

# Making a Difference

**Child Care Provider Conference Outcome Report, 2014**  
*Report prepared by Dr. Stephen Green, Extension Specialist for  
 Sherri Halsell, Clay County Extension Agent - FCS*

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. The Texas Workforce Commission 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. Additionally, child care is the 16<sup>th</sup> largest industry in the state, generating over 145,000 jobs and \$2.3 billion in wages for Texans.

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. Having a well-trained child care workforce is essential to providing the high quality child care that children need to develop physically, socially, emotionally, and cognitively.

### Child Care Provider Conference

On March 22, 2014, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service conducted a child care provider training conference in Wichita Falls, Texas for 63 child care providers and directors who provide care for 713 children enrolled in 22 child care centers or family day homes. Sixty-three participants completed a written evaluation of the conference (see Table 1 for participant characteristics). A total of 378 clock hours of training were provided to child care professionals seeking to meet state mandated training requirements established by the state of Texas.

**Table 1. Participant Characteristics (N = 63)\***

Variable	Percentage*	Mean
<b>Age (in years)</b>		42.9
<b>Number of Years in Child Care Profession</b>		13.1
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	98.4	
Male	0.0	
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
African American	9.5	
Caucasian	76.2	
Hispanic/Latino	14.3	
Other	3.2	
<b>Education</b>		
Less than High School Diploma	0.0	
High School Diploma	66.7	
Associates Degree	17.5	
College Graduate	15.9	
<b>Program Type</b>		
Home Day Care	9.5	
Child Care Center (other than Head Start)	63.5	
Head Start	6.3	

*Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating*

Other (e.g., Montessori)	20.6	
<b>Program Licensed and/or Registered</b>		
Yes	96.8	
No	0.0	
<b>Attended Extension-Sponsored Training in Past</b>		
Yes	57.1	
No	27.0	
Not Sure	7.9	
*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-three participants completed written surveys (See Table 2 for participant responses).

**Table 2. Child Care Provider Conference Outcomes (N = 63)\***

Item	Percent in Agreement	Percent not in Agreement*
<b>Acquisition of New Information</b>		
Learned new information	100.0%	0.0%
Will utilize new information to strengthen program	100.0%	0.0%
<b>Intent to Use Information</b>		
Will use now	100.0%	0.0%
Will use in future	100.0%	0.0%
<b>Training's Influence on Provider/Program Quality</b>		
Will be more effective provider	100.0%	0.0%
Will lead to improvements in quality of care offered	100.0%	0.0%
<b>Relevancy of Training</b>		
Helped provider obtain required clock hours	95.2%	4.8%
Topics relevant to daily work	98.4%	1.6%
<b>Other</b>		
Training cost-effective	98.4%	1.6%
Plan to attend another Extension conference	98.4%	1.6%
*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 = 63)\***

Item*	Much Worse	Worse	Same	Better	Much Better
Compared to other child care trainings you have attended (not provided by Extension), how would you rate the quality of today's training?	0.0%	0.0%	19.0%	28.6%	47.6%
*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 95 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, 76% of providers rated the training "Better" or "Much Better" compared to other trainings they have attended that were not conducted by Extension.

# Making a Difference

## 2014 Clay County A Matter of Balance: Managing Concerns about Falls Program

### Outcome Summary

Summary developed by Andrew Crocker, Extension Program Specialist – Gerontology and Health for Sherri Halsell, Clay County Extension Agent – FCS

Research indicates up to half of community-dwelling older adults experience fear of falling and that many respond to this concern by curtailing activity. A majority of falls occur during routine activities and are usually caused by a variety of issues. In fact, a large portion of falls are preventable. Being inactive may result in loss of muscle strength and balance. It can also compromise social interaction and increase the risk for isolation, depression, and anxiety. Fear of falling can actually contribute to falling. *A Matter of Balance* acknowledges the risk of falling but emphasizes practical coping strategies to reduce this concern.

