WHAT WE WANT
#STRONGIOWA
2018 IN CEDAR COUNTY

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach connects the needs of Iowans with Iowa State University research and resources. We are working with the people of Cedar County for what we all want: a strong Iowa.

Cedar County Extension Council

Every Iowa county has an elected extension council that guides local educational programming by partnering with staff. From needs assessment through program implementation and evaluation of outcomes, the council represents the issues and people of the county.

We have identified these local issues as priority topics for current and future programming:

- Community Partnerships
- Food and the Environment
- Health and Well-being
- K12 Youth Outreach

Community Partnerships

Being a small, rural county we are accustomed to forming close relationships with other agencies in our area and working together to share resources, make connections, and fill gaps. Two such collaborations have resulted in programs that have had a significant impact in our county.

Safe Sleep & Infant Care
This program teaches the most current safe sleep guidelines all parents should know and share with family, day care providers,

Extension Council Members

We want communities and farmers to thrive, and families and children to be healthy. And eventually we want to turn the world over to the next generation better than we found it.

Alan Beyer  
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Council Member  
Mike Boyle  
Council Member  
Terry Chapman  
Council Member  
Linda Jacobsen  
Council Member  
Deb Mohr  
Council Member  
Devin Schroeder  
Council Member  
Deb Storjohann  
Council Member  
DeAnna Tylor  
Council Member
and anyone who cares for their babies. It also teaches about immunizations, car seat safety, infant crying, and postpartum depression/anxiety. The goal is to ensure that every parent, grandparent, and caregiver in Cedar County will have the knowledge and equipment to implement as many safe sleep strategies as possible to reduce the risk their baby will succumb to SIDS or other sleep-related death. This is important because new mothers in Cedar County reported a significant lack of exposure to information about important infant care topics. For example, during pregnancy or time at the hospital only 39 percent reported that a doctor, nurse, or other healthcare professional provided information or scheduled a time to discuss how to lay a baby down to sleep which is 16% lower than the state average. Only 27 percent had been provided with action steps to decrease frustration when an infant cries, 17 percent lower than the state average, and only 29 percent had been provided information about the dangers of shaking an infant, 12 percent lower than the state average. (Data source: Iowa Barriers to Prenatal Care Project, IDPH, and University of Northern Iowa Center for Behavioral Research: 2016 Data.)

The collaboration between Iowa State University Extension & Outreach, Cedar County Public Health, Cedar County Community Partnership for Protecting Children, Community Foundation of Cedar County, and Lutheran Social Services of Iowa resulted in the following impact on residents of Cedar County; 3 Safe Sleep & Infant Care sessions held in 2018 (the total number of attendees equaled 69: 37 moms, 16 dads, 7 grandparents, and 9 other caregivers) which equated to 39 babies represented at the 2018 trainings.

**Trees for Threes**
Trees for Threes is a program that delivers real trees and conservation education. Everyone can be environmental stewards, respecting and helping to care for our environment. This program is a collaboration between Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Cedar County; Cedar County Farm Bureau, Ag in the Classroom; Cedar County Conservation; and Cedar Soil & Water Conservation District. In April of 2018 in conjunction with Arbor Day and Earth Day each 3rd grade classroom in Cedar County was visited by this collaborative team reaching over 275 third grade students. They learned about the benefit of trees, observed a tree planting demonstration, and received their own Red Oak to plant.

**Health and Well-Being**

**Reconnecting with Nature: Growing Up Wild**
Research shows that increased outdoor activity in children reduces childhood obesity, symptoms of ADHD and increase creativity and appreciation for nature. Children who spend time in active play outside are counteracting the adverse effects of obesity and the new indoor childhood phenomenon. Outdoor play can have positive physical, emotional, and intellectual
benefits for children. In an effort to promote more nature exploration with early childhood educators: the Cedar / Jones Early Childhood Iowa program sponsored the 4 hour Reconnecting with Nature: Growing Up Wild workshop for 13 early childhood professionals in Center Junction, Iowa. Collaborating partners included: Cedar County Extension; Jones County Extension and the Jones County Conservation Interpretive Naturalist.

53% of program participants felt the information improved their knowledge of outdoor education and 92% of program participants reported the training as "excellent". When asked about how participants anticipated using the Growing Up Wild resources, the following comments were expressed:

I will add it to my summer curriculum and use it three times a week. Love the book - it is so useful; exploring with the children, more of the outdoors; I will use the book for more activities with the kids; I will use the book all year for activities, snacks, lesson plans, etc.; many link well with science interests we like to pursue each year.

