

# COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Through Extension programs across the nation, Family and Consumer Science Extension Educators provide a multitude of educational opportunities to meet the needs of diverse audiences

## Improving Children's Lives

### Community Partnerships to Improve Children's Lives

In **Alaska** a Family and Consumer Science Extension agent developed successful partnerships with organizations in the areas of parenting, early childhood development, interpersonal relationships, and cross-cultural communication. This has led to providing national training in these areas. This area is important to Alaska because of high rates of suicide, violence and limited resources.

In **Maine** Cooperative Extension is bringing community groups together for collective impact on the topic of positive child development. Together, they formed the Maine Resilience Building Network. In the "Network" Extension's role is as a convener and information sharer. There is a core group of members, and through multiple sessions they have brought research-based information to medical professionals

**Delaware** has presented 17 child care training programs to 457 participants. These monthly programs cover such topics as: Bullying, What to Do?, Math for Every Age, Behavior is Contagious, Parents-Friend or Foe to enable participants to obtain Delaware licensing requirements.

**Mississippi** State Extension through the MSCCR&R Network, presented trainings to 101 early childcare center directors who completed the Mississippi Director's credential program. The nine-module program is designed to assist directors with the latest concepts in early child care curriculum and day-to-day operations of their centers. Another 8 Mississippians earned the National Director Credential online, supported by MSCCR&R trainers. There were 170 early care in-home providers who received 2,950 hours of technical assistance through the Mississippi Nurturing Homes Initiative.

### Child Safety Education

#### Child Safety Education (continued)

In **New York**, Cornell Cooperative Extension provides

and community members. Seven one-time programs were presented to 140 participants; a series of sessions was presented to another 20 participants.

The **Mississippi** Child Care Resource and Referral (MSCCR&R) Network seeks to assist early care and education providers through professional development and career building. The Network offered 3,095 trainings (including 1,464 professional development workshops) during 2012, an increase of 257%, in part due to expanded staff throughout the state.

In addition, the MSCCR&R opened two new resource centers for a total of 15 sites and one mobile unit to serve the state's 82 counties. More than 3,281 educational materials were checked out by educators, parents, students and guardians.

In **Tennessee**, UT Cooperative Extension and Tennessee Poison Center partnered to provide poison prevention education. Tennessee Cooperative Extension developed the program, *Be Poison Safe Tennessee*. Using this program Tennessee Cooperative Extension reached 6,065 direct contacts in 31 counties. Half of those contacts also attended *Be Med Wise* programs. Due to these programs 95% feel confident they know what to do in case of poisoning. 98% will contact the Poison Center if they suspect a poisoning or have a product question.

Additionally, 744,579 Tennesseans have received information about poison prevention through exhibits, newspaper articles, publications and radio programs. Evaluations indicate parents have: taught their children to ask first before eating or drinking anything questionable; conducted a poison safety audit of their home; posted the poison control center toll free number; stored food and household products separately, and stored medication out of reach of children.

resources and information to educators, school personnel and mental health workers about Non-Suicidal Self Injury (cutting and other forms of self-injury).

## Vision Screening

Ohio provided preschool vision screening for 3,4,and 5 year-old children with the help of high school students who were certified to provide this service.

## Relationship Skills Building for Parents and Teens

Michigan State University Extension Educators presented several 4 week series across the state with 486 participants on RELAX: Alternatives to Anger. As a result 52% of participants reported they yell and scream less during conflict. 51% reported an increased knowledge in ways to use positive communication during conflict. In addition 50% of participants reported working to be calm during conflict and ending things on a positive note.

Georgia has been providing Relationship Smarts to Georgia youth since 2008, reaching over 2,000 youth. This program provides a platform for youth to actively learn about healthy relationships. 75% of youth reported greater awareness and understanding of healthy relationships.

Cornell Cooperative Extension in New York provide education to parents and caregivers. These programs reach a wide range of families and seek to promote positive parenting and, ultimately, healthy family and child development. Evaluation showed parents had an increase in patience with their child, an increase in confidence in making rules which take their child's needs in consideration ,and decreases in yelling at their child.

Georgia provided child welfare professionals with the program Healthy Relationship and Marriage Education Training. 93 child welfare professionals completed the program.

## Parent and "Relatives as Parents" Education

*Project Navigator* guides parents on how to nurture children and prepare them for success not only in school but also in life. Services include fostering positive parenting skills, enhancing family communication, fostering nurturing behavior and routines, and teaching effective discipline techniques. Project Navigator is a one-on-one and group technical assistant parenting training originally offered in 12 of Mississippi's most distressed counties. At the conclusion of 2012, the program expanded to all 82 counties.

New York's Cornell Cooperative Extension provides the *Relatives as Parents* program to aide grandparents and relatives raising children whose parents are unable to provide care. Outcomes include: increased stability in the kinship home, movement toward legal permanency, improved school engagement, and enhanced peer and family relationships among children and their adult caregivers.

eXtension.org continues to be a well utilized resource for all Extension educators on Nutrition, Health, and Fitness. Extensioneducators have contributed fact sheets, programs, and resources to this site covering child care; drinking water and human health; families, food and fitness; family care giving; food safety; parenting, and personal finance. New research-based resources are added continually for consumers and professionals.

NEAFCS is the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences.

NEAFCS provides professional development for Extension professionals who improve the quality of life for individuals, families, and communities and provide education in:

- Food preparation, food safety, and nutrition
- Financial management
- Healthy lifestyles
- Home and work environment and safety
- Relationships and parenting skills

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