*A Matter of Balance* is an evidence-based fall risk reduction program that emphasizes practical strategies to reduce fear of falling and increase activity levels. Participants learn to view falls and fear of falling as controllable, set realistic goals to increase activity, change their environment to reduce fall risk factors and exercise to increase strength and balance.

Because *A Matter of Balance* is certified by the Administration on Aging and the National Council on the Aging, there is an abundance of data from national studies to indicate the program's effectiveness. Nationally, after completing *A Matter of Balance*:

- 97% of participants are more comfortable talking about fear of falling
- 97% feel comfortable increasing activity
- 99% plan to continue exercising
- 98% would recommend A Matter of Balance

As a result of participating in *A Matter of Balance* in Clay County, participants increased confidence that they can manage falls risk better and actual falls if they occur and that they can take action to help reduce the risk of falling. In addition, participants indicated that their concerns about falling are interfering less with their social activity and they report that they have increased their exercise levels.

Statement	Response (N = 7)		Percent Change
	Pre-Series	Post-Series	
	Scale: Very Sure (4); Sure (3); Somewhat Sure (2); Not at All Sure (1)		
I can find a way to get up if I fall.	3.00	2.57	(15%)
I can find a way to reduce falls.	2.43	3.14	30%
I can protect myself if I fall.	2.14	2.57	20%
I can increase my physical strength.	3.00	3.14	5%
I can become more steady on my feet.	2.57	3.14	57%
	Scale: Extremely (5); Quite a Bit (4); Moderately (3); Slightly (2); Not at All		
During the last four weeks, to what extent has your concern about falling interfered with your normal social activities with family, friends, neighbors or groups?	2.14	1.71	(20%)

Scale: Moderate 3 or more times per week (6); Moderate less than 3 times per week (5); Infrequent for over a month (4); Trying to start (3); Do not but thinking of starting (2); Do not and do not intend to start (1)			
How much are you walking or exercising now?	4.14	5.00	21%

Regarding the overall series

Statement	Response (N = 7)			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The leaders were well prepared.	71%	29%	0%	0%
The classes were well organized.	29%	71%	0%	0%
The participant workbook helped me better understand the classes.	43%	57%	0%	0%
As a result of this class, I feel more comfortable talking with others about my fear of falling.	29%	71%	0%	0%
As a result of this class, I have made changes to my environment.	43%	57%	0%	0%
As a result of this class, I feel more comfortable increasing my activity.	43%	57%	0%	0%
As a result of this class, I plan to continue exercising.	57%	43%	0%	0%
I would recommend this class to a friend or relative.	71%	29%	0%	0%

Selected Demographic Data for Participants

Gender

Female: 43%  
Male: 57%

Race/Ethnicity

American Indian or Alaska Native: 0%  
Asian or Asian-American: 0%  
Black or African-American: 17%  
Hawaiian Native or Pacific Islander: 0%  
Hispanic or Latino: 0%  
White or Caucasian: 83%  
Other: 0%

Age (Min: 70, Max: 85, Mean: 79.43)

Less than 60 years: 0%  
60-64 years: 0%  
65-69 years: 0%  
65-69 years: 0%  
70-74 years: 29%  
75-79 years: 14%  
80-84 years: 28%  
85-89 years: 29%  
90 years or older: 0%

What other changes have you made as a result of this class?

- Paying more attention!
- Be more aware about what you are doing at all times.
- I work on being much more active. Moved recliner so I don't sit in it as much.
- Taking my pills on time.
- More aware of my need to exercise. More alert to what is a potential hazard. More aware of my responsibilities about safety and to my family.
- I will be exercising more. Try not to fall as much.

Other comments or suggestions?

- Everyone over 65 should take this class.
- It was a great environment. Good participation from both the leaders and attendees. Hope for future classes.
- I need a partner to walk.
- I recommend this program to older people.

