

# Falls Prevention Awareness Week

Impact Report 2020





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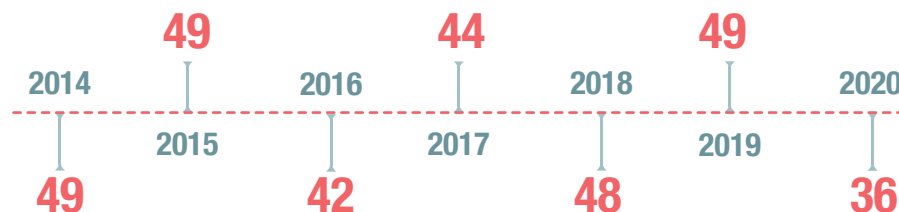


# The Importance of Falls Prevention

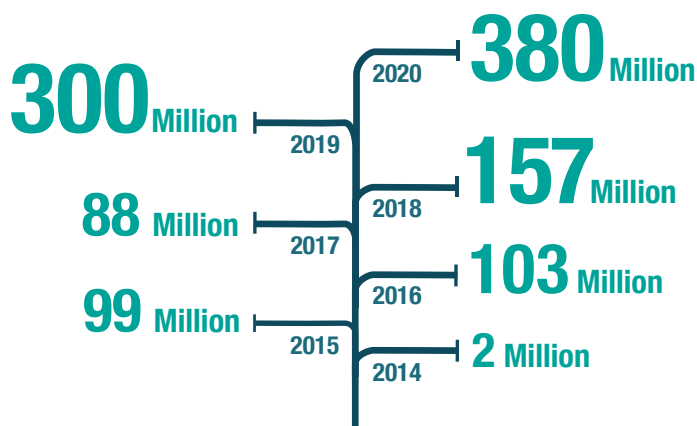
**E**very year, one in four Americans aged 65+ experiences a fall. Falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries for older adults, resulting in costly medical bills. However, falls are preventable and can be reduced by taking a few steps.

This year, the National Council on Aging (NCOA) expanded our efforts to bring awareness to falls prevention for a full week. While state falls prevention coalitions and partners were planning for this year's awareness campaign, the nation was negatively impacted by the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). Thus, the majority of aging adults are staying socially distanced from one another since March 2020. It has been a challenging time for all, particularly our partners who serve aging adults in their community as they continue to look for ways to engage older adults in a virtual space. NCOA's goal for this year's Falls Prevention Awareness Week was to remind aging adults that it is possible to maintain their health and independence no matter the situation. We understand that the pandemic has changed a lot of things. One thing that remains the same is falling is NOT a normal part of aging.

