



**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 “Out and About – Things to Consider”**

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 now through December 11<sup>th</sup> on the AAA7 Facebook page.

The latest episode on November 20<sup>th</sup> featured the topic “Out and About – Things to Consider” presented by SSU Master of Occupational Therapy (OT) students Brandon Flores and Megan Shaffer.

Occupational therapy is a profession that focuses on the client’s ability to perform daily tasks and activities as well as what they want or need to improve on. It can be helpful with physical, cognitive or emotional disabilities.

Falls are one of the leading causes of fatal and non-fatal injuries for older Americans; however, falling does not have to be inevitable.

Practicing good falls-prevention techniques and tips are also important being out and about in the community. The students shared these helpful tips:

- Make sure you are feeling good and that you have a good energy level before you head out.
- Have a phone or safety alert system with you at all times.
- In the car, use good safety tools to assist with getting in and out of the car if needed including a handy bar, step bar, and leg lifter.
- Public transportation – improve safety by utilizing hand rails and grab bars, and check for items and obstacles in the aisle while making your way to your seat.
- Check your surroundings outside to make sure it is well lit, use your cane or walker if you have one, and check the path for cracks or uneven surfaces.

- Be careful during dangerous weather such as storms or snowy conditions as they can make surfaces very slippery. You can utilize grip tape or grip paint to help prevent falls.
- Kitty litter can be used on icy paths to help prevent slips. Have this or salt on hand to use during the winter months.
- Make sure you take your time and navigate slowly and carefully.
- Use the curb cut if you are about to cross the road so you do not have to step down off the curb.
- Wear proper eyewear and shoes. Use sunglasses if it is bright out. Pause and allow your eyes time to adjust to the brightness when going in and out from the sun.
- Avoid situations where you are standing on a chair or ladder, especially if you are outside on grassy ground.
- In public restaurants, look out for liquids, grease and foods on the floor that could cause a slip.
- In shops and stores, look out for electrical cords on the floor and avoid extra clutter. In older stores, look out for loose floor boards.
- Utilize handicapped stalls in the bathroom when out as they usually have grab bars you can use to help avoid falls.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help or advocate for yourself when out in the community.

If you missed the episode, the broadcast can be viewed by watching a recorded version that is available on the AAA7's Facebook page or at the AAA7's website at [www.aaa7.org](http://www.aaa7.org). At the Home Page, click on the "Fall-Free Fridays" promotional ad and then find the "November 20<sup>th</sup>" episode information.

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](mailto:info@aaa7.org). The coaching can take place over the phone or through a virtual format.

The next Fall-Free Fridays episode on Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am will feature the topic of "Work Smarter, Not Harder to Prevent 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](mailto:info@aaa7.org), or Dr. Christine Raber with the Shawnee State University Occupational Therapy Program at (740) 351-3530 or [craber@shawnee.edu](mailto: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](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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**Fall-Free Fridays**  
with the Area Agency on Aging District 7 and  
Shawnee State University Occupational Therapy Program  
Fridays at 10:00 am  
Now through  
December 11th  
AAA7 Facebook Page

**FALLS**  
Prevention  
Awareness

The graphic is a rectangular box with a red border. The background is a light blue map of Ohio. The text is arranged in a clean, sans-serif font. The 'FALLS' logo features a stylized red figure falling into a green sun-like shape.