



Extension Education in Harrison County

Making a Difference

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has long been dedicated to educating Texans. Extension education evolved nationwide under the 1914 federal Smith-Lever Act, which sought to extend university knowledge and agricultural research findings directly to the people. Ever since, Extension programs have addressed the emerging issues of the day, reaching diverse rural and urban populations.

In Texas, all 254 counties are served by a well-organized network of professional Extension educators and some 100,000 trained volunteers. Extension expertise and educational outreach pertain to the food and fiber industry, natural resources, family and consumer sciences, nutrition and health, and community economic development.

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE *Providing Solutions*

Among those served are hundreds of thousands of young people who benefit annually from Extension's 4-H and youth development programs.

Texans turn to Extension education for solutions. Extension agents and specialists respond not only with answers, but also with resources and services that result in significant returns on the public's investment. Extension programs are custom-designed for each region of the state, with residents providing input and help with program delivery. Here are just a few highlights of Extension impacts on this county and its people.

Harrison County – Summary of 2015 Educational Contacts

- Total Contacts-25,090
 - ✓ Educational Events Contacts-6,653
 - ✓ Other Contacts-18,437

- All Sessions
 - ✓ Contacts-6,653
 - ✓ Hours-23,669.65

- Plan Level
 - ✓ In-Depth.....Contacts-1,436.....Hours-11,236.5
 - ✓ Outreach....Contacts-5,217.....Hours-12,433.15

- Marketing Contacts-692,227
(Includes Newsletters, Web Site, Email and Facebook)

2015 Harrison Agriculture/Natural Resources Events

August

★ **East Texas Forage Conference**

August 28, 2015

Gilmer, Texas

Paul Griffin

- Irrigation of Forage Crops

Hugh Aljoe - Noble Foundation - Ardmore, Oklahoma

- Utilization of Winter Forage

Dr. Vanessa Corrier Olsen - Extension Forage Specialist - Overton, Texas

- Options for Winter Forage

Craig Watson - Beef Producer - Sherman, Texas

- Cattle Operation Low Inputs - Rotational Grazing

Jack LaClaire - Bayer Crop Science - Saint Jo, Texas

- Forage Herbicide Updates

Approximately 100 producers from 5 different counties attended

September

★ **Wildlife Information Meeting**

September 22, 2015

Marshall, Texas

Dr. Billy Higginbotham, Professor & Extension Wildlife & Fisheries Specialist, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension & Research Center - Overton, Texas

- Information on trapping and removing feral hogs.

Millard Kimball, Avid Deer Hunter & Former Research Specialist with LSU Experiment Station

- Deer Food Plot Updates

Approximately 41 people in attendance



★ **Hunter Education Course**

September 26, 2015

Marshall, Texas

Matt Garrett, CEA-Ag/NR Instructed the course
Every Texas hunter born on or after Sept. 2, 1971 must successfully complete a Hunter Education Training Course
Approximately 51 students certified.



October

★ **KMHT Talk of East Texas Radio Show**

October 7, 2015

Marshall, Texas

Soil & Water Conservation District meeting, One Day 4-H, Master Gardener Plant Swap, and the 4-H Booth in the Fire Ant Festival were all discussed

★ **Harrison County Cattlemen's Association Annual Membership Meeting**

October 29, 2015

Marshall, Texas

Terry Holland, PRCA Bull Rider & Panola County Cattleman
- Presentation on his life as a bull rider and continued interest in raising cattle. Approximately 65 cattlemen & their wives in attendance



November

★ **4-H Show Broilers Informational Meeting**

November 30, 2015
Marshall, Texas

Dr. Craig Coufal, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Poultry Specialist
- How to Feed & Successfully Raise Show Broilers
Approximately 15 were in attendance

December

December

* **Master Gardener's Christmas Party**

December 8, 2015
Marshall, Texas



* **Agriculture Occupation Presentation to 75 Robert E. Lee Elementary Students**

