

ADVICE

OLD AGE PENSIONS

PEOPLE who are old enough and have no other income can get old age pensions. If you get money from another source such as your work pension or your savings then a "means test" will be used to work out how much your pension will be.

For "Coloureds"

- If you have no earnings you can apply for a pension of R71 (a small increase will be paid out from October).

- If you are single and have an income of up to R58 a month you can still apply for a pension.

- If you are married and together earn up to

Who can get old age pensions

R116 you can still apply.

- If you earn more than this you can not get an old age pension.

For "Africans"

Wages	Pension /a year:
Up to: R126	R480
R132	R474
R138	R468
and so on up to R348	R258

more than R348 nil

HOW OLD MUST YOU BE?

A man of 65 and a

woman of 60 can apply for a pension but you will be asked about the amount of money you get each month. Men over 70 and women over 65 can apply no matter how much they are earning.

IS THERE ANY EXTRA MONEY?

If you are living at home and someone has to look after you, you can get an extra R7,50 a month. This money is called attendance allowance.

The doctor at the Day Hospital or District Surgeon's office must fill in a form for you to get this money.

A friend or member of the family may do this for you.

If you are over 85 you may get the allowance without a doctor's certificate. BUT YOU MUST ASK FOR IT. It is not given automatically.

If you are a man older than 65 or a woman older than 60 and you are applying for a pension for the first time, you will get extra money for each year that you have delayed in applying for the pension.

For example, if you have waited a year you will get an extra R2,50 a month; if you have waited two years it will be R3,50 a month and so on up to five years which will give you an extra R6,50 a month.

This extra allowance is not given to "Africans".

Where to collect the money

"Coloureds" WHEN you apply tell the clerk where your nearest post office is. If you are never able to collect your pension yourself, a friend or a family member may fill in a special power of attorney form. These forms are at the post office.

They must be signed by you and the person who will collect the money. The Department of Internal Affairs have to say that this is all right.

If you are sick for a short time, someone else can draw your pen-

sion. The post office has a casual illness form which you and your friend must sign.

"Africans" YOU have to collect your pension every second month at the nearest civic hall, or at the place that the social worker tells you.

If you cannot collect the pension yourself, your friend or member of the family will have to fill in a form at Standard House in Observatory.

Finger prints are taken. Sometimes the

IN this issue of GRASSROOTS we give advice to old people on how to get their old age pensions. These are the pensions people claim from the government and not from their bosses.

People often have difficulty with these pensions. You need lots of documents if you apply for a pension and you need to go to the right place at the right time. Pensioners also have certain benefits which we will explain.

Old age pension is one of the areas where the government's apartheid policy is applied. The government uses this policy to divide us. By doing this the government can give better bene-

fits to some and none at all to others.

For example the maximum old age pension for "Whites" is R122 a month, for "Coloureds" it is R71 a month. For "Africans" with section 10 A or B rights the maximum is R40 x 1 month. For those who do not have the right to live permanently in the towns the South African government will give nothing.

Instead these people must try to claim a pension in Ciskei or Transkei. Old people in these places may have great difficulty claiming a pension.



Make use of benefits

ALL people getting an old age pension may get:

- Free attention and medicines at all provincial and day hospitals.
- Free hearing aids, spectacles and false teeth. If you apply for a wheel chair, they will ask if you can give some money towards the cost.

- Free legal aid.
- A "pension day card" from City Tramways for bus travel. This costs R1,20 and gives you 10 return rides from home to where you collect your pension.

It can be bought three days before pension day - on the 12th

of the month at Tramways ticket offices.

- A "Forty off card" from the railways that will give you 40 per cent off the normal fare for suburban lines and for inter-city travel in

the off-season.

It will cost you R10 to get the card and you also need two photos of yourself. Enquire about this at your local station.

How long will it take?

YOU have to wait for at least three months as all the forms have to go to Pretoria. It sometimes takes longer.

When you go to collect your pension for the first time, you must get money for each month from the date you first applied.

If you applied in January and you are only told in April that your money has come, you must get money for January, February, March and April.

Further information

WHEN you apply for a pension, it is a good idea not to hand in your own papers. You may need them for something else, or they may get lost. You should try to get a copy of the paper. Any police station, magistrate's office or commissioner of oaths can put a stamp on the paper and sign that it is a true copy

of your original paper.

There are a lot of different things to know before applying for a pension. This article may not have talked about everything. It is best to contact the office where you have to apply to make sure you qualify for a pension.

Where to apply

"Coloureds": Department of Internal Affairs (was Coloured Affairs), Broad Road, Wynberg or 32 Kronings Avenue, Bellville.

The offices are open from Monday to Friday between 8 a.m. and 4.30 p.m.

If you live out of these districts, go to your nearest magistrate.

"Africans": There are social workers at workshops or Stalle in Langa, at the old Fezeka High School in Guguletu and at the Nyanga East Registration office.

You go to them first on any Monday, Wednesday or Friday. They fill in forms with you. You then go with the forms to Standard House in Observatory.

What to take with

YOU need to take many papers when you go to apply for an old age pension.

If you don't have a birth certificate, the District Surgeon will give you a paper which shows a guess at your age.

Here are the papers you must take with you:

- A paper to show how old you are. This can be a birth certificate or a baptism certificate
- A book of life, identity card or reference book
- If you are married, you must take your marriage certificate
- If you are divorced, you must take your divorce papers
- If your husband or wife is dead you must take the death certificate
- If you are working, your boss must fill in a form saying what kind

of work you do and how much you earn (You must get this form from the place where you apply for a pension).

ADVICE

Caring for your child's teeth

THIS month the dentist answers questions most commonly asked by parents.

