Welcome HSFPP Readers:

New HSFPP Teachers

New members that joined HSFPP are:

- Harlem Public School-Nancy Coleman
- Judith Gap High School-Bertha Kirshchten
- Whitefish High School-Kelly Talsma

APRIL is Financial Literacy Month!

The U.S. Senate has designated April 2004 as “Financial Literacy Month” to raise public awareness about the importance of financial education in the United States and the serious consequences that may be associated with a lack of understanding about personal finances.

A variety of organizations have planned activities and events during April to promote financial literacy.

The Jump$tart Coalition is sponsoring “Financial Literacy for Youth” month. The website www.jumpstart.org includes information about a variety of events, activities, and resources to promote financial literacy for youth.

The American Bankers Association Foundation is also sponsoring a “National Teach Children To Save Day” on April 22. Information and resources are available at www.aba.com/Consumer+connection/teachchildrentosave.htm.

Teens Spent $175 Billion in 2003!

Do you believe that last year teens spent $175 billion? A three percent increase from 2002, according to a new study by Teenage Research Unlimited (TRU).

According to figures released in the October 2003 Study, teens ages 12-19 spent an average of $103 per week. This amount takes into account both teens’ own money and the cash they receive from other sources. For more information go online to www.teenresearch.com.

#### New HSFPP Members

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The "Fair Use" Rule

66 Ways to Save Money

Dollar Decision$

Posters for Youth

WOW! HSFPP in a Newspaper

Financial Education Challenge

Hard Times Game

Federal Financial Information Directory

Consumer Credit Card Usage

Talking with Teens About Money

Financial Literacy Improving High School Students
**Dollar Decision$**

A 22-minute video titled “Dollar Decision $” by the University of Idaho-Extension is now available.

It includes “Tracking Income and Expenses” and “Making a Spending and Savings Plan” workbooks, a 45-page Teacher’s guide complete with the lesson script, 25 PowerPoint slides, evaluation tools, and workshop marketing materials.

This curriculum also teaches how to differentiate between needs and wants, set financial goals, five methods to track expenses, how to develop a spending and savings plan, ways to increase income, and ideas for decreasing expenses.

The curriculum is flexible and can be taught in 30 minutes or two, one-hour classes.

The cost is $25.00 plus shipping and handling.

For more information contact Marilyn Bischoff at mbischof@uidaho.edu or email agpubs@uidaho.edu.

**Order Information:**
University of Idaho-Extension
P.O. Box 442240
Moscow, ID 83844-2240
Phone: (208) 885-7982

Source: Consumer News & Reviews, February 2004

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**Posters for Youth**

The Indiana Council on Economic Education (ICEE) has created a series of posters for youth. A total of 22 colorful posters, each describing an important financial economic concept are available. The cost for the complete set of posters is $39. However, there are two sets of 11 available, that cost $22 each.

There are also five NEW 18 x 24 Financial Literacy Posters available that illustrate fundamental principles of sound money management. The cost for a complete set of these posters is $20.

To aid in instruction, there are also color transparencies and a teacher’s guide for each poster.

For ordering information go to: www.kidseconposters.com/index.html.

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**WOW! HSFPP in a Newspaper**

Did you know the Fort Worth Star Telegram will print a modified version of the NEFE High School Financial Planning Program® (HSFPP) as part of its newspaper in education effort once a week for ten weeks beginning in October?

A full-page display of HSFPP-related topics will run in the main edition of the Fort Worth Star Telegram, which has a circulation of 233,326. In addition, 340 teachers in Forth Worth who use the NEFE projects in their classrooms will receive 30 copies of the paper each Wednesday during the program.

Are you aware of any papers in Montana that would be interested in a similar educational effort?

Source: NEFE Digest, September/October 2003

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**66 Ways to Save Money**

Enclosed is the brochure offered by the Consumer Literacy Consortium titled “66 Ways to Save Money.”

It explains ways to save money on transportation, insurance, banking & credit, housing, utilities, and much more!
“Let Us Remember that education is the primary means for creating new economic and financial opportunity for everyone. If we are able to boost our investment in people, ideas, and processes, just as we do in machines and technology, consumers and the economy can readily adapt to change, providing ever-rising standards of living for all Americans.”