## Number of States Participating

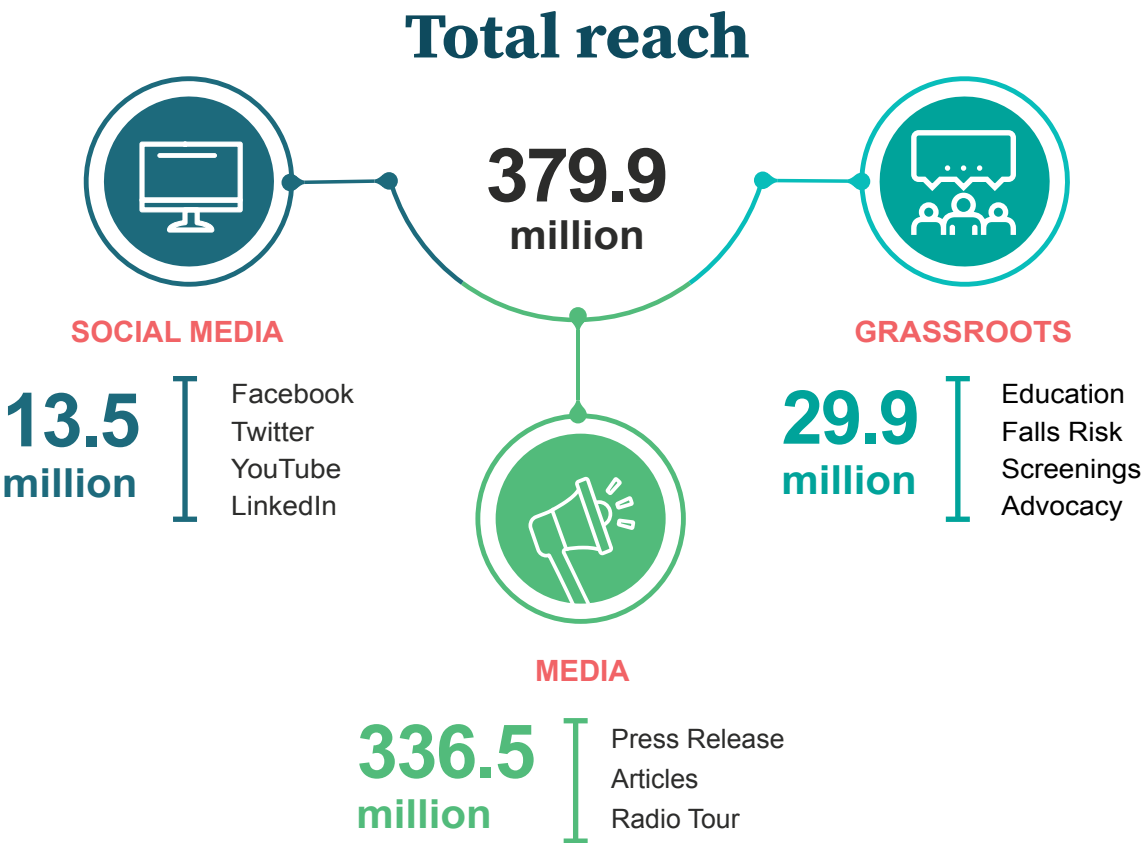


## Number of Individuals Reached



# National Outreach

For Falls Prevention Awareness Week 2020, NCOA and its partners shared the message of falls prevention nationally and locally. On the national level, NCOA utilized traditional and new media to reach older adults, caregivers, and professionals. Traditional media included radio media tours and press releases, while new media included emails, and customized posts on major social media platforms, including Facebook. In local communities, state and local members of the Falls Free Initiative delivered falls prevention education by conducting public awareness using social media platforms, providing educational presentations to older adults, caregivers and professionals, and advocating with state lawmakers.

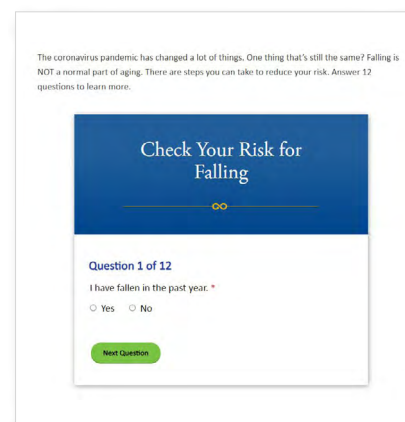
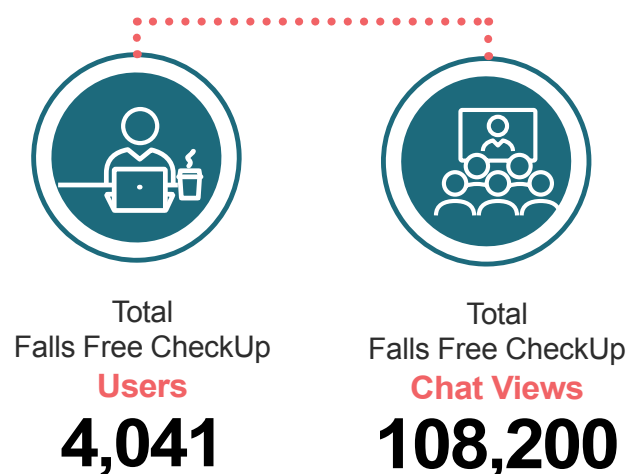