HOW MANY TEETH SHOULD A CHILD HAVE?

The first set consists of 20 'milk teeth'.

The first of these appear when the child is between 5 to 8 months old. If they appear earlier or later than this, there is no cause to worry.

The next teeth come out between 8 to 10 months and others about the time of the

first birthday.

All 20 teeth are usually out by the time the child is 3 years old.

The permanent set has 32 teeth.

The most important of these are the first four molars or large back teeth.

These appear at the back of the upper jaw and the back of the lower jaw.

They are the main chewing teeth and cannot be replaced. The last of the permanent teeth are called wisdom teeth and appear at any time after the age of 16

years.

ARE CHILDREN ALWAYS ILL WHEN THEY ARE TEETHING?

No. Some children may be irritable while teething, but if any illness seems to be associated with the child's teething, consult your doctor.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO KEEP MILK TEETH AND TO HAVE THEM FILLED?

Milk teeth should be given the best of care because:

- They are necessary for proper chewing and digestion of food.
- They help in the development of the growing child's face.
- They help the child to speak properly.

WHEN SHOULD A CHILD FIRST VISIT THE DENTIST?

A child should never be scared of the dentist. Your attitude should be that the dentist is one of the people who help us stay healthy and who should be seen regularly.

That is why a child

should not go to the dentist for the first time when he has a toothache.

Take the child when he is 2 to 3 years old and introduce the dentist as a friend.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THE CHILD'S FIRST VISIT?

The dentist will examine the child's mouth and teeth, using a special mirror to check for any problems. He will clean the teeth, apply fluoride and advise on proper brush-

ing.

WHAT IS A GUM-BOIL?

It is an abscess caused by an infection of the nerve inside a tooth. As pus collects, it spreads to the end of the root and pushes out the gum to resemble a boil.

In such a case the dentist or doctor must be seen immediately.

USEFUL HINTS FOR PARENTS

- The young child will need your help and encouragement to brush properly. Try

check list to encourage brushing at bed time. Children could make and colour their own check lists.

Let your child colour in one block every night *after* showing you that her teeth are clean. Check whether the plaque (white coating) is brushed away from the teeth and gums.

- Cut down on sweet things to eat and drink; especially between meals. Rather give fruit nuts or popcorn.
- Don't put sugar in babies' bottles or drinks.



Dealing with problems at school

THE teacher told me the other day that my boy Peter is going to fail at the end of the year, because he is so backward in his reading and spelling. He has already failed once. I know he will be very upset if he has to spend another year in the same class.

Especially as his sister would then be in the same class. The thing I can't understand is that he seems clever in other ways.

He gets good marks for oral work and maths and at home, he's always asking questions or working out things for himself.

I can send him to the shops any time and he always brings me the right change. Not like his one older bro-

ther who always gets it mixed up.

If he really can't do the work, I can see it wouldn't do any good to put him up. But if he has to stay back again, the other kids will start calling him names.

That happened to my eldest boy and it got so bad he wouldn't go to school any more.

THERE are many reasons why children don't manage at school. It is difficult to be sure why Peter isn't managing.

Is he happy at school?

Does he like and get on with his teacher? Has he got friends in his class? Maybe he had a bad experience with a previous teacher in

reading and spelling.

Even though he is managing with some subjects, it is possible that he may have a learning problem with these two subjects. Special teaching can help children overcome these kinds of problems.

But first talk to Peter's teacher and school principal to find out whether he is happy at school. If you find that there is no problem at school then there are places that can help to find out what the problem might be.

There are unfortunately not many places which offer this kind of help.

You should ask Peter's principal to arrange for him to be

seen at the Athlone School Clinic.

Don't be put off by excuses about long waiting lists or the attitude that "the school knows best".

It is Peter's right to have help to sort out whether he does have a problem. It is also his right to get the help he needs.

You may yourself contact the UCT Child Guidance Clinic or the Institute for Child Guidance at the University of the Western Cape.

Raise this issue in your community organisation so that parents with similar problems can get together. Groups of parents can often achieve more than one alone.

Beating high blood

DEAR Grassroots - I read a letter on high blood in your paper. I am a health worker who was involved with a group of people in Mitchell's Plain. It may help if I tell your readers how the group tried to cope with the problems of high blood.

A few people who knew that they had high blood, formed a group. They decided to meet regularly for the following reasons:

- To try to understand what causes high blood.
- To talk to one another and share the problems they have with high blood.
- To attempt to find out ways of coping with these problems.

Every second week the group met in the house of one of the members. At each gathering there was a health worker who answered questions about high blood and help the group to understand the disease and its treatment.

After a few meetings the group decided to learn how to take one another's blood pressures.

They then had a cake sale and with the money they bought a blood-pressure machine.

Now the group is less dependent on clinics and hospitals.

Finding out about their own blood pressure also helped them to remember to take their pills.

As last month's reader said, smoking and overweight can cause high blood.

Some of our group also had problems at work that caused high blood.

People in the group

who had problems with too much smoking and overweight helped to support one another, encouraging if there was weight loss or less smoking since the last meeting.

Coping with problems in a group seemed

so much easier than trying to do it as an individual. This was the lesson that everybody learned from the high blood group.

I hope this letter will help some of the Grassroots readers.

Health Worker.

Advice wants to meet you

AT our last AGM it was decided that the advice panel should go out to meet community organisations.

This would help organisations to get to know the panel and the services they can offer.

In turn it would also help the panel to find

out exactly what advice is needed.

We ask that community organisations discuss this suggestion and send us a list of the dates, times and places that they meet.

We can then draw up a roster to visit organisations.

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