When you support Extension, families recognize the signs of Alzheimer’s disease in order to benefit from early intervention.

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Todd County residents participated in a brain activity program by playing games and keeping the mind active.

Extension Increases Awareness of Alzheimer’s Disease and Promotes Healthy Life Choices

Family and Consumer Sciences Extension agents in eighty-six counties are trained to present “Know the 10 Signs,” an evidence-based curriculum from the National Alzheimer’s Association.
As many as 16 million people in the United States will be living with Alzheimer's disease by 2050 (Alzheimer's Association, 2016). The estimated cost of caring for those with dementia was $236 billion in 2016, increasing to $1.1 trillion dollars by 2050. Alzheimer’s is the sixth leading cause of death in Kentucky, with 69,000 adults age 65 and older diagnosed in 2016. In 2015, 270,000 caregivers provided a total of 307,000,000 hours of unpaid care in Kentucky.

“Know the 10 Signs” is an evidenced-based program written and distributed by the National Alzheimer’s Association. The Greater Kentucky/Southern Indiana Alzheimer’s Association Chapter trained Extension agents in eighty-six counties to help increase people’s knowledge of risk factors, understand the benefits of early diagnosis, and know what to do when risk factors are observed. Participants reported practicing healthy behaviors that include physical activity, healthy diet, stress management, adequate sleep, mental exercise, and meaningful social engagement. Of those who completed pre and post surveys, 80% reported increased confidence in managing their current situation such as talking about what is happening, calling a health care professional or following up with resources.

Extension conducts additional programs that address various age-related issues including Stand Up to Falling, Keys to Embracing Aging, Family Traditions and Memory Banking: A Life Story Presentation program. Some agents have even teamed with UK Worklife to offer the Second Wind Dreams, Virtual Dementia Tour (VDT). The VDT is an evidenced based dementia simulation that allows individual caregivers to better experience the cognitive, physical and emotional challenges that those living with the disease face on a day-to-day basis. During 2017, Family and Consumer Sciences agents made over 21,000 contacts with information on aging through programs and health fairs. Family Caregiver Bulletins are available each month online and through county Extension newsletters.