



**MONTANA**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

**EXTENSION**

*Montana High School  
Financial Planning Newsletter*

March 2007

## New HSFP Materials

The rollout of an all new NEFE High School Financial Planning program was unveiled to Extension and Credit Union partners in Denver, March 12 - 15. These materials will be available in the fall of 2007.

The updated curriculum now is linked to education standards in 50 states, and to several national subject-area standards. While remaining a paper and pencil curriculum—which is still in demand by most teachers—it has a new, edgy look that teens respond to.

In addition, the revised HSFP is supported by a dynamic Web site that will offer a large, continually changing collection of materials for teachers; online calculators, games, polls, and real-life learning exercises for students; and ideas for extending learning beyond the classroom, including a special section for parents.

Katherine Bastian, NEFE Fellow will reveal the new materials at the Montana Financial Education Coalition Conference on April 10 - 11 in Billings. HSFP is providing partial registration scholarships and MCEE is providing substitute teacher funding. For more information email: [mcee@montana.edu](mailto:mcee@montana.edu).

## Montana Financial Education Coalition Conference

Educators, financial institutions, CPAs, state and federal agencies, non-profits, 4-H Leaders, Extension agents, students, and individuals who are interested in meeting the need for financial education across Montana. You'll network with individuals from around the state who are dedicated to improving the financial future of Montanans. Take this opportunity to hear from national speakers and to see how your peers are reaching out to educate Montana's youth and consumers on basic financial skills.



Plus—this year's conference includes a Youth Track geared toward students up to 18 years of age. Workshops throughout the conference will help youth participants understand the importance of saving and investing for their future. Group rates are available for youth registration.

To register for the MFEC conference go to: [www.mtmfec.org](http://www.mtmfec.org). It's not too late to be a part of this exciting event.

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## Credit \$marts: Helping You Become Credit \$avvy!

Have you ordered copies of *Credit \$marts: Helping You Become Credit \$avvy?* packet. This packet is designed to educate high school students about credit and pitfalls of paying just the *minimum* payment each month on their credit card balances.

The packet consists of worksheets, quizzes, and a Credit Card Smarts™ slide calculator for each student. The worksheets provide students with the opportunity to work through real world examples of the *actual* cost of purchases made with credit cards when minimum payments are made on the balance.

The teaching guide for *Credit \$marts: Helping You Become Credit \$avvy* explains the packet materials and provides several ideas about using these in your classroom. A Credit \$marts teacher's answer key is also provided. A PowerPoint presentation to share with students is available at: [www.creditsmarts.montana.edu/presentations.html](http://www.creditsmarts.montana.edu/presentations.html).

An important part of this packet is the evaluation. Please return of your student's evaluations the address on the cover letter within the packet.

If you would like to order copies of *Credit \$marts: Helping You Become Credit \$avvy* for your classroom email [khayes@montana.edu](mailto:khayes@montana.edu). Be sure to provide your mailing address and the amount of packets within your request.

The packets are funded by MSU Extension, First Interstate Foundation, and Montana Credit Unions for Community Development.

## An A+ in Money Management



The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation has a special guide to help teens learn how to make good decisions about their money, right from the start.

This publication, titled *Start Smart: Money Management for Teens*, is available at: [www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/news/cnsum06/](http://www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/news/cnsum06/)

## Where is AutoTown?

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln has created a new Web site titled AutoTown.

In AutoTown students will learn what it takes to buy a car. They will also take a tour of each step that is required to purchase an automobile and have a chance to find out all about the hidden costs in purchasing a vehicle.

Each of the steps in AutoTown is very similar to what you will experience in real-life.

Check it out at: [www.autotown.unl.edu](http://www.autotown.unl.edu)



## Prevention and Clean Up: ID Theft

Do you know what an identity thief is? An identity thief is an imposter who assumes another person's identity in order to profit illegally or because the thief wants to hide behind the identity. It occurs when the imposter uses your personal information to commit fraud or other crimes.

A free Consumer Action publication titled *Prevention and Clean Up: ID Theft Account Fraud* explains the steps to prevent ID theft, and clear up the problems created and to lessen its impact on your life if you are a victim.

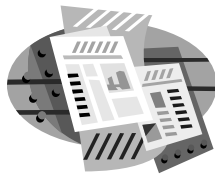
To order copies (limit 100), send your request to:

Consumer Action  
221 Main Street  
Suite 480  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
fax: (415) 777-5267  
Web site:  
[www.consumer-action.org/](http://www.consumer-action.org/)



## Family Strengthening News

Family Strengthening News is a monthly e-newsletter produced by the Family Strengthening Policy Center and the National Human Services Assembly and funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.



The newsletter features articles on topics such as Family Support Systems, Thriving and Nurturing Communities, and Family Economics Success.