Healthy Relationship Marriage Education Workshop

Research reports that quality and stability of adult couple relationships are linked with positive child, adult, and family wellbeing. Children growing up in homes where there is a healthy, stable couple relationship have fewer behavioral and emotional problems and perform better in school. In addition, relationship education programs have been found to be an efficient way to reach diverse couples with evidence-based practices. Relationship education programs have been found to be effective at improving outcomes ranging from couple’s communication to marital satisfaction to individual functioning (Markman & Rhoades, 2012).

With financial support from Community Partnerships for Protecting Children in Cedar County, the Healthy Relationship Marriage Education Training program was presented to 18 professionals in Cedar County on March 7, 2018. This program was developed to meet the safety, permanency, and wellbeing needs of vulnerable children in the child welfare system by increasing child welfare professional’s and other professionals who work with couples and families access to and implementation of relationship education. This 6 hour program provided professionals with information and tools to strengthen couple and family relationships. The program was led by Kristi Cooper and Dionne Daedlow who are trained facilitators in the Healthy Relationship and Marital Education Training (HRMET) program.

83% of program participants reported a greater understanding of how cultivating individual wellness and health supports the health of the couple relationship. 88% had an increased understanding of how choices individuals and couples make lay a foundation for a safe, stable and satisfying relationship. When asked what changes professionals will make in their work as a result of the Healthy Relationship training:

*I plan to use this tool kit with families to improve/discuss their relationship and hopefully prevent child abuse and provide a healthier home environment.
*Implement more healthy relationship emphasis on the parents as a means to support the child to prevent adverse childhood experiences (ACES).

Food and Environment

Confinement and Commercial Manure Applicators, as well as Commercial and Private Pesticide Applicators were provided opportunities to learn more about protecting the environment through recertification sessions and publications available through the Cedar County Extension Office. Approximately 250 operators and applicators attended one or more of these sessions.

Master Gardeners extend Iowa State University Extension & Outreach consumer horticulture education on the local level through volunteer activity. Some examples of service and education provided were: a booth at the Cedar County Fair where they shared information with fair goers of all ages, sponsoring a Bucket of Plants contest, conducting a horticulture workshop, and maintaining two gardens.

Power Up for Summer Fun is a combination of the Summer Food Program and Positive Youth Development activities in Cedar County. This program provides free meals and an activity to youth 0-18. This past summer we partnered with organizations who assisted with delivering and serving of meals and activities as well as provided some financial support. We served 1,103 meals to youth at the Tipton City Park for 34 days. The youth enjoy the meals and the social interactions that were available through this program.
K-12 Youth Outreach

Over 1,400 school age youth participated in club, school and after-school programs. This represents more than one in every three Cedar County K-12 youth. They participated in an assortment of educational programs that are at least six hours in length.

Adult volunteers are an important part in leading 22 4-H and Clover Kids Clubs. More than 40 volunteers guide over 300 youth in learning citizenship, leadership, healthy living, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and communications and the arts.

On their Own & Ok Children “on their own” are school-aged children who regularly take care of themselves during some part of the day, usually before and/or after school. According to a survey of working parents, one in five children ages 6 to 12 are regularly left without adult supervision after school (Westat Inc. of Rockville, MD/ABC News). It is estimated over 40% of children are left home alone at some time (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry). Children are left on their own for a variety of reasons and in all types of families. Learning to be alone is part of growing up.

In an effort to strengthen the skills of youth who may care for themselves and/or siblings Cedar County offered two sessions of the workshop “On their Own & Ok”. It was a 6 hour session that provided guidance and skills to help youth safely stay home alone. It was attended by 39 youth ages 9-14. Basic self-help and safety skills were the focus.

Summer Discovery launching rockets, erupting volcanos, and building catapults were a part of the multi-day camp provided in Clarence, Durant, Mechanicsville, Tipton, Bennett, and West Branch. Over 107 youth (K-5th grade) have been served through this opportunity.

Coding and Robotics Kids in 4th-8th grade spent the day exploring robotics, coding, and computer science fun! The kids got to design their own robots that solve problems, play with cubelets, and had a lot of time to play with Dash! Kids had a great time figuring out about different types of technology and how they work.

Expand My World– Your Passport to Adventure K-3rd grade spent the day traveling the world! Through charming picture books and engaging activities children embarked on a cultural journey that included exploring languages, traditions, games, music, dance, and cultural culinary from around the world.

County Extension Staff

Greta Bierman
Office Manager

Laura Webb
Office Assistant

Teresa Bohlmann
K-12 Outreach Educator

Dionne Daedlow
Families and Youth Educator

Katelin Mohr
AmeriCorps Partnering to Protect Children

ISU Extension and Outreach
Cedar County
107 Cedar Street
Tipton, Iowa 52772
563-886-6157
www.extension.iastate.edu/cedar

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