

Estill County Extension Family and Consumer Sciences



Cooperative Extension Services

Estill County

76 Golden Court

Irvine, KY 40336

(606)723-4557

Fax: (606)723-5912

December 2025/ January 2026

Happy Holidays,

I hope everyone is doing well. Please look at the Dates of Interest and mark your calendars for upcoming events. We have Homemaker Holiday party on December 2nd and the Holiday Workshop on December 9th.

I want everyone to stay safe during the holiday/winter season so here are a few quick tips:

- * Take care of your mental health and try not to stress about buying the perfect gift and spending a lot of money. Homemade gifts are great.
- * Be careful shopping online. Make sure the website has "https" at the beginning of the web address. The "s" means secure.
- * Check your credit reports at least once a year
- * Make sure that organizations that are asking for monetary donations are legit.
- * Follow food safety guidelines.

If you need more information on any of these subjects, contact me. We have a lot of information to share.

If you have any questions or program ideas, you may contact me at my e-mail judy.vaughn@uky.edu or by calling the Estill County Extension office at 606-723-4557.

Judy Vaughn, County Extension Agent
for Family and Consumer Sciences

Dates of Interest

- December 2nd—Homemaker Holiday Party "A Christmas Tea"
- December 9th—Holiday Workshop
- December 17th—Laugh and Learn at the Estill County Library
- Office Closed—December 24th-January 2nd
- January 6th 5:00—Not Your Momma's Homemaker Club Meeting
- January 22nd 6:00—Acts in Motion Homemaker Club Meeting
- January 27th 4:00—Mindfulness for Your Mental Health Matters
- January 28th 10:30-11:30—Laugh and Learn at the Estill County Library
- February 9th 11:00—Small Plate Cooking and Portion Sizes



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University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating.
Lexington, KY 40506



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You are invited to attend the 2025

Estill County Extension Homemakers *Holiday Tea Party*



**TUESDAY, DEC. 2ND
BEGINNING AT 5:30 P.M.
REGISTRATION STARTS AT 5 P.M.**

Meal will be potluck finger foods and desserts.
Homemakers will enjoy fellowship, games, door prizes, and more!
Members will need to bring a wrapped pair of socks for a game.

Registration fee: \$10

Pre-registration with payment required by Nov. 24th

Cash or check only. Checks made out to Estill Co. Extension Homemakers

Questions? Call 606-723-4557

Estill County Extension Office

76 Golden Court, Irvine, KY 40336

Judy Vaughn
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Estill County Extension Agent
for Family & Consumer Sciences

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HOMEMAKER NEWS

We had four people attend the Bluegrass Annual Meeting in Scott County. Bourbon County will host next years meeting.

The Homemaker Soup Bean Fundraiser went really well. We raised \$360.00 to go towards a scholarship. Thank you to all who brought food and helped out.

The holiday extravaganza will be on Tuesday, December 2nd. The theme is "A Christmas Tea". We will have a sock exchange this year, so bring a pair of socks. It is a finger/tea food potluck, so bring your favorite finger/tea food. We always have a lot of fun. See the flyer for more information.

If anyone is interested in becoming a Master Clothing Volunteer, please contact me at the Extension Office.

The Bluegrass Area is in charge of the KEHA Meeting for 2026. I think this will be the best meeting yet, so watch for sign-ups. It fills up fast.



Mindfulness for Your Mental Health

Just like our physical health, our mental health plays an important role in our overall well-being. When we're not mentally healthy, it can actually harm our physical health and even make us sick. Unfortunately, we've seen a rise in the number of adults in the U.S. experiencing mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression. People can use mindfulness to improve and/or maintain their mental health. Join me to learn mindfulness techniques that can be used to improve and maintain mental health and well-being.

When: January 27, 2026 at 4:00

Where: Estill County Extension Office, 76 Golden
Court, Irvine, KY 40336

Contact Judy Vaughn at 606-723-4557 if you have
any questions.

Ovarian Cancer Screening Signups

If you are over 50 years of age, you can receive a free ovarian cancer screening at the UK Markey Cancer Center. We take a group each year for this service. Call the office at 606-723-4557 to sign up.



**Deadline to sign up
Friday, December 12, 2025.**

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the UK Office of Equal Opportunity, 13 Main Building, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506-0032 or

US Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410.

Financial tips for sandwich-generation caregivers

Source: Nichole Huff, assistant Extension professor, family finance and resource management

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.

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>

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- 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.

For more information about available eldercare and caregiving resources and support, contact the Estill County Extension office.

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There are a number of resources available for eldercare and caregiving. See the article above for more information.

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](http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/health-bulletins)

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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

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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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Apple Blueberry Crisp

Wash hands with soap and warm water, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds. **Gently clean** all produce under cool running water. **Preheat** oven to 375 degrees F. **Place** apples and blueberries in a greased 2-quart baking dish. In a small bowl, **combine** the sugar, cornstarch, water, and lemon juice until smooth. **Pour** over apples and blueberries. In a medium bowl, **combine** the oats, flour, brown sugar, and cinnamon. **Cut** butter into the flour mixture until crumbly. **Sprinkle** over fruit. **Bake** uncovered for 40 to 45 minutes or until filling is bubbly.

Yield: 14 servings. **Nutrition Analysis:** 180 calories, 7g total fat, 4g saturated fat, 15mg cholesterol, 0mg sodium, 28g total carbohydrate, 2g fiber, 18g total sugars, 11g added sugars, 2g protein, 0% DV vitamin D, 2% DV calcium, 6% DV iron, 2% DV potassium.

- 4 medium-sized apples, peeled and chopped
- 2 cups blueberries, frozen or fresh
- 4 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1 cup quick-cooking oats
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ cup cold unsalted butter



For more Plate it up recipes visit
<https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/piukp-recipes>