- Allan Greenspan
Chairman

Source: September 26 remarks to the 33rd Annual Legislative Conference of the Congressional Black Caucus

What is the Financial Education Challenge?

DoSomething.org, in partnership with CitiGroup, has developed a new interactive web-based curriculum titled “Financial Education Challenge.”

It consists of a two week financial education curriculum and a corresponding two week online game.

Three different sets of curricula are available: one for grades K-5, one for 6-8, and one for 9-12.

Each of these components covers a broad spectrum of financial literacy topics including:
- Credit
- Interest and Savings
- Charitable contributions
- Taxes and much more!

Although the curriculum and online games were designed to complete together, it is not necessary to participate in both, each can be completed separately.

This year’s Financial Education Challenge officially begins on April 19, 2004, and ends on April 30, 2004. The curricula became available April 1 and the game will be available April 19. But it can be downloaded at anytime.


The Hard Times Game

A fun, new board game that involves building a successful life by obtaining a job, purchasing a car, home & furniture, and paying off outstanding debts is available on loan from MSU.

Hard Times is entertaining, challenging, and has simple rules.

By rolling the dice and moving along the board, players try to obtain possessions needed to win. The game creates a competitive atmosphere in that all players are trying to be the first to get what they need to win.

It is also educational by alerting players to some good and bad occurrences of real life situations.

To borrow, contact Marsha Goetting at (406) 994-5695 or email: goetting@montana.edu.

Federal Financial Information Directory

Throughout the Federal Government, agencies are sponsoring and developing financial education initiatives directed to broad and diverse audiences. The Office of Financial Education now offers this Federal Financial Information Directory.

It is available online at: www.treas.gov/, then click on Offices, Domestic Finance, Financial Institutions, Financial Education, then under resources click on Federal Financial Education Directory.

For a hard copy, email ofe@do.treas.gov or call (202) 622-5770.
**Talking to Teens About Money**

A new free booklet titled “Talking to Teens about Money” is now available from Consumer Action. While designed primarily for parents, it also may be helpful for teachers. Sections include:
- Teens and money
- Working
- Budgeting
- Needs vs. Wants
- Comparison shopping
- Banking
- Writing checks
- Balancing a checkbook
- Saving
- Credit Cards
- Credit reports
- Owning a car
- Cell phones

You can access the booklet by going to www.consumer-action.org, and clicking on MoneyWise.

**Financial Literacy Improving High School Students**

A nationwide survey conducted on April 1, 2004 by the Jump$tart Coalition for Personal Finance Literacy reveals that for the first-time since 1997, high school students are demonstrating increased aptitude and ability to manage financial resources such as credit cards, insurance, retirement funds, and savings accounts.

The comprehensive survey of more than 4,000 high school students in 33 states measured 12th graders level of knowledge of personal finance basics, and compared the results with those from similar surveys conducted in 2002, 2000, and 1997. On average, students who participated in the 2004 survey answered 52.3 percent of the questions correctly. This year’s score is up from 50.2 percent in 2002 and 51.9 percent in 2000.

Even with modest gains in financial literacy among high school seniors, students did not match 1997 aptitude levels when 57.3 percent of students answered their questions correctly.

Other findings from the survey included:
- Parental involvement played a great role in financial education and literacy.
- Having parents with a higher education level helped.
- Students who are planning on continuing their education did better than those who don’t plan to go on to college.
- The percentage of students who do not use a credit card was 68.2%

A copy of this survey can be found at www.jumpstart.org within the Downloads section.

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**Consumer Credit Card Usage**

Experian, a major provider of consumer credit reports, has announced the results of a nationwide study on consumer credit card usage.

U.S. consumers were found to have an average of 3.2 credit cards. About 46 percent of the U.S. population have at least two credit cards and approximately 10 percent have more than 10 credit cards.

As for Montana, the average credit score individuals have is 703 with 2 credit cards.

For additional information go to: www.nationalscore.com/USScore.aspx

Source: Consumer News & Reviews, April 2004

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Source: Financial Focus, December 2003