



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Aging & Long Term Care of Eastern Washington
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PRESS RELEASE:

Falls Prevention Class Now Available Online for Seniors

A free, online version of the award-winning [A Matter of Balance falls prevention class](#) for adults age 60 and older is being launched in Spokane this spring by Aging & Long Term Care of Eastern Washington (ALTCEW). The evidence-based class helps adults who are concerned about falling or have fallen to maintain their independence while staying involved in activities they enjoy.

“The rate of falls in Spokane County is about double the state and national average,” (1) said Kathy Hill, an ALTCEW *A Matter of Balance* master trainer. “A fall that happens in a moment can drastically alter the rest of one’s life, but most falls can be prevented. *A Matter of Balance* helps seniors prevent falls and stay active.”

Falling is NOT a normal part of aging, and yet many older adults regularly deal with falls, near falls, and losses of balance. Each year in Washington State, about one in four adults age 65 and older reports falling. Nationwide, about 37% of falls tend to result in injury that restricts activity or requires medical treatment, including broken bones and brain trauma (2).

Falls among older adults are the leading cause of injury-related hospitalizations and deaths in Spokane County, according to the City of Spokane and Spokane Valley fire departments (2020).

The online *A Matter of Balance* class consists of nine two-hour sessions led by two certified coaches. Sessions include group conversation, problem solving, gentle physical exercise, and assertiveness training. Class-related tech support and computer skills training is included.

People who wish to enroll should do so no later than Friday, April 23rd for the class starting Monday, May 3rd. Phone 509-458-2509 x217 for more information and to register.

More than 500 people have completed in person *A Matter of Balance* classes held in communities in Spokane County and, through a partnership with Rural Resources Community Action, in Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille, and Whitman counties since the fall of 2015, when ALTCEW brought the class to the area.

In-person *A Matter of Balance* classes have been temporarily suspended during the pandemic. ALTCEW’s suite of evidence-based falls prevention programming also includes FallsTalk, which is done by telephone.

[Aging & Long Term Care of Eastern Washington \(ALTCEW\)](#) is a social service agency that supports the well-being of older adults, adults living with disabilities, and their care partners. The goal is to help individuals to remain independent and in their homes in the community as they age. ALTCEW is the local Area Agency on Aging for Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille, Spokane, and Whitman Counties.



- (1) (9/2019, source SRHD, <https://www.spokanejournal.com/local-news/fatal-fall-rate-in-spokane-county-is-higher-than-state-nation/>)
- (2) (July 2020, <https://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalafety/falls/data/falls-by-state.html>)