

# EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE *Changing Lives*

## IN BALLARD COUNTY

Extension provides practical education you can trust by helping individuals, families, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future.



*Ballard County Extension Office*

### **Second Graders LEAPing to Good Health**

Ballard County Elementary School and Cooperative Extension Service are increasing awareness for students and their families of the importance of consuming a variety of fruits and vegetables every day, engaging in at least 30 minutes of physical activity to decrease their risk for Type II Diabetes and heart disease, getting the right amount of sleep, and the importance of frequent hand-washing to their health.

For the past four years, Ballard County second grade teachers have partnered with Cooperative Extension to target second graders for a large part of their Health and Nutrition education. This year, 80 second grade students and their teachers have participated in eight monthly sessions of the Literacy, Eating and Activity for Primary Health (LEAP) series, presented by Cooperative Extension FCS agent and Extension Homemaker volunteers. At each session students were read a story with a health focus, promoting making good health choices. Sometimes the main character in the book tried a new food. Students were able to identify with the character in the book and tried the healthy food sample offered that day. Students often reported liking the food and said they would ask their parents to provide that food in their home. Students also received a handout for their parent to use in reinforcing the message they learned each time.

Over the course of four years, teachers have indicated that students are talking about what they have learned in this program well after we leave and the teachers are also reinforcing the messages with them.

The first week of March, all Ballard County Extension agents worked together to present nutrition programs to these same students and said that in reviewing what they already knew, students were able to articulate nutrition facts they had learned up to that point.

## Priority Program Efforts

- A total of 74 people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
- 10 producers reported an economic impact (i.e., increase in agricultural productivity, increase in higher returns, decrease in expenses) in their agricultural operations.
- 335 youth and adults utilized the leadership skills, learned through participation in Extension leadership programs
- 243 youth and adults demonstrated increased practical living skills learned through Extension programming.
- A total of 169 individuals made lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health.
- 46 producers reported changes in knowledge, opinions, and skills related to the impact of public policies on agriculture and the environment.



2<sup>nd</sup> Grade LEAP

## AG AND NATURAL RESOURCES

### ***Renting Farmland from the Landowners Perspective***

The Purchase Area Women in Ag Conference has been an annual event for many years in our area. The audience is women who are connected to the farm, either as farm wives, landowners, business owners, or even farm operators. I was asked to develop a program for renting farm ground from the landowner's perspective. Most farm rental programs are from the farmer's perspective, figuring out an economic rental rate and possible rental terms that will keep the business solvent. This program was a complete 180 degree shift to the other side of the equation. It focused on how much should land rent be, what kind of rental agreements were out there? How location and size of crop fields enter into the equation. How to calculate land productivity and compare that under different rental arrangements and finally how to partner with a farmer that is trusted and form a long term business arrangement. The entire 93 member audience was female which was another 180 degree swing from my usual audience. The results of the after program survey showed that 86% were more confident that they could negotiate a correct rate for renting their land. Eighty three percent learned what to look for in a land renter and 77% felt that they could negotiate the best land rental agreement for their farm.

### ***Farm Bill Producer Education***

The passage of the new Farm Bill provided a great opportunity for partnering with FSA in educating farmers in the complexities of the program and how they apply to their individual farming operations. Tom Miller, Ballard County Agent for Ag and Natural Resources, conducted meeting in conjunction with local FSA representatives and local county agents across western Kentucky. A joint meeting was held for

and Ballard County. Two meetings were conducted in Carlisle County. Single meetings were presented in Fulton County, Marshall County, Livingston County, Lyon County and Crittenden County. Miller also developed a newspaper article for land owners that was widely circulated in western Kentucky and kept and used as a reference for several local FSA offices when landowners had questions. Over 200 producers attended these meetings and all local FSA personal were grateful for the producer education as they were prohibited from helping any applicant make a decision. The impact over the next 5 years from payments will be in the millions of dollars for the counties where this education was conducted.

