

Become a financial wizard

Imagine putting aside extra money every month. Don't think it's feasible? Look no further than the coins rattling around in your pockets or purse. Starting small is ok, as long as you *do* start.

Whether you're saving for new home, starting a child or grandchild's college fund, or adding to your retirement nest egg, saving your spare change and making small alterations in your spending habits can add up to big money. Learn about the different ways you can develop and improve your savings, investment and retirement strategies with the free Financial Planning kit from the MetLife Consumer Education Center and Federal Citizen Information Center (FCIC).

Begin by using the kit worksheet to map out your monthly spending plan. Fill in your total income and subtract your expenses, such as housing, food, clothing, gas and entertainment, from this total. To increase the amount you're saving, look over the plan to see where you can reduce your expenses. Here are a few ideas to help you get started:

- Take your lunch when you go out for the day and have more meals at home.
- Shop around for a free checking account or one with no minimum balance requirement.

checkmate

News for retirees from

New York City Comptroller

William C. Thompson, Jr.

www.comptroller.nyc.gov



- Use coupons when you shop, compare unit prices, and always shop with a list.
- Ask your physician about switching to generic drugs.

With all of your savings, you need to make sure you choose the best savings and investment options. The Financial Planning kit features useful information on certificates of deposit (CDs), stocks, bonds, mutual funds and more, and also gives you the facts on the different types of retirement savings accounts, such as 401(k) plans, and how to make the most out of your contributions.

You may think having a will is only for the very wealthy or those with children, but this legal document is important because it ensures that your assets, whatever they are, are distributed according to your wishes after you die. Find out what you'll need to consider when creating your will, including designating a guardian for any minor children and naming an executor.

Check out the free Financial Planning kit today. There are three easy ways to get the publications:

- Send your name and address to Financial Planning, Pueblo, Colorado 81009.
- Visit www.pueblo.gsa.gov/rc/n54financialplanning.htm to place your order online or read or print these and hundreds of other Federal publications for free.
- Call toll-free: **1 (888) 8 PUEBLO**. That's **1 (888) 878-3256**, weekdays, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern time, and ask for the Financial Planning kit.