December 11, 2015
Marshall, Texas



Agriculture and Natural Resources

- * **Harrison County Farm City Week Tag In & Validation - Over 220 Entries this year**
December 12-13, 2015
Hallsville, Marshall, & Waskom, Texas



- * **East Region 4-H Training - Marketing & Growth with Your County 4-H Program**
December 15-16, 2015
Athens, Texas



2015 Harrison Step Up, Scale Down

Relevance:

Obesity continues to be a critical issue throughout Texas. Long-term consequences of being obese are many and include increased risk for diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and several forms of cancer. According to the Texas Department of Health and Human Services the rate of adult obesity is 28.9% and the rate of adult of adult diabetes is 11.7% in Harrison County. If Harrison County adults increase their knowledge about the obesity epidemic and understanding how it can affect their personal health, then they will adopt a healthy lifestyle. The target audience for this plan was Harrison County adults.

Response:

Step Up and Scale Down is a 12-week weight management program that was designed to address two factors behind the obesity issue: physical activity and diet. Targeted towards adults, the program was offered in a group setting which allows participants to support and encourage each other. The following lessons were taught: *Scale Down by Setting Goals*, *Step Up to a Healthy Plate*, *Scale Down by Reading Labels*, *Step Up to Breakfast and Menu Planning*, *Scale Down with Moves to Lose*, *Step Up your Hydration*, *Scale Down by Finding Your Motivational Mojo*, *Step Up to Healthy Snacking*, *Scale Down with a Colorful Plate*, *Step Up to Successful Socializing* *Scale Down by Knowing Your Numbers*, and *Step Up and Celebrate*. The Harrison Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) program area committee first implemented this program in 2014 with great success. After reviewing the Harrison County adult obesity and diabetes rates, the committee decided to implement *Step Up and Scale Down* again in 2015. The committees invited previous speakers as well as seek and secure new speakers.

Results:

During 2015, 12 people (2 White female, 1 Black male and 9 Black female) from Harrison County enrolled and completed the *Step Up and Scale Down* program. Evaluation of the program was conducted using a pre, post, and 30-day follow-up survey. This allowed us to assess intent to implement targeted weight management behaviors as well as the extent to which the behaviors were adopted. All 12 completed the follow-up survey.

Change in targeted behaviors

Table 1 shows the extent to which targeted diet and physical activity behaviors were being followed at the beginning of the program, immediately after the program ended, and then approximately one month later.

Table 1. Change in targeted behaviors

Behavior	At the beginning of SUSD	Immediately after SUSD ended
Average days/week physically active for at least 30 minutes	3.8333	4.0833 (+0.250)
Average number of days that breakfast is eaten	6.2500	5.7500 (-0.500)
Average days in the last 30 with physical health not good	1.0909	1.7273 (+0.636)
Average days in the last 30 with mental health not good	.8333	1.7500 (+0.917)

Table 2. Perceptions about health

Behavior	Beginning of SUSD Number	Immediately after SUSD ended Number
Watches 14 hours of TV per week or less		1
Plans meals and snacks in advance “sometimes” or “always”	10	8 (-2)
Fills ½ of their plate with vegetables and fruits	2	
Uses nutrition information at restaurants “most of the time” or “always”	3	5 (+2)

	Pre	Post
Average number of times sweetened beverages are consumed per day	1.5000	0.7000 (-0.800)
Average number of times water is consumed per day	7.6000	7.2000 (-0.400)

Average weight at the beginning of the program was 205.091; immediately after the program ended, the average was 202.091 (-3.000). Positive feedback was shared with Agent McDonald as well as committee members: “*I have learned to watch my sodium intake. I exercise more by walking.*”

Acknowledgements:

A special thank you goes to the Harrison Family & Consumer Sciences committee for recognizing and willing to address the obesity epidemic in Harrison County. The program would not have been a success if the committee members did not assist with planning, advertising, implementing and interpreting the program. A huge thank you goes to all of the following for presenting and providing door prizes: Good Shepherd Medical Center, Greater East Texas Diabetes Education, Good Shepherd Life Center, Marshall Rural Health Clinic, and Harrison Family and Consumer Sciences committee.


