

News Release

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Ohio Department of Aging seeks community partners to host falls-prevention walking events and groups

10 Million Steps to Prevent Falls campaign raises awareness of older adult falls risk

Columbus, Ohio – The Ohio Department of Aging’s popular 10 Million Steps to Prevent Falls campaign returns for Falls Prevention Awareness Month in September 2021. The agency is seeking community partners to help raise awareness by hosting local walking groups and events to contribute to a statewide total of miles walked during the month in the name of falls prevention.

“Falls are a serious concern for older Ohioans; one in three will fall this year, and for some, that fall will be severe enough to send them to the emergency department or lead to hospitalization,” said Ursel J. McElroy, director of the department. “Falls are not a normal part of aging, and most falls can be prevented. Regular exercise, like walking 15-30 minutes each day, is one of the many things older adults can do to lower their risk for a potentially life-changing fall.”

10 Million Steps to Prevent Falls is an annual campaign from the department’s STEADY U Ohio initiative to encourage Ohioans of all ages to walk at least one mile during the month of September. Community-based walking events and groups provide opportunities for older Ohioans and others to get valuable exercise while learning about other things they can do and local resources available to help prevent falls.

Potential event and group hosts include individuals, companies, senior centers, local health departments, local governments, hospitals and health systems, doctor’s offices, community action organizations, schools, churches, service organizations, and more. A walking event is held at a specific time and location for individuals to gather and walk together. A walking group can consist of 2 or more individuals walking together or separately on one or more occasions. For the safety of all participants, event and group organizers are strongly encouraged to follow COVID-19 preventive measures.

Individuals, groups, and organizations interested in hosting a walking event or group can find planning guides and register their event at the 10 Million Steps to Prevent Falls webpage, www.aging.ohio.gov/10millionsteps. Events and groups that are open to the public will be listed on the webpage beginning in early September.



Ohioans who would like to contribute individually to 10 Million Steps to Prevent Falls may do so by posting pictures of themselves walking to social media with the hashtags #10MStepsOH and #PreventFalls. Individuals may also contribute by attending a webinar to be hosted by the department and their falls prevention partners during Falls Prevention Awareness Week, Sept. 19-25. More information is available on the 10 Million Steps to Prevent Falls webpage.

In 2019, 81 local partners organized 113 community events or groups for 10 Million Steps to Prevent Falls. More than 13,000 Ohioans walked 50,693 miles, contributing more than 126 million steps. The campaign was suspended in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

STEADY U Ohio is a falls prevention initiative, led by the Ohio Department of Aging and supported by Ohio government and state business partners, to coordinate and strengthen falls prevention activities around the state. Find falls prevention tips and resources at www.steadyu.ohio.gov.

About ODA – The Ohio Department of Aging serves and advocates for the needs of Ohioans age 60 and older, as well as their families, caregivers and communities. Programs include home and community based long-term supports and services, as well as initiatives to promote health and wellness throughout the lifespan. Visit www.aging.ohio.gov.

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