



IMPACT 2026

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

Healthy Homes and the Environment

Overview

According to The National Center for Healthy Housing, *“Housing conditions can and should support good health. A healthy home is one that is dry, clean, safe, ventilated, free of pests, and contaminants, well maintained, and thermally comfortable. In addition, homes should be affordable and accessible to all people, regardless of age or ability. Finally, a home and its occupants should be ready for the unknown—a wildfire, an earthquake, a flood, or other natural disaster.”* Over the past year, Family and Consumer Science Agents in three states, with the assistance of 19 community partners, have delivered five (5) programs that have equipped individuals with the knowledge necessary to maintain safe and healthy indoor environments, as well as providing education and knowledge to obtain affordable and accessible housing. Programs focusing on Homebuyer Education, Universal Design, Minimizing Home Food Waste, and Environmental Health Education were delivered 1,236 times, reaching 7402 direct contacts and over 800 virtual contacts.

State-Specific Highlights

Ohio: *The Home Buyer Counseling Program* provided one hour phone sessions with FCS counselors covering fair housing, accessibility rights, and personalized budgeting to prepare clients for homeownership. Two community partners supported FCS agents in conducting the program. In 2025, about 1105 participated in the program and 780 participating clients successfully completed a home purchase, reflecting the program’s impact on financial readiness.

Ohio: *Homeownership Education* reached 600 participants at housing-related financial literacy workshops such as *Rent Smart and Preparing to Buy a Home*. Additionally,

473 participants attended HUD-approved pre-purchase *Homebuyer Education Workshops*.

Ohio: As the population ages, there is a need for accessible housing for all, regardless of age or ability. FCS agents and 2 community partners reached 2,103 clients that participated in the *Universal Design Program*. The program focused on modifications to help individuals and families to age in place. These modifications included ramps, various counter-top heights, grab bars, and proper lighting.

Idaho: In partnership with the City of Boise, University of Idaho Extension FCS Agents offered a program entitled *Minimize Home Food Waste*. The program was offered 18 times and reached a total of 567 individuals. Participants received educational information on minimizing home food waste, highlighting environmental and financial impacts with 95% reporting increased awareness of waste and 95% stating they planned to implement the provided tools and share information.

North Carolina: *FCS Healthy Homes and Environmental Health Education Program* provided increased awareness of indoor environmental health, home safety, and hazard prevention. 3,000 clients and 800 virtual clients improved knowledge of mold, radon, and food storage practices, supporting safer and healthier living environments. Fifteen (15) community partners supported North Carolina’s educational efforts.

“I learned how to make my home safer and healthier for my family.”


—North Carolina Participant



Ohio's Universal Design Program

This report was written by Ann Davis (Mississippi State University Extension) and compiled by Dylan Gentry (University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension), along with Dr. Dhruti Patel, NEAFCS Vice President for Public Affairs. For more information, please email dhrutip@umd.edu.

This document was generated with the assistance of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology. The authors of this report have thoroughly reviewed the AI generated information ensure the highest level of accuracy, bias, and ethical standards.

Raising kids, Eating right, Spending smart 

Participant Outcomes and Areas of Impact

Healthy Home programs and education work to inform people as to how to make homes safer, more affordable, and healthier while promoting ways to save energy and improve the environment.

The Healthy Homes and Environment programs offered for 2025 emphasize the role Cooperative Extension plays in homebuyer education - preparing potential homeowners financially for purchasing or renting a home, making homes accessible to all individuals by making modifications to help individuals and families age in place, and reducing home food waste. 780 out of 1102 participants in **Ohio** successfully completed a home purchase reflecting the program impact on financial readiness. **Idaho** reported that 95% of participants increased awareness of food waste and planned to implement using the tools provided. **North Carolina's** program improved knowledge of mold, radon, and food storage practices, supporting safer and healthier living environments.

Community Collaboration and Future Direction

Community partners play a significant role in supporting and assisting with Extension programs. The 2025 Healthy Home and Environment statistics emphasize the need for Extension and their partners to continue and increase healthy home and environmental education that focuses on home ownership, health and well-being.

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; Diabetes Prevention and Management; Financial Management; Food and Nutrition; Food Safety; Healthy Homes and the Environment; Improving Children's Lives; and Protecting our Resources – Family Life.