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August 2017

A Matter of Balance Helps Older Adults Prevent Falls

One in three older Americans – about 12 million – fall every year, according to the National Council on Aging (NCOA). Falls are the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injuries for people 65 and older. Fear of falling also takes a toll, as some older adults try to prevent falls by limiting their physical and social activities.

Many people think falls are a normal part of aging, the NCOA reports, but they are not. Most falls can be prevented, and people have the power to reduce their risk.

A Matter of Balance is designed to reduce the fear of falling and increase the activity levels of older adults who have concerns about falls. The program is taught by trained volunteer coaches in eight two-hour sessions that combine physical exercises and group discussion.

The AgeOptions falls prevention program is part of a national award-winning, evidence-based program. It has been offered for several years in suburban Cook County by our partner White Crane Wellness Center, and is supported by the Administration for Community Living through a two-year grant to Rush University Medical Center, which is expanding the program statewide. AgeOptions bilingual staff plan to offer it in clinical settings and with limited English populations.

September 22 is Falls Prevention Awareness Day. [Click here for information from NCOA](#) on Debunking the Myths of Older Adult Falls, Steps to Protect Your Older Loved One from a Fall and more. For more information on A Matter of Balance in suburban Cook County, email Nikki Briggs at nikki.briggs@ageoptions.org.