way of Tarrant County and Falls Reduction Education and Empowerment (FREE) partners celebrates National Falls Prevention Awareness Day by supporting a ready, steady, and balanced lifestyle

Fort Worth, Tx (Sept. 22, 2016) – Today, *United Way of Tarrant County* and FREE partners along with the National Council on Aging (NCOA) and its Falls Free® Coalition, is celebrating the 9th annual Falls Prevention Awareness Day by helping support ready, steady, and balanced lifestyles.

“According to the World Health Organization (2012), a fall is defined as an event which results in a person coming to rest inadvertently on the ground or floor or other lower level. One in three Americans aged 65 and older falls each year (CDC Home and Recreational Safety, 2016). Among older adults, falls are the leading cause of fatal injury, accounting for over 27,000 deaths in the United States in 2014 (CDC Injury Prevention and Control Data and Statistics, 2016). Moreover, falls are the most common cause of nonfatal trauma-related hospital admissions among adults aged 65 and older (CDC Injury Prevention and Control Data and Statistics, 2016). In the United States, the direct medical costs for fall injuries are \$34 billion annually (CDC Home and Recreational Safety, 2016). Because of the serious, costly impact falls have on older adults, caregivers, and taxpayers, efforts to prevent falls are critical.

Across the country, partners are hosting classes and seminars, performing thousands of falls risk screenings, and educating older adults about this year’s theme: *Ready, Steady, Balance: Prevent Falls in 2016*. The theme highlights three goals that all older adults have the power to achieve.

1. **Be ready:** Education is the most important step to being ready to prevent a fall. Online and at thousands of community organizations, there are resources to help older adults understand their risk of falling. They also can enroll in evidence-based falls prevention programs to learn how to address their fear of falling and what they can do to sustain their strength.
2. **Be steady:** Older adults can be steady if they take simple steps to prevent falls. These include talking with a doctor about medications, getting hearing and vision checkups, and assessing living spaces for hazards. NCOA offers an award-winning video that provides [6 Steps to Prevent a Fall](#).
3. **Be balanced:** “Falls prevention is a team effort that takes a balance of education, preparation, and community support,” said Kathleen Cameron, Senior Director of NCOA’s National Falls Prevention Resource Center. “Falls Prevention Awareness Day is an opportunity to take a look at the world around us, be aware of falls hazards, and think about how we can make changes that will help our parents, grandparents, aging neighbors, and even ourselves safe from falls.”

For the first time this year, NCOA and its Falls Free® Coalition are encouraging supporters to wear a yellow ribbon to increase awareness of falls prevention. To find a state coalition, go to ncoa.org/Map and search for Falls Prevention Coalitions.

To find more falls prevention resources, go to ncoa.org/FallsPrevention.

About United Way of Tarrant County /Area Agency on Aging

UWTC has developed a high level of expertise in the areas of project research, needs evaluation, identification of resources, program results measurement, and public policy and advocacy. Our mission is to improve lives across our diverse communities by prioritizing needs in education, income and health, forming innovative and effective partnerships with other organizations and strategically raising and investing resources to make lasting change. United Way and the FREE Implementation Partner AAAs have substantial experience in implementing fall prevention programs.

Partners include:

Alamo AAA

210-362-5283, www.alamoaging.org

Bexar County AAA

210-362-5236, www.bexaraging.org

Capital AAA

512-916-6054, www.aaacap.org

Coastal Bend AAA

361-232-5146, www.aaacoastalbend.org

Dallas County AAA

214-823-5700, ccgd.org/seniors/daaa.html

North Central Texas AAA

1-800-272-3921, www.nctcog.org/cs/aging/

Rio Grande AAA

915-533-0998, www.riocog.org/aaa

Tarrant County AAA

817-258-8102, www.unitedwaytarrant.org/aaa

Senior Citizen services

817-413-4949, www.scstc.org

About NCOA

The National Council on Aging (NCOA) is a respected national leader and trusted partner to help people aged 60+ meet the challenges of aging. Our mission is to improve the lives of millions of older adults, especially those who are struggling. Through innovative community programs and services, online help, and advocacy, NCOA is partnering with nonprofit organizations, government, and business to improve the health and economic security of 10 million older adults by 2020. Learn more at ncoa.org and @NCOAging.

About the Falls Free® Initiative

Led by the National Council on Aging, the Falls Free® Initiative includes 43 states and 70 national organizations, professional associations, and federal agencies working collaboratively to bring education, awareness, and evidence-based solutions to local communities. Falls Free® seeks to provide hundreds of thousands of older Americans with the resources and education needed to reduce their risk of injury. For more information, please visit: www.ncoa.org/FallsFreeInitiative. Use #FPAD16 to join the conversation on social media.

FREE workshops for people **60 and older** and caregivers

September 13-November 1, 2016

Tuesdays, 9:00 AM-11:00 AM Medical Plaza Professional Building
To register, call 1-855-807-5292

September 8-October 27, 2016

Thursdays 10:00 AM-12:00 PM Texas Health Fort Worth (Senior Health and Wellness Center)
To register, call 1-877-THR-WELL (1-877-847-9355)

October 4-October 27, 2016

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:30 PM-3:30 PM, Texas Health HEB
To register, call 1-877-THR-WELL (1-877-847-9355)

September 27-October 20, 2016

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00 PM-4:00 PM First United Methodist Church Hurst
To register, call 817-282-7384 Ext. 22