

“Stress acts as an accelerator: it will push you either forward or backward, but you choose which direction” – Chelsea Eriean

# Royal Throne April 2023 Financial Literacy Month



## Budgeting Tips: Where did all my money go?

- Calculate your income & expenses:** Building a budget is an effective way to get finances under control, so saving becomes possible. Begin by subtracting your monthly expenses from your income for a quick financial snapshot. Then allocate portions of income for spending and saving, making any adjustments needed to help bring goals within reach.
- Pay Yourself First:** Even if it's only a small amount, commit to putting something into savings before paying any other bills or expenses. It can be difficult to save when it seems like nothing is left after you pay all the monthly bills. Break that cycle by making a firm decision to pay yourself first. You'll be amazed what a difference this small change in perspective makes to your savings balance over time, and makes you prepared for any emergencies that may arise. A good rule of thumb is to have 3-6 months of living expenses in an emergency saving account.
- Track your Progress:** Build a habit of tracking your expenses daily. This will keep you on track, keep your budget up to date, and help you make better money decisions. Use a spreadsheet, the cash envelope system, or a financial tracking app on your phone to record expenses daily.
- Trim Expenses:** With a little creativity, you can cut back without taking the fun out of life. Instead of going out to movies, or going out to eat, try having a movie night at home, try a new recipe, or explore free parks, beaches, or events in your area.
- Plan ahead:** Every month is different! Put a “budget meeting” on the calendar before the month begins. This way you can review your budget from the previous month, check the progress on your goals, and plan next month’s budget. Meet with your family to determine your top 3-5 values. Look at spending and see if it matches those

values. If not, make an adjustment!

## 7 Ways to Relieve Stress

April is National Stress Awareness Month, and while stress is unavoidable, there are ways to help prevent and manage it.

- Pick one tip to incorporate each day of the week and repeat for each week in April.**
- Spend time with your pet**  
Spending time with animals is proven to reduce loneliness, increase feelings of social support, and boost your mood.
- Reach out and Reconnect**  
Call, visit or email a friend or family member you haven't spoken to in a while to catch up!
- Declutter your space**  
Extra stuff isn't just messy. It could be holding you back from living your best life.

- Find peace in a pod**  
Find a podcast that interests you! There are a ton of podcasts available to help you de-stress and gain perspective.
- Get more physical activity**  
Exercise reduces stress, so go for a walk, get a workout in or try a new group exercise class at AvSP.
- Go tech free for an afternoon**  
A digital detox can help you and your family refocus and relax. If you can't manage an afternoon, try an hour or two!
- Spring clean your online presence**  
De-clutter your phone and social media apps. Delete all the stuff you never look at.



**Questions about Financial Literacy?**  
**Contact: Carol Bayer,**  
**Financial Literacy Coach**  
**712-792-9266 ext. 1022**  
**1-800-642-6330**  
**cbayer@newopp.org**  
**www.newopp.org**