



IMPACT 2015

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

Extension delivers a multitude of educational programs aimed at helping parents do their best to enable their children to live healthy, productive and successful lives. FCS educators also work closely with childcare providers, school teachers, and other adult youth workers and organizations intent on providing safe and supportive learning environments for the children in their care.

Childcare and Day Care Training and Outreach

In **Arizona**, three Family Resource Centers served over 9,500 families with programming, information and referrals. Fifty-one percent (51%) of FRC children met expectations versus only 26% in the general student population. Head Start teachers that have some of the children now report to FRC staff: "We don't have to spend time working on how to hold a pencil, or crayon or cutting with scissors because the children have had experience with this already."

Texas conducted 31 child care conferences for 3,225 child care providers and directors who provide care for more than 47,500 children enrolled in 863 child care centers or family day homes. As one Texas childcare provider noted, "I wish to emphasize my appreciation for this type of training. It helps us to stay informed with new ideas, provides refreshers for things we have already learned...This was the best training I've been to since I started."

Kansas childcare provider: After one of my trainings, a provider approached me, thanking me for the 'wake-up call' she received regarding children's obesity. She is committed to changing the environment in her home child care (operation) to impact the health status of the children she cares for."

In **Arizona**, 372 child care professionals completed *Brain Builders for Life*, a 16-hour curriculum for integrating early brain

development into early child care education for home and center based providers to better work with the families and children they serve. **Arizona** is reaching more children with screening to detect developmental delays and vision/hearing problems. In 2014, 484,587 children were screened and 1,129 of them received referrals to connect their families with appropriate services so conditions may be corrected or improved

"Why do we care about early brain development? Because the kids we are caring for now are going to be caring for us, in more ways than one, when we are older. They are going to be running the world!" – Arizona child care class participant

Child Passenger Safety

Twenty Booster Seat campaigns and 27 car seat checkup events were held by **Texas** Extension Service. Checkup events, fitting stations, and individual appointments totaled 1,877 contacts. Over 1,290 car seats were distributed as replacement seats at no cost to families in need.

Parenting Programs

Missouri offered 1,161 Family Strengthening programs to 16,362 participants. Most participants were from low SES families. Eighty-nine percent of program participants demonstrate an increased knowledge about appropriate parenting practices on post-program evaluations while 86% adopt at least one new positive parenting practice. One parent noted how much they enjoyed interacting with other parents taking the class.

Raising kids, Eating right, Spending smart



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In **New Mexico** 100 programs, reaching 30,000 participants, focused on nurturing parenting skills. The topics included: Stress Management; Praising Children; Building Self-Worth; Building Personal Power; Positive Discipline; Emergency Preparedness; and Understanding Drug and Alcohol Use.

New York educators held 13 programs reaching 555 participants. Some of feedback they received included the following comments: "I learned new ways to approach a problem and reduce yelling and frustration in our household" • "It has given me a new perspective on the difficulties that parents face by listening to and working with the other parents in my class." • "It was a really good class -- I learned how to be a better father."

In **Oklahoma**, 115 *Co-Parenting for Resilience* programs were offered to 682 divorced parents. Evaluation data showed that 52% rated the program very high in motivating them to change their behavior toward their co-parent; while 64% rated the program very high in teaching new ways to be an effective parent during and after the divorce.

"There's nothing to say but thank you! I've been trying to figure out how to be a better parent to my children during our divorce and help them through it, but wasn't quite sure how. This helped tremendously!" – Oklahoma parent

Wisconsin Family Living Programs created a learner-centered, interactive, online learning community for parents called Parenthetical. The site has had more than 15,000 visitors and over a third returned at least twice. More than 900 registered participants engage on a weekly basis. Parents surveyed indicated increased confidence in parenting skills and coping with the emotional challenges of teens. Seventy-six percent listened more to their teens and 77% felt better prepared to talk about important issues with their teen.

Responding to requests from local officials, **Wisconsin** Extension Family Living educators and partners develop

programs that help jail inmates make the transition back to their families and communities. When individuals successfully reenter their communities, WI residents and taxpayers share in the benefits. As one WI inmate put it, "I appreciate that I was able to learn new ways to be a better father."



Kansas parent: "One lady who was court-ordered to complete a parenting class participated in the class I led in 2013. Recently she called to see what classes I would be leading for 2014. Things were going much better in her family, and she wanted to enroll in another class — not because she had to, but because she wanted to."

University of **Nebraska** Extension's Learning Child section held 150 programs on social emotional development, reaching 77,000 individuals. Evaluations noted the following behavior changes: "Find positive approaches to each child even when negative behavior is occurring." Another wrote: "Turn off my cellphone, and computer. Be more intentional about playing with my child and encouraging positive behaviors."

This report was compiled by Mary Liz Wright, University of Illinois Extension, Public Affairs Subcommittee member; and Theresa Mayhew, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Vice President – Public Affairs. For more information, email tcm5@cornell.edu.

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 the areas of: Childhood Obesity Prevention; Community Health and Wellness; Financial Management; Food and Nutrition; Food Safety; Healthy Homes and the Environment; Improving Children's Lives; and Protecting our Resources – Family Life.