The Henry County Extension Council has been elected by the people of the county to guide local educational programming by partnering with extension staff. From needs assessment through program implementation and evaluation of outcomes, the council represents you and your issues. We are always serving Iowans and we are here for you. Now. Always.

Thank you for your support.

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2021 IN HENRY COUNTY

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach connects the needs of Iowans with Iowa State research and resources. We listen, learn, and work with the people of Henry County for a #STRONGIOWA.

Serving the People of Henry County

As Iowans adjusted to life during the COVID-19 pandemic, ISU Extension and Outreach continued to prioritize health and safety as we delivered research-based education to the people of Henry County. During 2021 we focused on the following efforts.

- The Henry County Leadership program returned in October 2021 and will continue into 2022. This intensive leadership and community development program strives to provide our communities with an enduring source of diverse leaders who are prepared and committed to serving this region.

- The Master Conservationist program also returned in 2021, this year in partnership with ISU Extension and Outreach Des Moines County. 10 budding Natural Resource Stewards received hands-on education from local County Conservation, NRCS, and Iowa DNR professionals and graduated the program ready to educate others on the sustainability of Iowa’s natural resources.

- Agriculture programming continued to be delivered in hybrid ways with the goal of giving farmers and agribusiness representatives several options for completing required trainings and continuing education credits. Programming included: Private and Commercial Pesticide Trainings; Manure Applicator Courses; Farm Land Leasing, Farm Tax and Accounting, and Farm Owners/Operators meetings; Ag Exploration Day for area high school students; and Women Managing Farm Finances.
• Pick a Better Snack and Switch programming continued to be our largest program delivered in the schools, encouraging the majority of Mt. Pleasant area Elementary and Middle school students to decrease screen time, increase physical activity, and incorporate nutritious fruits and vegetables into their day.

Showcasing 4-H at the County Fair

The Henry County Fair returned to normal in 2021, providing the opportunity for youth to demonstrate what they had learned through their 4-H project work over the past year.

The 2021 Henry County Fair saw 4-H members exhibit 177 livestock and 379 non-livestock projects. Youth performed in Share the Fun and communication events, modeled their clothing projects at the fashion revue, and ultimately supported their friends and fellow Henry County 4-H and FFA members.

A 2020 modification that continued into 2021 was broadcasting many of the exhibitions live on Facebook, allowing family and community members who could not or preferred not to attend in person, to view the festivities.

Working toward Recovery

As our state works toward recovery, ISU Extension and Outreach Henry County has been supporting efforts to increase access to quality child care.

• Throughout 2021 we strived to promote online child care provider trainings, resources, and the “Science of Parenting” website, podcast, and blog.

• Under the guidance of ISU Extension and Outreach Community Development staff and Human Sciences Specialist, Dawn Dunnegan, the Mt. Pleasant Community Childcare Board successfully opened the 501c3 non-profit Mt. Pleasant Childcare Center, providing 68 childcare spots to the community.

• A “Babysitting basics” clinic was held for tweens and teens who are just entering the babysitting workforce. The clinic focused on child-appropriate activities and snacks, emergency preparedness and additional babysitting skills needed to be a reliable babysitter.

• Our 4-H staff coordinated a six week afterschool program in the Spring and Fall, providing youth with educational activities in STEM, the arts, health, and nutrition, while providing families with a short-term option for affordable afterschool child care.

• During the summer, ISU Extension and Outreach programming was offered at three local libraries for three weeks, allowing families to leave their children in reliable hands for a short time while they tended to other responsibilities.

Looking ahead to 2022, ISU Extension and Outreach Henry County will continue to provide afterschool and summer programs for youth and promote programs and resources, such as “The Science of Parenting” and child care provider trainings, frequently throughout the year.

Additionally, to assist with the shortage of child care and afterschool programs, our staff plans to host an “On Their Own and OK” program designed for 4th through 6th graders to explore how they may begin to stay home safely on their own for short periods of time. Participants will learn ways to safely fill their time, make their own healthy snacks, and know their family’s safety guidelines and protocol in case of an emergency.

ISU Extension and Outreach
Henry County
127 North Main Street
Mt. Pleasant, Iowa 52641
(319) 385-8126
www.extension.iastate.edu/henry

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