# Making a Difference

## 2014 Clay County 4-H Food Nutrition Program Outcome

*Summary developed by Sherri Halsell, County Extension Agent, Clay County*

### **RELEVANCE**

The 4-H Food & Nutrition Program offers a variety of opportunities for youth to develop knowledge and skills in nutrition. By offering a variety of workshops as well as competitive activities, 4-H members will learn about nutritional value, serving size and cost of food dishes. They will learn to apply the knowledge and skills gained through participation in the 4-H foods and nutrition project, demonstrating their culinary and food safety skills, and continuing to learn about making healthier food choices.

The specific objectives of the 4-H Food and Nutrition Project:

- Provide opportunities for participants to exhibit their knowledge and skills when preparing and presenting a dish
- Provide opportunities for participants to learn from other team members and promote teamwork.
- Provide opportunities to tour food establishments.
- Give participants opportunities for public speaking.
- Provide leadership opportunities.
- Give 4-H members the opportunity to participate in exciting competitive events.

The goal of implementing the 4-H Food Nutrition Program is to give youth and volunteers a many opportunities for increasing knowledge related to foods and nutrition and being able to apply the knowledge and skills gained through project experiences.

### **RESPONSE**

After reviewing the goal of the 4-H Food Nutrition Program and data concerning the needs of the 4-H Members, the Clay County Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) 4-H Youth Program Area Committee chose to adopt programming that would meet these goals. Programming included a Food & Nutrition Workshop, practices for the County and District Food Shows, practices for the Food Challenge and a series of workshops called Critter Cafe.

**RESULTS**

Student knowledge gains and behavior changes are noted in the chart below.

2013 Clay County Foods & Nutrition Projects Survey thru Survey Monkey	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
My understanding of "My Plate"	18.4%	34.6%	31.7%	15.3%
My knowledge of food nutrients and their functions	0	45.7%	40.1%	14.2%
My understanding of the importance of food safety and kitchen safety.	0	13.7%	24.1%	62.2%
My understanding of how to plan and prepare a recipe	0	0	39.8%	60.2%
My knowledge level of how to alter a recipe according to a healthy lifestyle	9.3%	16.3%	44.5%	29.9%
		Yes	No	Unsure
I have planned or prepared a recipe at home based on what I have learned.		100%		
I have made healthier food choices based on what I have learned.		73.7%	17.1%	9.2%
I have changed the way I handle and prepare food based on what I have learned.		88.8%	11.2%	0%
I have been more physically active and watched less TV based on what I have learned.		63.5%	11.2%	25.3%
I am going to do a better job of following through on obligations because I have participated in the food and nutrition projects.		84.3%	0%	15.7%

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Thanks are extended to Clay County Family & Consumer Sciences 4-H Youth Committee – Shirley Visentainer, Sheila Choate, Margo Grunseich, Cami Franke, Jan Slagle and two youth Korri Franke and Madeline Catron for their role in supporting AgriLife Extension childhood overweight education programs. Henrietta ISD for providing facilities for County Nutrition Contests & Workshops; TEEA, Sorge Appraisals, Davis Funeral Home, Henrietta Pharmacy for donation of funds to support the projects and contests. This collaboration will continue in 2015.

# Making a Difference

## *Healthy Life Style for Youth Output - 2014*

*Summary developed by Sherri Halsell, County Extension Agent, Clay County*

### Relevance

Experts are concerned that today's children are likely to be the first generation to live shorter, less healthy lives than their parents. Being overweight in childhood increases a person's chance of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, certain cancers, breathing problems, arthritis, joint problems and social discrimination. According to the Centers for Disease Control, about 17% of all children in the U.S. are overweight. Texas ranks 13th as the most obese state in the nation; with adult obesity at 26-29% and child obesity at 16-20% during the past four years. Research indicates that 61.5% of children aged 9 to 13 years do not participate in any organized physical activity during their non-school hours and that 22.6% do not engage in any free-time physical activity. The youth in Clay County that are overweight is varied from 7-11 % according to the Jeanette Holding, Henrietta ISD nurse. An emerging issue that presented itself during the year was bicycle safety. The city of Henrietta received a grant to create sidewalks around town to help students' safety walk to school. After the sidewalks were built many children were riding their bicycles to school but not stopping at intersections while crossing the streets. There were many reports that drivers narrowly missed hitting these children. According to National Safe Kids, helmets can reduce the risk of severe brain injury by up to 88%, but only 45% of children wear bike helmets. According to National Safe Kids, bicycles are associated with more injuries in children than any other product except automobiles. Other studies from the organization found that nearly half of the hospitalizations related to bicycles are traumatic injury to the brain. Helmets should be considered an important part of bike riding.