## 4H AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

### ***BCES 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Career Day***

A Career Fair was held for the 4th and 5th grades at Ballard County Elementary School. The main objective of the event was for students to understand how important it is for them to establish good work habits and employability skills that will help them be a successful adult. They were to identify how academic classes (reading, writing and math) relate to various careers/jobs; and to identify how personal responsibility and good work habits (attendance, work completed on time, following directions) are important at home, school and work. Planning partners were the Ballard County Elementary School, Community Education and UK Cooperative Extension/4-H Youth Development. Teachers and youth reviewed the career clusters starting at the beginning of the school year. The committee chose a career from the career clusters that were available in our area including Civil engineering, aviation, nursing, building contractor, minister, guidance counselor, banking and forestry. 98% of youth reported learning about a new job or career; 86% reported learning more about the importance of the basic skills of reading, writing and math in careers/jobs; 92% reported learning the importance of social skills, teamwork, motivation and enthusiasm for job performance and satisfaction; and finally 100% reported learning the importance of



setting goals for school and career/job beginning now. The students were provided a booklet from Extension that included each speaker and the following questions for each speaker (the speakers had this same information): What kind of education or training did this speaker learn in school that helped them the most to do their career/job?, What is the salary range for this career/job?, What educational degree, certification and/or experience does it take for this career/job?, What did this person's employer look for when hiring someone, or what does this speaker look for when he/she is hiring someone?, Is there an opportunity to move, or relocate with this career/job?, What is a typical day for this career/job?, How or when did this person make their career/job decision? What goals did this speaker set? What goals do they have?

The teachers reported this was the best career day they had had and thought the booklets helped the students stay focused and grasp more information than just listening would have given them.

### **Truth and Consequences**

Ballard County faces serious substance abuse issues as do most other counties. We are a rural county and have had methamphetamine issues and now face the beginnings of heroin issues. Ballard County Extension 4-H led the effort for Ballard County eighth graders to participate in Truth and Consequences. We had the cooperation of a committee of twelve individuals and community partners to plan this impactful event. Similar to the Reality Store, the youth drew a situation and a parent, grandparent or "volunteer parent" went through the basic process with the student as they would encounter in real life. We had a passive permission form so that if a student didn't return a permission form, we could still allow them to go through the process. We had over 50% family participation. This is higher than any other school that our health professionals had seen at other schools. We also had great community volunteer participation for students whose parent couldn't attend. As with most Truth and Consequences, the students had a scenario in the gym with health care, law enforcement, judicial system, coroner and more. We had debriefing following the scenarios. A speaker who was a recovering addict from a home for substance abuse recovery spoke to each group. A video was shown and the state police set up talking about their interaction with people stopped for DUI and DWI and other situations. Some of our students were near tears as they went through the process. Many of them had older friends or acquaintances that had gone through substance abuse issues. One hundred percent of parents of students reported that

the event provided appropriate information, felt appropriate topics were addressed but offered more suggestions, 90% said they got new information, 100% reported getting useful resources and 100% reported that they would share the information gained with family and friends and planned to talk with their son or daughter more about substance abuse choices.

Administration and faculty said they felt it was impactful on students and their family that attended. One hundred percent of our Community volunteers felt it was worthwhile and want to volunteer again. We plan to hold our next event in April 2016.

### **Communications**

Ballard County fourth and fifth graders learned communication skills and practiced those skills by giving speeches in the classroom. One hundred ninety-two youth learned to select a topic, research a topic, develop an outline, write a speech, practice a speech and then deliver a speech in the classroom. Another 12 youth learned about giving a demonstration in a community club setting, then took turns developing and delivering their presentations at the club level. This agent worked with the fourth and fifth grade language arts teachers to teach public speaking. This agent worked with the community club leader to teach about demonstrations.



Ninety-six 5th graders also had the focus of their club meetings to be communications as it relates to leadership. Each month youth had the opportunity to practice public speaking in various ways such as "introducing themselves" listing many of their characteristics, they learned to give and listen to directions, they communicated silently and then vocally and learned how important being able to have two way communication was, along with many other lessons. One hundred percent reported being more comfortable speaking before a group at the end of the club year.

Two youth competed at the area competition. One went on to state and was state communications day champion in Senior Safety Demonstrations.

