



Montgomery County
Department of
Health and Human Services

Office of Community Information and Education

Increasing Self-Efficacy in Older Adults Through Evidence-Based Falls Prevention Programming

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[Montgomery County Board of Commissioners:](#)

Valerie A. Arkoosh, Chair Kenneth E. Lawrence, Vice Chair Joseph C. Gale, Commissioner

Agenda

- ❑ Falls Overview
- ❑ Benefits Gained
- ❑ Impact on Problem Solving and Assertiveness
- ❑ Target Populations
- ❑ Questions

Falls Overview

Since 2011, 520 older adults participated in A Matter of Balance class offered by MCOPH.

What Do We Know About Falls?

- 1/2 to 2/3 of falls occur around the home.
- A majority of falls occur during routine activities.
- Falls usually aren't caused by just one issue. It's a combination of things coming together.
- A large portion of falls are preventable!



Falls: Epidemiology of the Problem

- Major cause of injury and death for older adults.
- 1/3 to 1/2 of older adults acknowledge fear of falls.
- Fear of falling is associated with:
 - depression
 - decreased mobility and social activity
 - increased frailty
 - increased risk for falls as a result of deconditioning.



Benefits Gained

Nationally, over 97% of participants have seen improvement. This aligns with Montgomery County results.

Benefits Gained

- Areas that showed the biggest improvement:
 - The perceived ability to get up after a fall
 - Protect oneself if a fall occurs
 - Fall reduction strategies
 - Increase physical strength, and become more steady.
- Participants were less likely to let their fall concerns interfere with their social life and more likely to increase physical activity.





Increased Mobility



Increase in Exercise



Increased Social Interaction

Impact of Problem Solving and Assertiveness

One of the hardest expressions of self-assertiveness is challenging your limiting beliefs.

Nathaniel Branden

Methods

- Participants complete first and last session surveys to obtain demographic information and assess changes in attitudes.
- During the last session, additional feedback and personal successes are collected through a class evaluation form.



Success Stories of Assertiveness Training

- “I recently had a fall, and the doctor says I’ll have to use a cane to get around. I don’t like the cane and I am hoping I can get my strength back so I don’t need it. But after coming to this class, I realize that the cane is useful and I should be using it. If it keeps me from falling down again, it’s worth it.” - Masonic Village Lafayette Hill
- “A Matter of Balance equipped me with the means to take charge of my life and my health. For instance, I was afraid to attend my family’s annual apple picking event this year. I worried the event might be too physically taxing. I know that my strength and balance have improved since participating in MOB but the class has also helped me to assert my needs in order to prevent falls. I decided to ask a friend to accompany me on my family outing and help me navigate the apple orchard. Thanks to MOB, I am confident that I will maintain my independence, continue to do the things I love, and work on my balance daily.”
- Peter Becker Community



Self-efficacy

- Self-efficacy is defined as one's belief in their ability to succeed in specific situations and overcome challenges.
- The Montgomery County Office of Public Health (MCOPH) utilizes A Matter of Balance (MOB) program to reduce the fear of falling and increase self-efficacy in older adults throughout the county.
- MOB participants attend eight, two-hour classes and learn to view falls as controllable, make environmental changes to reduce fall risk factors, and increase their physical strength and assertiveness.



Focus Interventions on:

- Changing misconceptions
- Teaching skills that promote self-confidence in one's abilities (self-efficacy)
- Instill the belief that one's efforts will make a difference (outcome expectations)
- Encourage positive adaptive responses in the face of difficulties (attributions)