# Falls Free CheckUp

**A**s everyone is socially distanced from one another, technology has been essential to keep us connected with our family, friends, and health care providers. Video conferencing and telehealth have never been more utilized until this year. NCOA's goal for Falls Prevention Awareness Week was to develop a new resource that aging individuals can use to learn more about their falls risk and maintain their independence amidst a pandemic. This resulted in the Falls Free CheckUp, a digital screening tool modeled after the 12-question screener included in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths and Injuries (STEADI) Stay Independent brochure. At the end of the screening, the participant has the option to receive copy of their personalized results sent to their email, in which they can share with their family, caregivers, and medical providers for further discussion. Our intention for this tool is to empower older adults to have a clear understanding that falls are preventable and that they can take action to control their risks. The CheckUp was created in English and Spanish to reach adults of different backgrounds.

Accompanying the Falls Free CheckUp assessment is the Falls Free CheckUp Chat where health professionals including a geriatrician, physical therapist, occupational therapist, social worker, and pharmacist, discuss the importance of the CheckUp questions with an older adult. NCOA hosted the Falls Free CheckUp Chat in English and Spanish on our social media platforms.

## From August 2020 through November 2020



# National Advocacy

**N**COA led the effort for passage of the U.S. Senate resolution declaring September 21-25, 2020 as National Falls Prevention Awareness Week to raise awareness and encourage prevention of falls among older adults. The resolution was supported by Senators Susan Collins (R-ME), Jacky Rosen (D-NV), Tim Scott (R-SC), Bob Casey (D-PA), Martha McSally (R-AZ), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Josh Hawley (R-MO), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Mike Braun (R-IN), and Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ). We appreciate our state and local partners as they engaged their lawmakers for support of this resolution for falls prevention awareness and education.

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Designating the week of September 21 through September 25, 2020, as  
“National Falls Prevention Awareness Week” to raise awareness and  
encourage the prevention of falls among older adults.

\_\_\_\_\_  
IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

\_\_\_\_\_  
submitted the following resolution; which was referred  
to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

## RESOLUTION

Designating the week of September 21 through September  
25, 2020, as “National Falls Prevention Awareness  
Week” to raise awareness and encourage the prevention  
of falls among older adults.

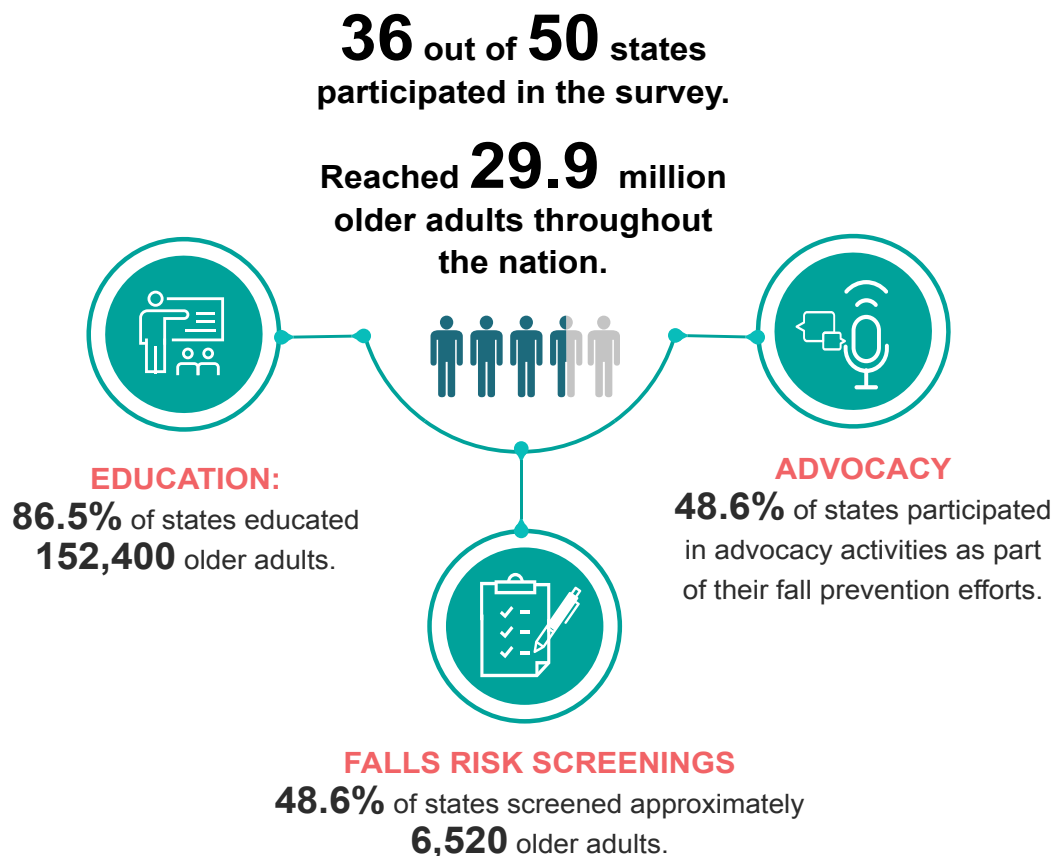
Whereas individuals who are 65 years of age or older (re-  
ferred to in this preamble as “older adults”) are the fast-  
est growing segment of the population in the United  
States, and the number of older adults in the United  
States will increase from approximately 56,100,000 in  
2020 to an estimated 73,100,000 by 2030;