Future Program Actions:

Due to the lack of interest in *Step Up Scale Down* during 2015, the Harrison FCS committee will reconvene and determine if the program will be implemented again.



VALUE

Obesity Prevention and Reduction



The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service engages children and adults in programs that teach them how to eat nutritious foods and engage in regular physical activity to promote health and reduce their risk for obesity. The Texas public benefits through a healthier population, reduced health care costs, and increased productivity.

2015 Harrison Walk Across Texas

Relevance:

Research has shown that obesity can cause serious health care problems such as diabetes, depression, heart disease, and hypertension. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 64% of American adults are obese. An estimated 20% of children are obese according to the United States Department of Agriculture Symposium on Childhood Obesity. The Texas Department of Health and Human Services reported the rate of adult obesity is 28.9%, the rate of youth obesity is 14.7% in Harrison County. If Harrison County youth can learn the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle at an early age, then they will be able to delay the onset of chronic diseases such as diabetes. The target audience for this plan was Harrison County youth.

Response:

After reviewing the Harrison County alarming obesity statistics, the Harrison Family & Consumer Sciences (FCS) program area committee set a goal to increase physical activity for youth. All members decided to implement *Walk Across Texas* (WAT), an eight week physical activity program designed to help people of all ages establish the habit of regular physical activity. In an effort to make an impact; the Harrison WAT task force was formed. The task force included members from the Harrison FCS committee, Marshall Independent School District, Health Care Express, Harrison Extension Education Association and Harrison County Health Department.

Results:


In October, Robert E. Lee Elementary implemented a Walk Across Texas Kick Off event. A total of 330 students (23 White male, 28 White female, 62 Black male, 73 Black female, 49 Hispanic male and 65 Hispanic female, 17 Native American male, 13 Native American female), which are in Kindergarten through fourth grade are currently participating in the event. They logged 30,172.7 miles. The economic impact of the program is \$15,363.

Acknowledgements:

A special thank you goes to the Harrison FCS committee and Harrison WAT task force for recognizing and willing to address the obesity epidemic in Harrison County. The program would not have been a success if the committee members and school administration did not assist with planning, advertising, implementing and interpreting the program. A huge thank you goes to all of the sponsors for the prizes: Health Care Express, Golden Chick, Wendy's, Subway, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Choice Dental, Meadowbrook Funeral Home, Legacy Insurance, Pizza Hut, Exodus Nutrition, Women's Center, Texas Bank and Trust, Sonic, Chicken Express, State Representative Chris Paddie, County Commissioner William Hatfield and Marshall News Messenger.

Future Program Actions:

The Harrison FCS committee and Harrison WAT task force plan to reunite and implement WAT in 2016.

VALUE	
Obesity Prevention and Reduction	
	<p>The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service engages children and adults in programs that teach them how to eat nutritious foods and engage in regular physical activity to promote health and reduce their risk for obesity. The Texas public benefits through a healthier population, reduced health care costs, and increased productivity.</p>

2015 Harrison Money Smart

Relevance:

Recovery from the economic recession has varied across the state and nation. Consumer awareness of the need for financial literacy education has increased particularly in the areas of budgeting, saving and cutting back spending. Recent studies indicate that people of all ages, incomes, and education levels lack basic financial knowledge and skills to ensure long-term financial stability for themselves and their families. Results of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority Financial Capability Study indicate that 19% of Texans participating in the study reported spending more than their income; 30% reported having past due medical bills; 57% lack an emergency fund that would cover up to 3 months of expenses; and 39% reported using a non-bank lending product (e.g. payday loans) in the past 5 years. The Corporation for Enterprise Development reports almost 51% of Texans do not have a savings account; 20% of Texans have zero net worth; Texans have the lowest credit scores in the nation; and Texas ranks 44th in the rate of home ownership. According to the United States Census, 16% of Harrison County citizens are living below the poverty level. If adults increase their financial management knowledge, then they will be able to budget their finances better. The target audience of this plan was Harrison County adults.

