

WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for November 28, 2022
Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about frugal fashion, and as always look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

The other day I heard something on the radio that really puzzled me. People are purchasing imaginary clothing. OK, well it sort of exists. Welcome to the world of digital fashion.

Digital fashion is created via computer technologies and 3D software. These outfits are often designed by true physical fashion designers with an interest in the metaverse. People can purchase unique creations that fit an image of themselves. These can be "worn" on social media, used in games, and displayed by avatars on all sorts of virtual reality and augmented reality platforms.

One thing that intrigued me was a comment about potentially reducing textile waste through the purchase of digital fashion. Now I am pretty sure that people still have to come out of their homes occasionally, and digital clothes are just not going to cover it. But it did pique my interest regarding textile waste.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the main source of textiles in municipal solid waste is discarded clothing. There are some other smaller sources including furniture, carpets, tires, footwear, and sheets and towels. The EPA estimates that the generation of clothing and footwear added 13 million tons to landfills in 2018. This has skyrocketed from 1.3 million tons annually just 50 years ago.

Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles (SMART) is an international trade association that acquires both unused and used textiles for reuse and recycling purposes. They estimate that the equivalent of 81 pounds of textiles per person ends up in the waste stream. According to SMART, "45% of used clothing and household textiles are re-used as apparel; 30% are converted into industrial polishing/wiping cloths and 20% are processed into fiber to be manufactured into new products like, paper, yarn, insulation, and carpet padding. 95% of all used clothing is recyclable, only 5% is unusable due to mildew or other contamination."

One of the best ways to recycle clothing is to donate to a charity like Goodwill or Save and Serve thrift stores or to the Salvation Army. Please do not donate items that have mildew. You could also donate gently used blankets or towels to our local Coshocton County Animal Shelter.

I am not convinced these digital fashions will reduce textile waste, but I guess we will see. Until then, we can all do our part to assess our attitudes towards clothing, especially as we head into the holiday gift buying season.

A recent article in the International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education described a study in Canada with young fashion consumers. Researchers were particularly interested in understanding how environmental and frugal attitudes influenced clothing repair practices to extend the life of garments.

They found that Generation Zers and younger Millennials with higher environmental awareness make more effort to repair their clothing and care for it to extend its life. There was a clear distinction between frugality related to saving money and frugality related to caring for possessions (not being wasteful with resources). The young people spend money on fashion, but then treat it well to enjoy it longer – both to keep it out of landfills and not to consume additional clothing.

It was also interesting that some respondents may not see repair as necessary since distressed, stained, or otherwise damaged clothing can be viewed as a fashion statement. So though ripped up jeans may not be your favorite look, in theory it may keep those jeans in a wardrobe longer.

And now let's look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension. November is National Diabetes Awareness Month. There is a free, self-paced online course to help participants learn, share, and chat with health professionals about successfully managing diabetes. The course, *Dining with Diabetes: Beyond the Kitchen*, focuses on carbohydrates, fats, sodium, and fiber. The easy to follow three-module course includes interactive presentations, videos, activities, and access to trusted resources and apps. Sign up at our website Coshocton.osu.edu.

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help educate and improve our families, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265 or visit our website at coshocton.osu.edu. Make it a healthy day!