Cognitive Restructuring

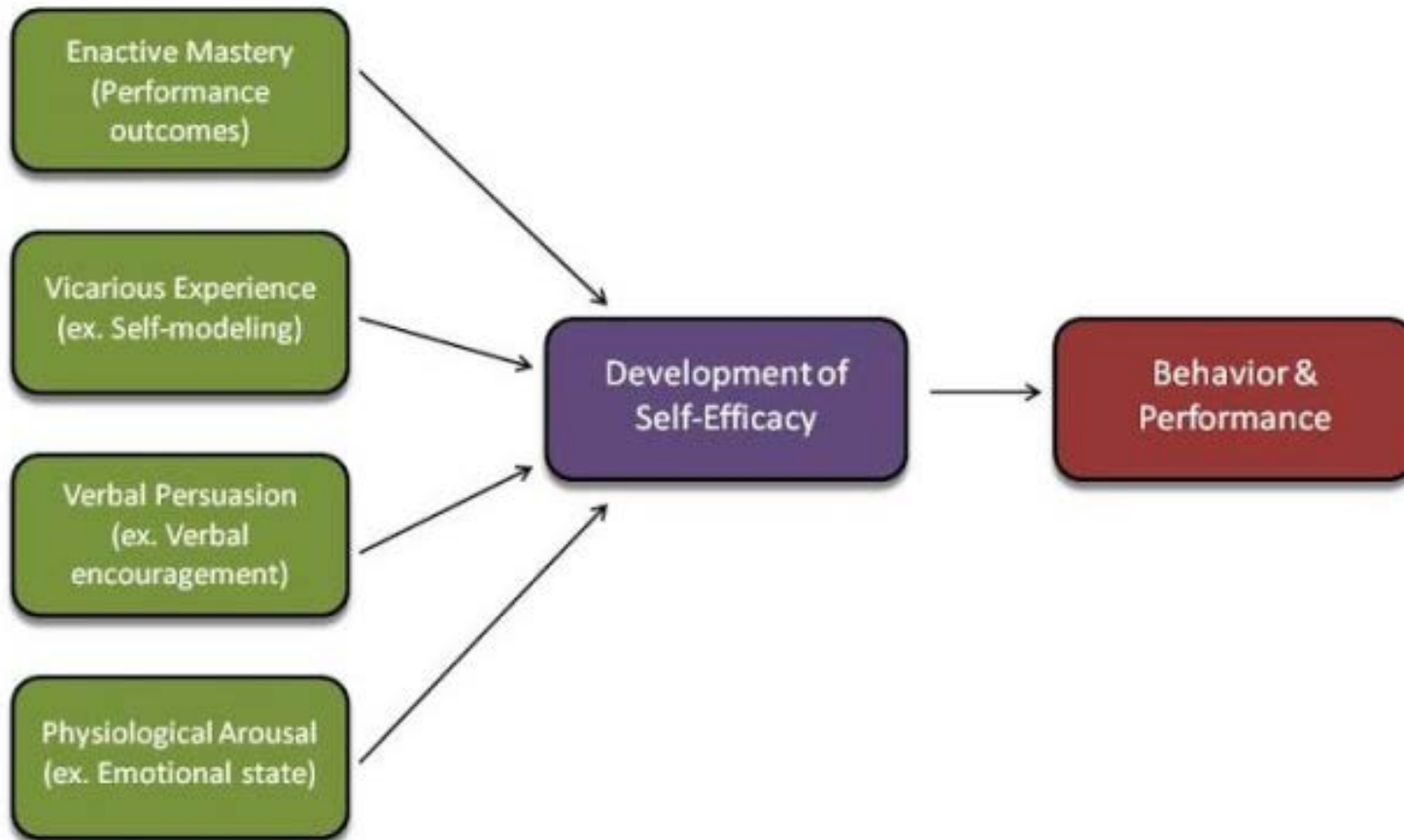
(Bandura and Lachman, 1997)

- ❑ Method of turning negative thoughts into positive thoughts
- ❑ Need to define barriers, obstacles when engaging in a new behavior
- ❑ Identify strategies for overcoming the barriers
- ❑ Plan realistic/feasible experiences so you can experience success

A Matter of Balance: Managing Concerns About Falls, Maine Health



Sources of Self-Efficacy



Target Populations

Go where the people are....

Target Populations

- Designed to benefit community-dwelling older adults who:
 - Are concerned about falls
 - Have sustained a fall in the past
 - Restrict activities because of concerns about falling
 - Are interested in improving flexibility, balance, and strength
 - Are age 60 or older, community-dwelling and able to problem-solve



Target Populations

- Locations may include:
 - Senior Centers
 - Faith Based Organizations
 - Community Centers
 - Senior Living Buildings
 - Anywhere Groups of People Congregate





Graduation at a Senior Living Community

Conclusion

- A Matter of Balance is designed for easy replication and implementation in community settings by trained lay leaders.
- Montgomery County's results support the findings of this evidence-based program.





Graduation

Questions?

Thank you!



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This project is funded by the Pa. Department of Health's Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant.



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