

# The Balancing Act

Winter/Spring 2014

University of Georgia Family & Consumer Science, Southwest Georgia

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## Be Egg-stra Food Safe this Spring

By: Rebecca Creasy, Houston County



The spring season brings warm, sunny weather and is an excellent time to celebrate special occasions, including Easter, Passover, and outdoor graduations. Eggs play an important role in many spring celebrations and are used for egg hunts and as well as ingredients in festive dishes. Because eggs are a moist, protein-rich food, they provide the perfect growing conditions for harmful food microorganisms if they are not handled properly. To help keep you and your family egg-stra safe during your spring celebrations, follow these tips:

### Separate

Keep cooked eggs and egg dishes separate from raw meats, raw poultry and raw eggs to prevent cross-contamination.

### Clean

Wash hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds. Hands should be washed prior to and after food handling and preparation. Prevent cross-contamination by washing all food contact surfaces and cooking

equipment with hot water and soap after each use. When selecting eggs for cooking and egg hunts, choose only clean, un-cracked eggs. During egg hunts, hide eggs in places that are protected from pets, dirt and other potential sources of bacteria.

### Cook

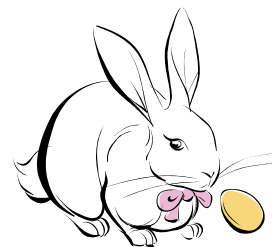
Cook scrambled and fried eggs until the yolk and white are firm and there is no visible liquid egg remaining. To safely prepare your boiled eggs, place a single layer of eggs into a medium saucepan and add enough water to cover eggs by at least one inch. Cover the saucepan, bring the water to a rapid boil, and remove from heat. Allow the eggs to stand in the covered pan for 15 minutes. To cool the eggs, immediately run cold water over them and then place in an uncovered container in the refrigerator when cool enough to touch. Even clean, un-cracked eggs can harbor disease-causing bacteria, such as *Salmonella* Enteritidis. Cookie dough, cake batter, and other recipes that use raw shell eggs should not be tasted before the batter or

dough is cooked.

Cheesecakes, lasagna and other egg dishes should be cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 160°F.

### Chill

Refrigerate eggs at or below 40°F. Place the eggs on a shelf in the refrigerator and not inside the door. Refrigerator thermometers are a great tool to use to monitor the temperature inside your appliance. If you do not have a refrigerator thermometer, you can purchase one from a home goods store for less than \$10. Refrigerate egg dishes and boiled eggs within 2 hours of cooking. If you will be dyeing the eggs and using them for egg hunts, do not let eggs remain in the “danger zone” of 40°F to 140°F for more than 2 hours. Hard-boiled eggs can be stored in the refrigerator or up to one week after cooking.





## Vacations Don't Need to Break Your Bank

By: Kayla Craft, Stewart County



With the weather starting to warm up a lot of you are probably starting to plan your summer vacations. Whether you plan on relaxing at the beach, enjoying a mountain get-a-way or tackling a popular theme park, it is important to keep a few things in mind, so that your summer vacations don't drain your bank account.

When creating your budget for your summer travels it is important to be realistic about what you can afford. While it would be nice to spend a week at a Caribbean resort that is advertised on television, sometimes it just is not affordable. According to Patrice Dollar, CFP, Financial Management Specialist, financial disaster is sometimes the result of wanting more than you can afford. Social pressure and media advertising often encourage us to

overspend. Instead, find a vacation spot that is fun and appealing and is within your spending range.

Shop around. You will be surprised at the low rates you can find by comparing prices. There are a number of websites that will even do most of the work for you including Expedia, Hotwire and Travelocity. If you are not computer savvy, you can always just pick up the phone and call. The important thing is to shop around and compare the different prices, so that you can get the biggest bang for your buck.

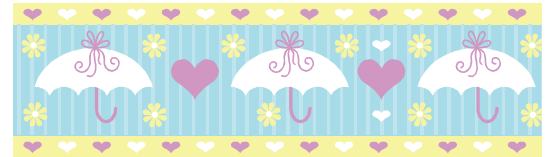
Once you settle on a fun yet affordable vacation destination and determine how much the trip will cost, it's time to start saving. If you are having trouble setting money aside each month, you should try to be more aware of your spending habits.

According to Michael Rupured, UGA Extension Consumer Economics Specialist, the average family can increase the money available for spending by as much as twenty percent just by paying more attention to where their money goes. The more money available for spending, the more money you have available for saving.

Planning a summer trip doesn't have to be stressful. Remember to be realistic about what you can afford, take advantage of travel comparison sites such as Expedia, and start saving now. Keeping these tips in mind while planning your summer vacation will allow you and your family to have a great time doing the things you love, while maintaining financial stability.

