



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

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## **Jackson County Residents Complete** **“A Matter of Balance”**

Eleven Jackson Countians recently completed the *A Matter of Balance* falls management workshop presented by the Area Agency on Aging District 7 (AAA7). The workshop, conducted with the assistance of the Oak Hill Senior Center, was open to individuals 60 years of age and older and focused on changing common misconceptions regarding falls. The workshop helped teach attendees skills to promote self-confidence, exercises to help improve balance, skills to increase physical strength, problem solving, and assertiveness. Coaches who helped teach the class to participants were Carla Cox, Breanna Williams and Emily Ash of the Area Agency on Aging District 7.

The workshop is an evidence-based program developed by Boston University to help reduce the fear of falling and increase the activity levels of older adults. *A Matter of Balance* has demonstrated injury reduction and cost savings. According to STEADY U Ohio, in Ohio, falls are the leading cause of injury-related hospitalization and death among Ohioans age 65 and older. One in three older Ohioans will fall this year with the estimated cost of falls (medical and lost work) in Ohio at over \$1.8 million a day.

Of the participants in *A Matter of Balance*, 96 percent have reported they have made changes in their homes to improve safety, 97 percent are more comfortable in talking about their fear of falling, 99 percent plan to continue to exercise after the workshop and 99 percent would recommend the workshop to their friends and family. After completing the course, participants have noted, “I am exercising more”, “I am being more aware of my surroundings”, and “The class was very informative and very good for older adults, more people should attend.”

Participants from the recent class at the Oak Hill Senior Center enjoyed their time together so much and wanted to continue supporting each other with good falls management tools that they developed “Ready and Steady”. In this group, they have continued using the exercises and pointers they learned in their Matter of Balance classes and provide support by meeting on a regular basis.

For more information about upcoming classes in the area, please call the AAA7 at 1-800-582-7277, extension 247 (Breanna Williams) or extension 284 (Carla Cox).

Your local Area Agency on Aging District 7 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 nurse or social worker 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](http://www.aaa7.org), or the Agency can be contacted through e-mail at [info@aaa7.org](mailto:info@aaa7.org). The Agency also has a Facebook page located at [www.facebook.com/AreaAgencyOnAgingDistrict7](http://www.facebook.com/AreaAgencyOnAgingDistrict7).

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Participants enjoyed learning exercises in the *A Matter of Balance* class that was recently held at the Oak Hill Senior Center. Pictured left to right are: *A Matter of Balance* Coach Carla Cox, and participants Helen Arnott, Harry Dillinger and Annabelle Miller. Standing are, left to right, Dorothy Metzler, Jean Hale, Anna Mae Evans, Marlene Haydon, Martha Detty-Foster, Bonnie Harris, Eloise Jones and Carolee Lewis.