Response:

The Harrison Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) program area committee discussed the need to continue to educate Harrison County adults on financial management. New Bethel Missionary Baptist church contacted Agent McDonald and expressed the need to offer financial education programs in the community. Members of the Harrison FCS committee and church leaders met with Agent McDonald and discussed the current poverty level in Harrison County and how Harrison County adults can be mentally financially empowered. Everyone agreed the following programs would be implemented: First Time Homeowners Seminar and The Con Artist: A financial fitness seminar to help protect your nest egg. The first time homeowners seminar informed the participants of the purpose of a good credit score, how to complete a home loan application and why owning is better than renting. The goal of the con artist seminar was to inform participants how to protect their finances from thieves.

Results:

A customer satisfaction survey was used to evaluate the First Time Homeowners Seminar. The results are as follows:

35 adults (3 White male, 1 White female, 15 Black male, 14 Black male, 1 Hispanic male and 1 Hispanic female) attended the seminar

94% (33 out of 35) were mostly or completely satisfied overall with the activity

97% (34 out of 35) were mostly or completely satisfied with the information being easy to understand

69% (24 out of 35) plan to take actions or make changes based on the information from this activity

Positive feedback was also shared:

“I did not realize how important it is to have a good credit score.”

“The bank representative made me feel like I can actually own a home.”

Family and Consumer Sciences

An evaluation instrument was not used to evaluate **The Con Artist: A financial fitness seminar to help protect your nest egg**

39 adults (2 White male, 12 Black male, 23 Black female, 1 Hispanic male, 1 Hispanic female) attended the seminar

Positive feedback was shared:

“Con artist can very easily take my personal information.”

Acknowledgements:

A special thank you goes to the Harrison Family & Consumer Sciences committee and New Bethel Missionary Baptist church for recognizing and willing to address the financial needs of Harrison County adults. The program would not have been a success if the committee members and the church did not assist with planning, advertising, implementing and interpreting the program. A special thank you goes to Flo Jasper, retired CEA-FCS agent for her testimonial story as well as Lister Productions Photography for taking pictures. An additional thank you goes to the Harrison County Sheriff Department, State Representative Paddie’s Office, Citizens National Bank, BBV Compass Bank, Brad Burris Realty, SIG Insurance, East Texas Professional Credit Union and Austin Bank for providing guest speakers and door prizes.


Future Plans:

The Harrison FCS committee and New Bethel Missionary Baptist Church plan to continue to partner together and educate Harrison County adults in the area of financial management in 2016.



V A L U E

Financial Literacy



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service financial literacy programs provide adults and youth with basic financial education and resources to help them set and reach financial goals and plan for the future. When Texans make better financial decisions and implement recommended financial management practices, they increase their ability to achieve financial security.

2015 Harrison Better Living for Texans

Relevance:

In Harrison County, an estimated 86,128 individuals receive benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), historically known as food stamps. Studies have shown that individuals who live in poverty (including SNAP recipients) have dietary intakes that are not in agreement with current recommendations (i.e. Dietary Guidelines or MyPlate). Having enough food to eat is also a challenge; an estimated 1 out of 6 households experience food insecurity.

Response:

The BLT Program is a cooperative endeavor among Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), and the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) of USDA. A component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), BLT offers food and nutrition education to SNAP recipients, applicants, and other low-income audiences to help improve their ability to plan and prepare nutritious meals/need for physical activity, stretch food dollars, and prepare and store food safely.

During 2015, 44 Harrison County adults completed the BLT *Back to Basics on-line* series (pilot program) but data for 26 were analyzed because they were not listed under Wiley College. This program focuses on meal planning, physical activities, stretching food dollars, and adopting selected behaviors that can reduce the risk of foodborne illness. This report reflects results of the pre, post, and 30-day follow-up surveys completed by these 26 participants.