To subscribe to the monthly e-newsletter or to browse the online version go to:

[www.nassembly.org/fspc/news/news.html](http://www.nassembly.org/fspc/news/news.html)

Source: Family Economics News, November 2006

## Don't Be an Online Victim!

Identity Theft continues to be one of the fastest growing crimes in the United States and has ranked as one of the top consumer concerns for the past several years.

The Federal Insurance Deposit Corporation has created a multimedia presentation on a CD to help consumers protect themselves from identity theft. For a copy of the CD: email: [goetting@montana.edu](mailto:goetting@montana.edu).

## Scary Credit Card Statistics

According to National Score Index, New Hampshire and New Jersey have the highest percentage (20%) of consumers with at least 10 credit cards.

More critical to financial management is how much consumers use the cards. Nationally, one in seven consumers—or 14.3%—use 50% or more of their credit cards for purchases.



Other findings include:

- On average, U.S. consumers have four credit cards.
- Roughly 51% of the U.S. population has at least two credit cards.

- About 14% of the U.S. population has more than 10 credit cards.
- About 14% of the U.S. population uses at least 50% of their available credit.
- The national average credit score for those with credit card use is 645, compared with the overall national average of 674.

Source: CUNA News Now, February 2007

## Financial Tips of the Week



The Personal Financial Planning Department of the University of Missouri, Columbia, provides affordable, unbiased education and counseling in all areas of personal finance to individuals and families.

This department offers free subscriptions to its weekly financial tips regarding personal finance. To sign up go to: [www.financialsuccess.missouri.edu/](http://www.financialsuccess.missouri.edu/)

Source: Family Economics News, October 2006.

## New Consumer Action Handbook

The Federal Citizen Information Center's (FCIC) newly released the 2007 *Consumer Action Handbook*. This guide is for helping people find the best and most direct solutions to consumer problems and questions.

The handbook is filled with useful tips to make better purchasing decisions, including information on buying cars, understanding credit, protecting privacy, avoiding identity theft, and much more. It also gives consumers the steps to resolve any difficulties that may arise after a purchase. A sample complaint letter is also available. There is also a directory of hundreds of consumer contacts at companies, government offices, and professional associations.



To get a copy, call 1-888-878-3256, toll free, or visit [www.pueblo.gsa.gov/rc/d37cah.htm](http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/rc/d37cah.htm)

## Families and Credit Cards

Parents usually are the best people to teach their kids about credit, and since even young children can use credit cards, it's never too early to begin education.

A new Consumer Action Publication titled *Families and Credit Cards* is designed for parents who are weighing the options of giving their children a credit card.

The topics covered include:

- Youth and credit cards
- Adding cardholders to your account
- Alternatives to credit cards
- Tips to share with kids
- Credit and spending management tools
- Payment options for kids
- Balancing credit card debt
- Differences in spending and saving



To order go online to: [www.consumer-action.org](http://www.consumer-action.org). Or call (415) 777-9635.

## Focus on Youth, Money Matters Newsletter



The University of Rhode Island Center for Personal Financial Education's fall issue titled *Focus on Youth, Money Matters* is now available. Topics in this issue include:

1. Changes Ahead in Retirement Accounts
2. The Real Costs of Payday Loans
3. New Ways to Receive Your Tax Refund

To download or subscribe free of charge to the magazine, go to:  
[www.uri.edu/hss/hdf/gff/highschool/index.shtml](http://www.uri.edu/hss/hdf/gff/highschool/index.shtml)

Source: Family Economics News, November 2006

## Thrive By Five on the Radio

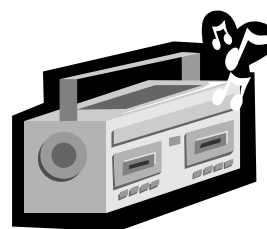
The Credit Union National Association (CUNA), based in Washington, DC, and Madison, WI, is the premier national trade association serving America's credit unions.

CUNA provides many services to credit unions and citizens. One of the services is *Home and Family Finance Radio*, a weekly 1-hour program that offers helpful information and advice on consumer finance issues. Some of the topics in the latest editions of the program include:

1. Planning for Now for What You'll Need Then
2. Strategies for Helping Senior Parents Manage Their Money, and;
3. Making Financial Room for Baby

To learn how to tune in, visit the CUNA Web site at: [www.cuna.org/initiatives/hff\\_radio/](http://www.cuna.org/initiatives/hff_radio/)

Source: Family Economics News, November 2006



## Free Financial Calculators

I have "old" battery operated Texas instruments TI-BA-35 financial calculators and copies of the Montana State University self-study manual (developed specifically for the calculator) available for FREE (as long as supplies last). For a calculator and self-study manual email me at [goetting@montana.edu](mailto:goetting@montana.edu).

Please provide your mailing address in your request.



## Financial Planning for a Life

To assist individuals with Multiple Sclerosis in maximizing their financial options and planning for their future, NEFE developed an informative, easy to use booklet in partnership with the National Sclerosis Society and the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA). The goal of the booklet is to help individuals meet the financial challenges that can accompany Multiple Sclerosis, so they can focus on living life to its fullest.