Materials used in the classroom were Speak Up and some Tools of the Trade from the 4-H Agent Resource Guide.

## **FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES**

### ***School Readiness in Ballard County***

Extension collaborated with the Four River Counties Community Early Childhood Council (CECC), helping to secure a \$19,800 grant for early childhood programs in the four river counties. Funds from that program helped the partnership of Cooperative Extension, the Ballard County Preschool Head Start program, and the Family Resource and Youth Services Center to provide two educational opportunities and several resources for three Day Care Providers and over 100 preschool and Head Start families.

The GROW event was offered in the fall with over 60 adults and 52 children attending. Extension provided a parent-child activity where a spider kit/manipulative was assembled. Plate it Up Pumpkin Apple Muffin samples were also handed out. Families also took part in an Ages and Stages assessment for their preschool and younger children. The children painted pumpkins, visited with Ms. Rene for Story Time, played on the Bump & Jump & Trikes, and was later served chili. Everyone went home with a GROW pack filled with Kindergarten Ready literature and Nutrition incentives provided by Cooperative Extension. In a post survey 90% indicated they had increased their knowledge about what it took for their child to be ready for Kindergarten and 100% committed to increasing their reading time with their child.

The Kindergarten Transition event was offered in the spring with over 65 adults and 48 children attending. Families had the opportunity to visit with Kindergarten teachers and toured their child's future classroom. An inflatable was set up for children to play & jump and be active. Lastly families went to the cafeteria where a spaghetti supper was provided. At the end of the event families picked up a GROW Pack filled with Kindergarten Ready literature and Nutrition coloring books and crayons provided by CECC funds and the Cooperative Extension Service. In a post survey, 85% indicated that their knowledge of what to do to help their child be ready for kindergarten had increased and 95% plan to use the materials and information received at the event. One parent said, "as a teacher in a different school system I want to commend you on recognizing the importance of this huge transition for our children. I wish our school system would do the same for our preschoolers".

### ***Walking with Ease with Arthritis***

For people in general, a regular walking program is the easiest and safest way to get needed cardiovascular exercise and all the physical and

mental benefits that go with it. Research shows that this is especially true for people with arthritis, and walking at least three times a week provides the most benefit to them. To help motivate people to increase their physical activity and improve their health, the Cooperative Extension Service partnered with the Purchase District Health Department in presenting "Walk with Ease" a structured six-week, 18 sessions program of the National Arthritis Foundation. All three program leaders received training from the foundation and were certified to lead the program.

"Walk with Ease" was written specifically for people with arthritis but is known to be beneficial to anyone wanting to walk safely to increase their physical activity. Of the ten women and one man who participated, seven had arthritis and four did not.

Walking is central but the program also includes four other components: health education information, stretching and strengthening exercises, motivational tips and tools and socialization.

Each session was based on: a pre-walk discussion about related topics on arthritis, exercise, or walking safely and comfortably, as well as motivational strategies and group sharing, followed by warm-up exercises, then a walk of 10 to 30 minutes, and a cool-down followed by closing remarks. At first, sessions averaged about 45 minutes but increased to more than an hour as the group improved their fitness level over the succeeding weeks.

Eight of the original 11 people completed the program. Of those filling out a written survey at the end, 100% had increased their knowledge about how to do warm-up and cool-down exercises before and after walking; and 100% felt more knowledgeable about walking in a safe and comfortable manner. At the beginning of the program participants were assessed on how many laps they could walk around the gym in 10 minutes. By the end of six weeks most had increased their laps by 1-2 times. Furthermore, the group had bonded over the six weeks and made plans to continue walking at the Family Life Center 2-3 times a weeks.

<p>COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE</p>  <p>UNIVERSITY OF <b>KENTUCKY</b> College of Agriculture, Food and Environment</p>	<p><b>The Ballard County Cooperative Extension Service</b></p> <p><i>Extending Knowledge, Changing Lives</i></p>
<p>For more information, contact us at 110 Broadway, La Center, KY 42056-0237 Phone: 270-665-9118 Fax: 270-665-5241 <a href="http://www.ca.uky.edu">www.ca.uky.edu</a></p>	