Results:

During 2015, 112 (5 White male, 2 White female, 41 Black male, 47 Black female, 14 Hispanic male, 3 Hispanic female) individuals from Harrison County attended the kick-off event and 44 completed the pre/post-tests. The program evaluation was conducted by using a pre/post survey and 30 Day Follow-Up. Only 26 (2 White male, 13 Black male, 12 Black female, 1 Hispanic male, 1 Hawaiian female) evaluations were analyzed because the agency was not identified.

Change in targeted behaviors

Table 1 shows the extent to which targeted diet and physical activity behaviors were being followed at the beginning of the program, immediately after the program ended, and then approximately one month later.

Table 1. Change in targeted behaviors

Behavior	At the beginning of the program	Immediately after program ended	Change in Behavior
1. Plan meals in advance	Always 1 (0) Sometimes 17 (65%) Never 8 (31%)	Always 7 (27%) Sometimes 16 (62%) Never 2 (1%)	Always increased 27%
2. Use a list when shopping	Always 9 (35%) Sometimes 9 (35%) Never 8 (31%)	Always 15 (58%) Sometimes 6 (23%) Never 4 (15%)	Always increased 23%
3. Compare prices when shopping for food	Always 15 (58%) Sometimes 7 (27%) Never 4(2)	Always 14 (54%) Sometimes 10 (38%) Never 1 (0)	Always decreased 4% Sometimes increased 11%
4. Use unit pricing when shopping	Always 6 (23%) Sometimes 4 (15%) Never 14(54%)	Always 11 (42%) Sometimes 7 (27%) Never 7 (27%)	Always increased 19%
5. Sanitize cutting boards after cutting up raw meat and poultry	Always 17 (65%) Sometimes 7 (27%) Never 1 (0)	Always 15 (58%) Sometimes 10 (38%) Never 0	Always decreased by 7% but sometimes increased by 3%
6. Thaw frozen meat at room temperature	Always 12 (46%) Sometimes 12 (46%) Never 1 (0)	Always 14 (54%) Sometimes 11 (42%)	Always increased 8% Question not understood

Table 2. Back to the Basics On-Line Survey

Behavior	Beginning of SUSD Number	Immediately after SUSD ended Number	Change in Behavior
Think about the last time you cooked dinner...How long did you leave it sitting out before eating or refrigerating?	Eaten right away 7(27%) Less than an hour 13 (50%) 1-2 hours 2 (1%)	Eaten right away 11 (42%) Less than 1 hour 8 (31%) 1-2 hours 4 (15%)	Eaten right away increased 15%
Describe your ability to cook nutritious meals	Very Good 3 (11%) Good 11 (42%) Fair 8 (31%)	Very Good 8 (31%) Good 12 (46%) Fair 4 (15)	Rating of very good for cooking nutritious meals increased by 20%
As a result of the on-line class, do you think you will be able to spend less money at the grocery store?		17 (65%) stated "yes" 2 (1) stated "no" 6 (23)were "unsure"	

All the above data showed increase in knowledge except for sanitizing cutting boards and comparing pricing (continuous training is needed in these areas. Nine individuals completed the 30-Day follow-up and the results but because all of the evaluations were not analyzed, the 30-Day Survey results would not be accurate.

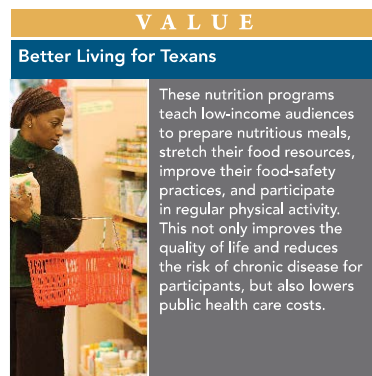
Family and Consumer Sciences

Acknowledgements:

A special thank you goes to the Harrison Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Committee program area for assisting with planning, advertising, implementing and interpreting the program. A huge thank you goes to the following for donating prizes: Harrison FCS committee, Exodus Nutrition, and Annie Tinsley, BLT-RPM. A special thank you goes to Annie Tinsley, BLT-RPM and her team for calculating the evaluation results. A special thank you goes to the Harrison County support staff for preparing documents and verifying donations.