### Response

After reviewing the emerging issue of bicycle safety and data concerning childhood overweight statistic within the county, provided by the school nurses and state statistics, the Clay County Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Program Area Committee chose to adopt the *Healthy Life Style for Youth Output* in an effort to promote better health and safety for youth. In an effort to provide programming to address the issue of health and safety and reach as many youth as possible the committee adopted a variety of programming including: Bicycle Safety and Proper Hand Washing.

### Program Activities

**Proper Hand Washing Method** is a hands-on demonstration program presented to 455 students Henrietta Elementary K-5<sup>th</sup> grade students on the proper method of washing hands. **Bicycle Safety Program** - Presented a Bicycle Safety Program which consisted of lesson on bicycling for healthily exercise and bicycle safety with the

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating

need to wear helmet to the Henrietta Elementary students. This was an emerging issue and was be planned by a task force. A session was presented with a talk about the importance of wearing helmets while riding a bike and knowing the rules of the road. A hands-on obstacle course was set up for students to go through with stops and policemen to correct their mistakes. The program was an emerging issue for Henrietta due to the new sidewalks that were built around the town. 215 3-5th grade students from Henrietta Elementary attended the program with 90 receiving new bicycle helmet, sponsored by Texas Medical Association and Dr. T. David Greer. This was a joint program with AgriLife Extension and Henrietta S.H.A.C. The program included a classroom lesson covering bike safety, bike check list and rules of the road. Then students bringing bicycles participated in a hands-on obstacle course to practice lessons learned in classroom. Other students participated in a hands on pedestrian cross course and when to sessions on seatbelt safety and sports helmet safety and first aid. There were 25 volunteers that helped with this program. **Mass Media Method** – A promotional news flier was sent to all 215 parents about the upcoming Bicycle Safety Program before the event. After the event a parent newsletter (215) was sent to reinforce knowledge the students gained at the program. Parent newsletters were written and distributed to parents of Henrietta Elementary students on bicycle safety and youth diabetes. News articles were written and distributed to two newspaper outlets, one online newspaper and distributed to 6900. Articles included: Don't forget the Helmet, Bicycling safely for Good Health, National Nutrition Month and Healthy Lifestyle Choices.

## Results

**Proper Hand Washing Method** results from Henrietta Principle, Kendra Bennett, states that absentees are down by 7% from the year before after the hand washing lesson was presented.

**Bicycle Safety** results are shown below. 215 attended program. 215 evaluations disrupted with 199 returned for pretest and 177 for posttest.

BICYCLE SAFETY	#	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation
Pretest Score	199	10	100	71.66	16.415
Posttest Score	177	20	100	77.23	13.969

## Qualitative Data

- "I plan to wear a helmet when I ride my bike."
- "I enjoyed the obstacle course the most."
- "I did not know there were bike driving rules."
- "I learned how to check my bike before riding it."

## Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to the Family & Consumer Sciences Program Area Committee - Shirley Visentainer, Howard Beeler, Jan Slagle, Sue Woodson, Margo Grunseich, Betty Franklin and Pauline Uttke, Henrietta Elementary - Kendra Bennett, principle Jeanette Holding, nurse, Cindy Dunkerley, PE teacher and Pennie Clevenger, music teacher and Henrietta S.H.A.C. for their role in support of the healthy life style programs.