PSU Family Eligibility
Families enrolled in the program share these characteristics:
- Marathon County residents
- Income at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guideline
- Dependent child in the home
- One or more adults currently employed, in W-2 program or attending school

Participants Commit To:
- Attend financial literacy courses
- Meet with program coordinator on a regular basis, minimum of once per month
- Being motivated to make a change, learn new skills and money management strategies
- Attend financial education events

Families Achieve Financial Stability Through:
- Repairing their credit
- Tracking their spending
- Use of community resources
- Developing LIFE skills in budgeting, banking, credit and the importance of saving
- Attending financial education events

For more information please contact
Connie Umstead
Program Coordinator
608-519-8067
cumstead@cclse.org

AVOID SPLURGING & RISKING A BUDGET MELTDOWN

Some people have this idea that splurging every once in a while is acceptable. Sometimes a little extra spending won’t hurt, but if your habit gets out of control, it can lead to major financial problems. Is your budget able to handle a splurge, or are you better off keeping your belt tight at all times?

Strategies to Minimize or Eliminate Splurging

1. **Careful Budgeting** – The best defense to any bad spending habit is a solid budget. With every dollar accounted for, you’ll feel an increase in financial awareness.

2. **Leaving Cards at Home** – Credit cards make spending easier and splurging more likely. Relying on cash for all purchases places a barrier on impulsive spending.

3. **Avoid Splurging Situations** – Black Friday sales, online shopping events, and daily deal websites are common consumer debt traps. Just because a price is discounted doesn’t mean you can afford to buy.

4. **Know the Difference Between “Needs” and “Wants”** – It’s hard to separate required spending from desired spending sometimes. Keep in mind that all entertainment expenses, and that a night out on the town is just as much a splurge as a new TV.

Whether you can afford a splurge or not, every purchase you make should be carefully considered. Being mindful of your spending requirements as well as your spending habits will go a long way to keeping you in good financial standing.
Financial Literacy Classes this Month

**Using Credit Wisely**
- **Monday, May 1st** at 6PM

**Making a Plan – Budgeting**
- **Monday, May 8th at 9:30AM** and **Monday, May 22nd at 6PM**

**Small Savings Build Big Dreams**
- **Monday, May 18th at 6pm**

**Meal Planning For Busy Families**
- **Tuesday, May 23rd at 9:30AM**

All classes are held at UW-Extension, 212 River Drive in Wausau (south of Marathon County Library). Be sure to register online at marathon.uwex.edu or call 715-261-1230.

3 Classes Must Be Complete prior to completing the Project Step Up program.

---

10 Credit Score Myths to Know

1. **Income affects individuals’ credit scores**: Low income does not damage credit. Income is not an item on credit reports. Also, it is not a deciding factor of your credit score.

2. **People with a bad credit score can never get a loan**: Many companies are willing to give loans even to people with bad credit. Unfortunately, the loans will have higher interest rates than those with good credit.

3. **If one spouse has good credit the other doesn’t matter**: Creditors consider the credit reports of both individuals when a couple applies for any form of credit.

4. **Closing credit cards will improve credit score**: Closing a credit card you don’t use will not necessarily improve your score. It is possible that closing that credit card will lower your score. A credit card closure means that you have lesser total credit.

5. **Race, religion and other demographic considerations can affect credit scores**: Credit reports do not contain any information about race, national origin, profession, disabilities or religion. Credit reports also do not mention how much is in a person’s bank account or retirement account.

6. **Paying off debt erases the evidence of poor credit**: Paying off your debt does not automatically erase the record from a credit report. Evidence of debt can stay on the credit report for years. Negative information can remain on a credit report for up to seven years. Bankruptcies stay on the report for up to 10 years.

7. **Late bills always affect credit scores**: It is likely a late bill will not always affect your credit score. More often than not creditors do not report late payments to the bureau if they are paid in less than 30 days late.

8. **Having several credit cards affects your score**: The number of cards is not a factor of credit score. Although it does not directly affect the credit score, having multiple credit cards lowers credit utilization by increasing the available limit.

9. **You can avoid the risk of credit by paying cash**: It is not possible for a person using only cash or debit cards to build credit. The only way to build credit is to establish a solid payment history.

10. **Credit reports and scores from all three bureaus are the same**: More often than not, credit reports and scores from the three credit bureaus are different. Lenders do not always report all accounts to all credit bureaus. Also, the creditors do not always update the credit reports at the exact same time. The credit score formulas are slightly different depending on the system they use.