Future Program Actions:

In 2016, the Harrison FCS committee plans to assist Agent McDonald with implementing the Better Living for Texans nutrition series online as well as face to face.



2015 Harrison Extension Education Association

Relevance

The Texas Extension Education Association was organized in 1926 as a way to strengthen and enrich families through educational programs, leadership development and community service by volunteer members of the Association, in coordination with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, TEEA functions exclusively for charitable, educational and scientific purposes as a 501c3 organization.

Response

The Harrison Extension Education Association consists of one club: Sabine EEA Club. There are twenty-one members. They have continued to be active in the community.

Results

These individuals have donated a total of 1600 volunteer hours in programs and community activities. They raised over \$2000 during the Annual Cornbread & Bean Luncheon and an additional \$1600. The monies were used for educational programs, conventions, training meetings and scholarships. They collected and donated food items to the local food pantry. They visited nursing homes and hospitals. Financial contributions were made to the local food pantry, Toys for Tots and the Harrison County 4H scholarship fund. They donated auction items and money to the district and state for 4H scholarships. Also, they donated funds to the Coins for Friendship to help support the state 4H Center in Brownwood, TX.



2015 Harrison Quilt Study Group

Relevance

Quilting is becoming a lost art. Several female adults requested to start a quilt study group in 2004. In 2011, the membership of the quilt study group began to decline.

Response

Due to low enrollment, quilt study group members and the Harrison Family and Consumer Sciences Committee decided to have a four week beginners' quilt class in 2011. Each year the attendance has increased.

Results

The Quilt Study Group met each first and third Tuesday of each month to learn quilting techniques, fabric selection and different quilting patterns. They showed their finished projects at Quilt Shows and in their study group. This year members made and donated 10 quilts to Court Appointed Special Advocated for children (CASA) and Wounded Warriors.

Acknowledgements

A special thank you goes to Margaret Lucht, Master Quilter, for volunteering her valuable time to teach the quilters.

Future Program Actions

Unfortunately, the Harrison Quilt Study Group disbanded in 2015 due to lack of interest. However, if an interest does ever arise, the Harrison Quilt Study Group will reconvene.



2015 Multi-County Dinner Tonight

Relevance

The Dinner Tonight weekly video demonstration program was created by a team of agents interested in expanding outreach opportunities through technology. Each Monday, a video demonstration, featuring a quick and healthy recipe is released for the public to view. The Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking Schools are a method of expanding the original dinner Tonight program and offering a face to face educational method to teach families about meal planning and healthy food preparation. While there are many groups who conduct cooking schools, the Dinner Tonight healthy cooking school has a unique emphasis. The demonstration recipes are cost effective, easy to prepare and fit into a healthy meal plan. The goals of the cooking school are to promote family mealtime while teaching families healthy meal planning and food preparation techniques. The vision for the Dinner Tonight healthy cooking school is to create a high-visibility, large-scale event that is fun and informative for participants.

Response

Harrison, Gregg, Rusk, Smith, Upshur and Wood Counties Family and Consumer Sciences Agents as well as volunteers planned and implemented a Dinner Tonight Cooking School in Upshur County at the Yamboree Building for the general public.

Results

As a result of the planning and marketing efforts over 200 people attended the Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School. Approximately 12 individuals purchased cooked and raffle tickets. A barbeque cooking supplies basket was raffled. The Ranch Kitchen Chef Alise Nolan presented a special family beef and noodle recipe. She also gave hints and tips for several uses of beef. Positive feedback was shared: "The Tuscan White Bean tasted like pizza." "I did not know Blueberry Cheesecake Bars could be healthy."