The 72-page booklet, *Adapting: Financial Planning for Multiple Sclerosis*, uniquely blends financial planning basics with the special considerations of the illness.

It offers advice tailored for every stage of the disease including:

1. Health-care coverage
2. How to apply for disability income benefits
3. Hire help at home
4. Insurance options
5. Employment concerns

Interwoven with the financial aspects of living with Multiple Sclerosis are basic money management skills such as developing a spending plan, getting debt under control, and having an estate plan completed.

This booklet can be downloaded at:  
[www.nationalmssociety.org/FinancialPlanning.asp](http://www.nationalmssociety.org/FinancialPlanning.asp)

Or for a **free** copy; contact:

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
733 Third Avenue  
New York, NY 10017  
1-800-344-4867

Source: NEFE Digest, November/December 2006



## Financial Literacy and Housing Counseling Workshop

The El Paso Collaborative for Community and Economic Development in collaboration with NEFE have developed a manual/workshop titled *Financial Literacy and Housing Counseling*.



It was developed to meet the need for financial literacy and housing counseling training designed for rural and Colonia residents living on the U.S. Mexico border.

The manual consists of a series of modules that can be presented alone or as a part of a comprehensive program. Each module is designed in a user-friendly format that focuses on key concepts, a delivery presentation system, suggested training materials, and approximate time needed to conduct the session.

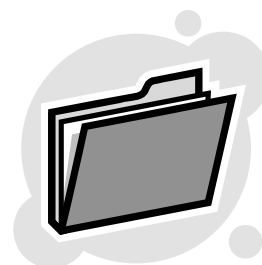
To download the workshop materials go to:  
[www.epcollab.org/FL/](http://www.epcollab.org/FL/)

Source: NEFE Digest, July/August 2006

## Consumer Protection Packets

The Office of Consumer Protection, Attorney General's Office, has a packet that contains 13 bookmarks on a variety of topics. The packet is titled *Consumer Protection: Helpful advice and resources for Montana Consumers*.

If you would like to have copies of the packet for distribution in your classroom call toll-free 1-800-481-6896 or email [JHammill@mt.gov](mailto:JHammill@mt.gov)



## Choosing a Wireless Service Provider

Consumer Action has designed a new guide in partnership with Cingular to help you understand the issues involved in setting up cell phone service, and to spread knowledge in the communities you serve.



This 22-page guide contains information on:

1. Choosing a phone
2. Preventing theft and fraud
3. Comparing cell phone plans (worksheet)
4. Different wireless plans
5. Selecting the best wireless coverage
6. Phone number portability

To order copies (limit 100), send your request to:

Consumer Action  
221 Main Street  
Suite 480  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
fax: (415) 777-5267  
Web site: [www.consumer-action.org/](http://www.consumer-action.org/)

## Credit-ED Challenging Workshop

The Credit-ED Challenge Workshop kit contains all the materials needed to conduct a 1-hour financial education workshop for students.

The workshop assumes no prior financial knowledge on the part of the facilitator or the participants. In this program, students will examine their own spending habits and attitudes toward money, recognize how a budget helps them meet their financial goals and understand the rewards and responsibilities of credit card use.

Materials in this **free** Credit-ED Challenge workshop kit include:

- Facilitator Guide
- Student Handouts Book
- DVD of students talking about credit
- Flyers to advertise workshop

- Credit-ED Public Service Announcement (PSA) DVD
- Access to the Credit-ED Challenge certification quiz

This workshop kit also has a PowerPoint presentation.

To order or download go to:  
[www.credit-edadministrator.com/](http://www.credit-edadministrator.com/)



## America Saves on Car Purchases

Enclosed is the brochure titled *America Saves on Car Purchases*. This brochure answers the following questions: (1) Should I buy a car? (2) What vehicle should I buy? (3) How should I make the purchase? (4) How should I finance the purchase?

It also includes a form to fill out to become an American Saver. For additional information visit [www.AmericaSaves.org](http://www.AmericaSaves.org).

## The Basics of Saving and Investing



The nonprofit Investor Protection Trust (IPT) has unveiled a new teaching guide titled *The Basics of Saving and Investing: Investor Education 2020*. It focuses on investor education, stocks and bonds, mutual funds, 401 (k)

retirement plans, and IRAs.

This guide is available at no cost to high school teachers at [www.investorprotection.org/basics/](http://www.investorprotection.org/basics/).

Or order (*limited number of printed copies*) from:

Office of the State Auditor Securities Department  
840 Helena Avenue  
Helena, MT 59604  
phone: (406) 444-2040

Source: Family Economics News, November 2006

Explore Montana HSFP at [www.montana.edu/extensionecon/hsfp.html](http://www.montana.edu/extensionecon/hsfp.html)