## When Baby Makes Three: Making Time for Two

By: Wayne Coachman, Early County



Becoming parents for the first time is a significant experience, personally and for your marriage. A lifestyle that was once comfortable and familiar becomes unpredictable and perhaps stressful. Many first-time mothers and fathers share anxieties regarding the changes a baby brings to the marriage. Among these concerns are the added expenses of a new child, managing child care responsibilities, and – the biggest concern of all – how the marital relationship will change. Here are some things to consider to address these relationship concerns:

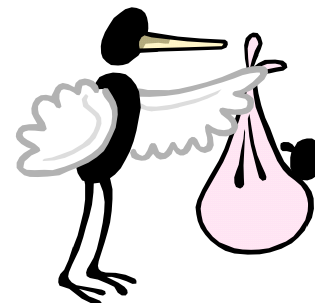
**Set aside time for each other.** In the businesses of attending to parenting, work and household responsibilities, couple time is often ignored – or you are just too tired to worry about it! Make a conscious effort to set aside at least a few minutes a day to check in with each other. Turn to friends and family for child care support so you can spend alone time together.

### Seek Balance

The stress resulting from balancing work and family roles, coupled with fatigue and the seemingly endless demands of a baby, make it easy to understand how conflict in the

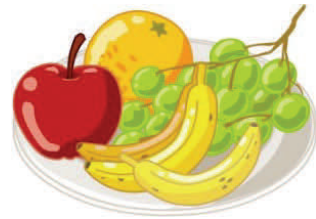
couple relationship could increase. Although becoming a parent can challenge you and your relationship, view this transition as an opportunity to enrich your marriage – take charge of these changes and create opportunities for lasting love and connection!

*This resource supports the following principles of healthy relationships. For more resources, visit [www.gafamilies.org](http://www.gafamilies.org) and [www.nermen.org](http://www.nermen.org). Updated and released by Dr. Ted Futris and Evin Richardson from the Department of Human Development and Family Science and Family and Consumer Sciences Extension at the University of Ga.*



## Smart Snacking for Kids

By: Rachel Hubbard, Lanier County



Snacking is a regular part of the American lifestyle. Unfortunately, many popular snack foods, such as potato chips and candy bars, contain lots of extra, empty calories. Planning smart snacks for you and your family will boost energy and increase vitamin and mineral intake. It may even help you lose weight.

Unlike adults, children have small stomachs. They are unable to eat enough at mealtime to get all the nutrients they need. Children's small stomachs mean they get hungry more often than adults. Smart snacks help fill the gap. They provide energy, vitamins, and minerals that kids need to grow healthy and strong. Snacks should supplement meals, not replace them. Make sure snacks provide vitamins and minerals for your child. Snacks containing a lot of fat and sugar are usually low in nutrients and may cause your child to gain extra weight. If snacks are served too close to a meal, your child won't be hungry at mealtime. Children may get hungry every two to three hours. This means they need two to three snacks daily in addition to breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

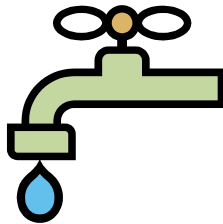
Some healthy snacks options are:



- Pretzels
- Low-fat popcorn
- Peanut butter and celery
- Granola bars
- Baby carrots and low-fat ranch
- Fresh fruits and veggies

- Fruit with low-fat yogurt
- String cheese
- Baby carrots and low-fat ranch dressing
- Graham crackers with milk
- Sugar free pudding

Between meal hunger can lead to overeating at mealtimes or grabbing a high fat and sugary snack from a vending machine or a convenience store. Avoid overeating and high fat, high sugar snacks by planning smart snacks for you and your family.



## Fix a Leak

By: Sylvia Davis, Baker/Mitchell County



Water leaks in U.S. homes average 10,000 gallons every year, which is enough to fill a backyard swimming pool. While not every home has substantial leaks, 10% of homes waste 90 gallons or more per day.

Some leaks are obvious, like a dripping faucet. Just one leaky faucet that drips one drop per second wastes over 3,000 gallons of water in one year. A constantly running toilet can waste 200 gallons in one day. If your shower head is dripping 10 drips per minute, that adds up to 500 gallons per year. It's enough to wash 60 loads of dishes in your dishwasher. Fixing all the leaks in your home can reduce your water bill by more than 10 percent. Most of these leaks are fairly easy to fix. The faucet probably needs a new washer and gasket, you can replace the flapper in the toilet and tighten the showerhead connection with pipe tape and a wrench. These repairs can often be done by the homeowner or landlord. For tips on how to make simple home repairs go to: ([http://www.epa.gov/watersense/our\\_water/howto.html](http://www.epa.gov/watersense/our_water/howto.html)).

Sometimes there are hidden water leaks. These are when you notice your water bill increasing, but you can't see any dripping faucets or hear running water. A good way to check for these types of leaks is to check your water meter before and after a two-hour period when no one in the house is using water. If the water meter has changes, then you probably have a leak.

As you are making repairs around your house, consider replacing faucets, showerheads, toilets, and appliances with WaterSense labeled products.

Take time during Fix a Leak week to fix the leaks around your home. More tips on fixing leaks around your home are available at [http://www.epa.gov/watersense/our\\_water/fix\\_a\\_leak.html](http://www.epa.gov/watersense/our_water/fix_a_leak.html).

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*The Balancing Act: Your Current Issue Enclosed*

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*Dear Friends,*

***The Balancing Act** is a quarterly publication sent to you by Family and Consumer Sciences Agents serving all South-west Georgia. All information in this newsletter is written by Specialists at the University of Georgia and FACS agents, and is backed by research from the University of Georgia and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.*

*This newsletter brings you the latest information, please contact the agent in your county.*

*Thank you,*

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