Acknowledgements

A huge thank you goes to Chef Alise Nolan for volunteering her time and expertise as well as the Yamboree Festival Board allowing the use of the facility without cost. This event would not have been a success without the volunteers and especially, the Harrison County Family and Consumer Sciences committee. Last but not least, a special thank you goes to the all the Family and Consumer Sciences agents in this cluster who worked together so diligently.



2015 Multi-County Child Care Conference

Relevance

The demand for quality child care continues to rise as children are spending more time in contexts outside of the family. Over 60 percent of children from birth through age 6 (not yet in kindergarten) receive some form of child care on a regular basis from persons other than their parents (Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 2010).

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) estimates that there are over 100,000 child care providers caring for more than 760,000 children under the age of 13 in licensed or regulated child care facilities in the state of Texas. According to TWC, there are over 23,000 licensed or regulated child care facilities (child care centers, family day care). Additionally, child care is the 16th largest industry in the state, generating over 145,000 jobs and \$2.3 billion in wages for Texans.

With the demand for child care at an all-time high, researchers and policy makers have become increasingly concerned with the quality and accessibility of child care. Large-scale studies conducted across the U.S. have found that the quality of care on the national level tends to be poor to mediocre. At the same time, findings from longitudinal research have clearly established the fact that quality does matter when it comes to child care. Children who receive high-quality care (e.g., warm sensitive caregiving, well- educated child care staff, low child-to-adult ratios, small group size) develop better language, math, and social skills; exhibit fewer behavior problems; and tend to be better prepared for entrance into school (NICHD, 2006).

Having a well-trained child care workforce is essential to providing the high quality child care that children need to reach their developmental potential. Licensed and registered child care providers are mandated by the state of Texas to obtain a set amount of training (i.e., clock hours) in a variety of areas associated with the care of children. The child care provider training conference provides an avenue to reach early childhood educators with research-based information that will enable them to obtain state-mandated clock hour credits and continuing education units (CEUs), and enhance their knowledge and skills in the child care profession.

Response

Family & Consumer Sciences agents in Gregg, Harrison, Panola, Rusk, Smith, Upshur and Wood counties hosted the Annual Piney Woods Child Care Conference in Carthage, TX at the Texas Music Hall of Fame.

Results

Family and Consumer Sciences

62 child care providers and directors who provide care for 1,809 children enrolled in 15 child care centers for family day homes. Sixty-two participants completed a written evaluation of the conference (see Table 1 for participants' characteristics). A total of 372 clock hours of training were provided to child care professionals seeking to meet state mandated training requirements establishments by the state of Texas.

Table 1. Participant Characteristics (N = 62)*

Variable	Percentage*	Mean
Age (in years)		40.0
Number of Years in Child Care Profession		12.2
Gender		
Female	88.7	
Male	1.6	
Ethnicity		
African American	17.7	
Caucasian	74.2	
Hispanic/Latino	6.5	
Asian	0.0	
Other	1.6	
Education		
Less than High School Diploma	4.8	
High School Diploma	64.5	
Associates Degree	11.3	
College Graduate	16.1	
Program Type		
Home Day Care	9.7	
Child Care Center (other than Head Start)	90.4	
Other (e.g., Montessori)	0.0	
Program Licensed and/or Registered		
Yes	93.5	
No	1.6	
Attended Extension-Sponsored Training in Past		
Yes	38.7	
No	41.9	
Not Sure	14.5	
*Percentages do not always equal 100% due to missing cases.		

Participants were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with a series of items related to the training. Sixty-two participants completed written surveys (See Table 2 for participant responses).