Whereas approximately 30 percent of older adults in the  
United States fall each year, with each 10-year increment  
in age increasing the risk of falls;

# Grassroots Efforts

**A**n important factor to prevent falls is bringing awareness around this topic. NCOA's goal of Falls Prevention Awareness Week is to encourage aging adults to learn about their risk of fall injuries and take action to reduce the risk. In addition to the Falls Free CheckUp screening tool, we translated consumer materials into Spanish to ensure our efforts are reaching Spanish-speaking older adults as well. This year state and local partners worked diligently to continue bringing awareness on falls prevention despite the inability to gather in person. Our state and local partners were able to accomplish this effort through virtual educational presentations to older adults, caregivers, and professionals, and maximized their engagement on social media platforms by conducting public awareness on falls risk reduction. Additionally, local partners advocated with lawmakers in their state.

## 2020 Grassroots Reach Total





# Acknowledgements

Falls Prevention Awareness Week 2020 was made possible in part by the U.S. Administration for Community Living through funding of NCOA's National Falls Prevention Resource Center. NCOA gratefully acknowledges our federal and national stakeholders, as well as state and local Falls Prevention Coalitions for participating in Falls Prevention Awareness Week. We appreciate the year-round efforts to prevent falls and falls-related injuries among older adults.

## FUNDER

- Administration for Community Living

## NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

- AARP
  - Administration for Community Living
  - Advancing States
  - American Association on Health and Disability
  - American Occupational Therapy Association
  - American Physical Therapy Association
  - American Podiatric Medical Association
  - American Society of Consultant Pharmacists
  - Brain Injury Association of America
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
  - Diverse Elders Coalition
  - Evidence-Based Leadership Collaborative
  - Genesis Rehab Services
  - Grantmakers in Aging
  - Hartford Center for Mature Market Excellence
  - Home Modification Occupational Therapy Alliance
  - Homes Renewed
  - IDEA Center, State University of New York at Buffalo
  - Johns Hopkins School of Nursing
  - LeadingAge
  - Meals on Wheels America
  - National Alliance for Caregiving
  - National Association of Area Agencies on Aging
  - National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Program
  - National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
  - National Center for Healthy Housing
  - National Indian Council on Aging
  - National Osteoporosis Foundation
  - National Senior Games Association
  - Prevent Blindness
  - Rebuilding Together
  - Safe States Alliance
  - University of Southern California Leonard Davis School of Gerontology, Fall Prevention Center of Excellence
  - YMCA of the USA
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Learn more at [www.ncoa.org/FallsWeek](http://www.ncoa.org/FallsWeek)





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