Tarrant County Master Naturalists are 67 specially trained Extension volunteers who provide programs and activities to help protect the natural environment through home and community environmental best management practices.

Supporting Our Agriculture

Pizza Ranch 2014 was a huge success with 4,000 students learning first-hand where the raw ingredients which go into the making of their favorite food – pizza – really come from. They learned about milk’s role in making cheese, how wheat is used in the crust, how vegetables and herbs go into the sauce, and using beef as the meat ingredient. The children were then treated to pizza, milk and yogurt, courtesy of Domino’s Pizza, Southwest Dairy Farmers and other kind sponsors.

For more information, contact:

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Improving Our Health

Extension nutrition and health classes use learning-by-doing activities which teach practical information about basic nutrition concepts, simple food preparation, food safety practices, comparison shopping, kitchen sanitation, and increased physical activity.

2014 Educational Outreach

Educational Programs Presented: 2,065
Attendance at Educational Programs: 63,531
Individual Contacts: 249,373
Volunteers Involved: 1,198
Volunteer Hours: 81,649
Valued at $1,841,185*

*Hourly value of volunteer time, provided by Independent Sector

In cooperation with:

Tarrant County Commissioners’ Court
B. Glen Whitley, County Judge
Roy Charles Brooks, Commissioner, Pct. 1
Andy Nguyen, Commissioner, Pct. 2
Gary Fikes, Commissioner, Pct. 3
J. D. Johnson, Commissioner, Pct. 4

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Prairie View A&M University Cooperative Extension Program are open to people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, Acts of Congress of May 8, 1914, as amended, and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture. Dr. Douglas Steele, Director, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.
Developing Our Youth

Over 10,000 youth and over 1,000 adults were involved in a nutrition-oriented lesson series with impressive results: 85% of youth improved their ability to choose foods according to nutrition knowledge, and adults reported an average cost savings of $67 per month on their food budget.

Enhancing Our Horticulture

Tarrant County is proud of the 400 plus certified Master Gardeners that provide a variety of volunteer service activities which include educating others about gardening, conserving water, and practicing environmentally sound procedures as they manage their home landscapes.

Tarrant County Master Gardeners manage 20 projects across Tarrant County as a community service.

They are required to recently their Master Gardener status each year through continuing education and volunteer service. In addition, Master Gardeners may choose to become a specialist in 12 different areas, including greenhouse, plant propagation, Junior Master Gardener, composting, fruits, and vegetables.

This specialist certification allows them to better serve the community by using their specialized training to enhances learners’ experiences.

The 4-H Youth Development model essential elements are: 1) a caring adult, 2) life skills through experiential learning, 3) youth leadership, 4) community service and 5) family engagement, carried out through a structured club experience in an informal environment in the neighborhood.

4-H volunteers serve as 4-H club managers, project leaders and parents at the club level to provide caring adults for the youth as they grow. Caring adults are a key component to positive youth development as they provide sincere caring, teaching life skills for adulthood, providing structure in an informal setting, and providing consistency to help the youth feel comfortable.

The 4-H motto is “Learning by Doing”. Since the first 4-H club in 1903, 4-H has used experiential learning models to help youth learn by actually experiencing the activity rather than reading about it, or watching someone else do the activity. These life skills range from manners and protocol, to career exploration and workforce development.

Experiential learning helps youth feel positive and optimistic about themselves.

Offering youth opportunities to provide leadership in a formal leadership role or an informal role for a specific activity is important in 4-H. It helps the youth work towards objectives and gain confidence.

The Tuff’s University 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development found that 4-H’ers are nearly four times more likely to make contributions to their communities (Grades 7-12). Service activities provide opportunities for memorable experiences and social interactions for youth are often associated with meaningful development.

Families play a key role in any 4-H club. They serve as volunteers. They provide support for their own children and other youth. Families play a critical role in helping youth succeed in high school and beyond. Families make more of a difference than neighborhoods.

Strengthening Our Families

The Building Young Families Conference provides teen parents/high school students, both male and female, resources and education. This year the conference engaged 96 teens, including 14 teen fathers. Topics included: preparing for college; preventing poisoning in the home; child support for both males and females; child abuse and neglect recognition and prevention; and other health-related topics.

Extension’s financial literacy lesson series focuses on helping adults develop a spending plan, increase their savings, and reduce their debt. A significant program audience is parents who are in arrears with child support, and 183 of these adults attended the mandatory monthly class. Ninety days after the class, 82% continued or started a savings plan and 82% were more able to fit child support payments into their current spending.

In the eight-year longitudinal 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development, 4-H club youth were compared with similar youth participating in other out of school time activities. 4-H participants reported high academic competence in Grades 7, 9, 11, and 12 and higher school engagement in Grades 11 and 12 than participants in other activities. 4-H’ers are nearly twice as likely to participate in science, technology, engineering and math programs during out of school time (Grades 10-12). 4-H girls are twice more likely (Grade 10) and nearly three times more likely (Grade 12) to take part in science programs compared to girls in other out of school time activities.

Today over 400 Tarrant County youth participate in regular meetings at 21 neighborhood 4-H clubs. There they learn important life skills, practice real-life leadership roles and contribute valuable community service. 150 adult volunteers in Tarrant County provide leadership to the 4-H program, providing much of the teaching, plus organizing learning experiences in a wide range of settings as 4-H’ers “learn by doing.”

Heroes 4-Health is a youth service-learning program dedicated to developing youth advocacy and benefitting communities through nutrition and physical activities. Twenty teen ambassadors were trained to teach younger children about good nutrition and the value of physical activity. Nearly 700 younger children learned from their teen ambassadors, and of that number 86% reported learning “how to make healthy food choices,” 74% now “eat more fruits and vegetables,” and 91% reported that “being active is good for me.”