Table 2. Child Care Provider Conference Outcomes (N = 62)*

Item	Percent in Agreement*	Percent not in Agreement*
Acquisition of New Information		
Learned new information	93.5%	4.8%
Will utilize new information to strengthen program	98.4%	0.0%
Intent to Use Information		
Will use now	98.4%	0.0%
Will use in future	98.4%	0.0%
Training's Influence on Provider/Program Quality		
Will be more effective provider	98.4%	0.0%
Will lead to improvements in quality of care offered	98.4%	0.0%
Relevancy of Training		
Helped provider obtain required clock hours	98.4%	0.0%
Topics relevant to daily work	96.8%	1.6%
Other		
Training cost-effective	98.4%	0.0%
Plan to attend another Extension conference	98.4%	0.0%
*Percentages do not equal 100% due to missing cases		

In addition to the above items, participants were asked to rate the quality of the conference compared to other child care trainings they have attended in the past by non-Extension organizations/agencies. Table 3 below contains the results.

Table 3. Perceptions of Quality Compared to Other Non-Extension Trainings (N = 62)*

Item*	Much Worse	Worse	Same	Better	Much Better
Compared to other child care trainings you					

Family and Consumer Sciences

have attended (not provided by Extension), how would you rate the quality of today's training?	0.0%	0.0%	32.3%	22.6%	33.9%
Percentages do not equal 100% due to missing cases					

As can be seen in the tables above, child care providers found the training to be very beneficial. Over 93 percent of participants acquired new information from the conference, considered the training to be very relevant to the work they do, plan to utilize the information gained at the conference to improve their programs, and consider themselves better equipped to work with the children in their care. Moreover, **57%** of providers rated the training “Better” or “Much Better” compared to other trainings they have attended that were not conducted by Extension.

Acknowledgements

A huge thank you goes to Dr. Stephen Green and his team for compiling the evaluation results. A special thank you goes to the agents in this cluster who worked together to provide a successful child care conference. Of a big thank you goes to all of the speakers and volunteers who donated their precious time.

Future Plans

Due to such great success, in 2016, the Family and Consumer Sciences cluster plans to implement a Child Care Conference again in Panola County.



2015 Harrison Let's Go, Let's Grow

Relevance:

The Let's Go, Let's Grow initiative is an exciting opportunity to increase 4-H club enrollment. This plan is meant to be a marketing and promotion plan for 4-H, as well as a strategic initiative to offer NEW projects and activities to NEW target audiences. The result will be recruitment of NEW 4-H members and volunteer leaders. The Harrison 4-H Advisory board will direct the Let's Go, Let's Grow initiative. They should meet a minimum of three times per year and support program outreach and expansion. Harrison County youth needs to improve their leadership skills as well as their life skills.

Response:

During 2015, the Harrison 4-H Advisory Board met more than three times in an effort to plan a two day camp. The purpose of the camp was to expose Harrison County youth to the 4-H program. The following workshops were offered: archery, food and nutrition, photography, duct tape, beekeeping, financial management, character education and wildlife.

Results:

32 youth attended the event and 22 screened adults volunteered.

A youth participant satisfaction was completed by 26 campers. The results are as follows:

91% (24 out of 26) of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the activity.

81% (21 out of 26) of respondents would recommend this activity to others

68% (18 out of 26) of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the range of topics

As of today there are 87 youth enrolled in the Harrison 4H program as compared to 72 in 2014.

Also, please note the Trinity 4H club began in 2015.

Acknowledgements:

A special thank you goes to the Harrison 4H Advisory Board, 4H Club Managers, 4H Adult Leaders for recognizing the importance of the 4H program as well as assisting with growing and strengthen the program in Harrison County. The program would not have been a success if these did not volunteer their precious time.



Fire Ant Festival

Fire Ant Festival is one of the primary festivals held in Marshall Annually. The purpose of the event is to celebrate how Harrison County tries to manage fire ants and boost the economy. Each year the Extension Office assist with one of the contest while marketing the Extension program. Members of the Harrison County 4-H program also set up an informational booth each year to help promote and market the local 4-H program.

Wonderland of Lights

Wonderland of Lights is another major festival held in Marshall Annually. People from across the country come to Marshall, TX to view the Christmas lights. Visitors can also enjoy an outdoor skating rink and tour immaculate homes with Christmas decor.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Harrison County

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