

Family & Consumer Sciences

DID YOU KNOW?

FAMILY &
CONSUMER
SCIENCES



Creating Healthy & Sustainable Families

2014 Highlights

The Family & Consumer Sciences Extension Educators work through statewide issue teams to address Health, Financial Readiness, Safety, Hunger, Family Resilience, Jobs and Employment, Risky Behaviors and Environmental Degradation.

HEALTH

The Health Issue Team addresses Oklahoma's ranking as 6th most obese state in the nation with a variety of programs to help youth and adults adopt behavior changes such as increased fruit, vegetable, whole grain, and dairy food consumption; increased meal preparation at home, and increased physical activity.

Improving lives in Oklahoma – After attending the *Journey Through Health* program at their retirement community, a group of residents requested a change to their meal service to include less salt, fewer fried foods, and more fruits and vegetables. The dining service now includes a fruit and vegetable bar at each meal and alternative seasonings are being used in place of salt.

A youth in the middle school Family & Consumer Sciences *Food Showdown* lessons came to class and said "I made the dish we cooked in our food showdown last week at home this weekend and it was good! I don't usually eat vegetables, but I even added some to my recipe." The teacher of the food science classes said that the hands-on learning elements of the food showdown had engaged some of her usual problem students who learned the importance of planning and team work.

FAMILY RESILIENCE

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension provided expertise during the legislative process to ensure a new statewide law included appropriate education for divorcing parents with minor children.

Co-Parenting for Resilience

- A 3-4 hour program providing parents with strategies and skills to help them reduce conflict, keep their children out of the middle of their divorce, and promote resilience in their children
- In 2014, classes were provided in 30 counties
- Over half of participants who completed evaluations were motivated to change their behavior toward their co-parent; 64% learned new ways to be an effective parent during and after their divorce.

Improving lives in Oklahoma – A *Co-Parenting for Resilience* participant commented: "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!"



FINANCIAL READINESS

Money Habitudes

- Fun, easy tool incorporated into finance education programs which helps individuals understand their money personality and spending habits
- Participants in evaluation show an increase in plans to regularly track income and spending, and intent to have an emergency savings fund

Improving lives in Oklahoma – Through using *Money Habitudes*, a Head Start parent learned how much money she would have in a year by saving \$4.00 a week, and started taking leftovers for her lunch instead of eating out or using vending machines. When her car had a flat tire, she had the money to buy a tire, and did not have to miss work.

OKLAHOMA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

SAFETY

Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program

- A series of six classes that provide low impact exercises to build strength and relieve arthritis symptoms
- Evaluations showed a 62% increase in those who are able to move without risk of injury in spite of their current health , as well as a 67% increase in those who are able to perform common activities of daily living

Improving lives in Oklahoma - An Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program participant had recently broken her wrist and her doctor had recommended gentle movements with her fingers to regain full usage and strength. She was forgetting to do this at home and was thankful for the opportunity this class provided. After only two sessions, she was already experiencing better feeling and movement.

HUNGER

The *Learn to Grow* gardening project was presented to 82% of Child Care facilities and Head Start programs in five northeastern Oklahoma counties. In 2014, 222 garden beds were put in 102 child care facilities reaching over 3,249 children and impacting approximately 11,721 family members. Evaluation data shows that 81% of participants plan to grow food for the children in their care.

Improving lives in Oklahoma - The educational garden at the Cherokee County Extension office provided food and education to county residents. Fresh vegetables from the garden were provided to a food pantry and retirement community along with information on safe food handling practices, and also used in a food preservation workshop. Junior Master Gardener participants learned to transplant tomato plants which were then sold to community members.



MULTICULTURAL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- OCES - Family & Consumer Sciences has designed a comprehensive plan to improve Intercultural Competence of extension personnel.
- Extension factsheets have been translated to Spanish and Chinese, and extension curriculum is being translated to and provided in Spanish.
- The training challenges Extension professionals to think outside their comfort zone, explore their core beliefs, and adapt the way they work with individuals in a diverse society.

Improving lives in Oklahoma - Hispanic participants in the *Dining with Diabetes* series said they did not realize the tortillas, beans and rice which make up a large part of their diet were not healthy for persons with diabetes and were very interested in learning new techniques and foods to incorporate. As the series progressed, they reported that they are eating more fruits and vegetables and making an effort to limit their carbohydrates.

ADDITIONAL INITIATIVES

- Preparing Oklahomans to enter or re-enter the workforce and maintain employment through life changes are part of the scope of work for the **Jobs & Employment Issue Team**.
- Recycling, home food preservation and home energy management are part of the scope of work for the **Environment Issue Team**.
- Parenting, bullying, character development, and high school graduation rates are part of the scope of work for the **Risky Behaviors and Resilience Issue Teams**.

For more information about Family & Consumer Sciences,
visit www.fcs.okstate.edu

To learn more about Cooperative Extension in Oklahoma,
visit www.oces.okstate.edu

