

Mission: We teach, learn, lead and serve, connecting people with the University of Wisconsin, and engaging with them in transforming lives and communities.

Nutrition Education

The Racine Kenosha Nutrition Education Program (RKNEP) responds to community needs with research-based education and partnerships that support families and strengthen communities, by offering direct education to low-income individuals and families. In FY (Fiscal Year) 12, nutrition educators completed over 1,600 teaching events, made over 30,000 teaching contacts and reached over 9,000 learners in both Racine and Kenosha Counties. Of the 28,620 Racine County residents enrolled in FoodShare, RKNEP made 15,172 teaching contacts and offered education at 1,008 teaching events. Many of our learners (47%) are reached through schools. Fourteen percent of our learners are taught in Head Start and preschool programs, which is where we recruit most of our parents for classes. We also work with parents, seniors, veterans, and homeless individuals. Our typical topics include: dietary guidelines, MyPlate, stretching your food dollar, and food safety.



One of our feature programs this year was Head Start. In FY12, RKNEP educators taught in 126 classrooms in Racine County, reaching all 695 children who are enrolled in programming and providing 3 lessons related to their needs. Newsletters coordinated with the teaching topic were sent home after each lesson. Our Head Start partners print these newsletters and distribute them to parents via their weekly folders. Our connection to these classrooms allows us to reach parents by sending materials home to them, making connections to their teachers who help us recruit for classes and by the messages that their children bring home about what they learned.



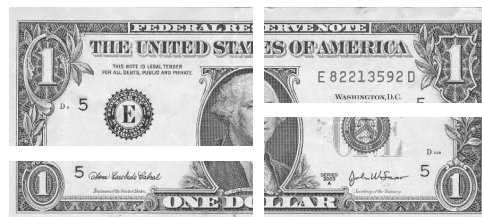
To evaluate our impact on preschoolers, an evaluation survey was distributed to parents after the hand washing lesson was taught. Of the parents who responded, 83% reported that their child seemed more willing to wash their hands, 58% reported that their child was washing their hands without being reminded and 58% reported that their child had been reminding others to wash their hands. When asked to share any differences they noticed as a result of the three-series RKNEP classes, several Racine Head Start teachers observed that their students were more willing to try new foods, were more aware of the benefits of healthy food and exercise, and were heard saying, "Bye," to the germs while washing their hands.

Funding Partnership

The shared investment among the University of Wisconsin System, the Federal Government and the County of Racine has established an infrastructure which brings university educators into contact with county residents where they live and work. The collaboration also leverages volunteer support, grants, expertise from university specialists and additional funding for local initiatives. In addition to the core investment, educators obtained direct funding valued at \$557,321 for local programs. Of this amount, the Racine Kenosha Nutrition Education Program acquired \$377,745 in additional federal funds.

UW System 35%

County 18%



Federal 9%

Grants 38%



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4-H Community Club Program

4-H is a volunteer-led organization that allows members to participate in fun, hands-on learning activities supported by youth development research.

In 2012, 277 leaders supported the programming for 1,051 youth involved in Racine County 4-H Community Clubs. Each year new volunteers are trained on youth development topics. Twenty-nine new leaders came on board in 2012, adding new livelihood to the 4-H experience. Through general club meetings, project meetings, and other special events, individual youth are able to meet their needs of belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. Members participated in activities including: County Fair, 4-H Camp, Communication and Arts Festival, Exploring 4-H Fun Day, Night with the Stars, Recognition and Celebration Banquet, 4-H Trips, and many more activities focusing directly on specific project areas.



4-H Ambassador Program

Racine County's 4-H Ambassador Program's purpose is to promote 4-H and provide service to others both within and outside of 4-H. Ambassadors are selected based on their leadership experience and aptitude. The 2012 Ambassador team was made up of 21 youth and advised by two 4-H volunteers. The Ambassadors represented 4-H by helping out at many local parades, the county fair, and various 4-H events.

In addition, the Ambassador team also planned and implemented a Mid-Winter Leadership Conference for 4-Hers in 7th grade and up. Forty-five youth attended the conference and learned leadership skills around the theme of healthy living. The Ambassadors represent the best of 4-H and continue to challenge themselves to "Make the Best Better."



4-H Youth Excel in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)

The Wisconsin 4-H Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) program area cuts across all project areas. However, strong STEM projects use an inquiry-based learning approach, improve STEM abilities, are based on National Science Education Standards and are led by trained adults. Youth in Racine County 4-H learn about aerospace, computers, small engines, mechanical engineering, energy and robotics.

There were 22 youth from Racine County 4-H Community Clubs enrolled in the robotics project in 2012, and the Racine County 4-H Vex Robotics team made up of Joshua Thornton and Christian Gianou from Clever Clovers 4-H Club edged out competitive teams from other states to take First Place in the VEX Robotics remote control competition at the National 4-H Engineering Challenge. The event was held at Purdue University in Lafayette, Indiana, on September 23-25, 2012.



Another approach to engaging youth in STEM programming is the *Wisconsin 4-H Tech Wizards* program. This grant-funded mentoring program is designed to prevent juvenile delinquency, provide youth with positive adult role models and promote a positive perception of educational attainment while engaging youth in a robotics curriculum. *Tech Wizards* matches youth with volunteer adult mentors in Racine, Milwaukee, Kenosha and Crawford counties.

In January 2012, 58 youth from the cities of Racine, Kenosha and Milwaukee, comprised 15 teams to compete in a tri-county 4-H Tech Wizards Robotics Rally at the CNH corporate training facility in Sturtevant. The Case Corporation opened its training facility and helped sponsor the program to expose youth to career possibilities in manufacturing and technology. Each team consisted of about five youth and one or two adult mentors who had been working together afterschool since November using a Lego NXT Robot, a laptop, and programming software to prepare for the event.

Creating Knowledge through Young Children of Jailed Parents Research Study

Having an incarcerated parent has become one of the most common and significant public health concerns for U.S. children—more common than autism, maltreatment, or juvenile diabetes. Yet little is known about young children of parents incarcerated in local jails. Thanks to a partnership with UW-Madison, the Racine County Sheriff's Department/Jail, and a grant from National Institutes of Health, that is changing with a research study to document the developmental functioning of this population. Data collection from jailed parents at the Racine County Jail, their young children, the children's caregivers and the children's teachers began in June 2012 with over 152 jailed parents undergoing eligibility screening. As of March 2013, fifty have also completed an in-depth assessment. Half of the children's caregivers (26) completed the study. At the end of this 2-year project, the research team aims to develop recommendations for children's visits with jailed parents, interventions to prepare children for visits, and strategies to support young children and families with a parent in jail.

Using Touchpoints to Support Families and People who Work with Families

Strengthening parent-child relationships by connecting with families before and during predictable, difficult periods of disorganization helps families navigate challenging transitions. The Racine County Touchpoints Project began in 1997 and with the continued support of United Way of Racine County, workshops for families and people who work with families are provided on a variety of topics such as healthy attachment, self-regulation, feeding, sleep, toilet training, and temperament. Raising a Thinking Child is a multi-session for parents of 4-7 year olds. Early care and education staff also learn strategies for improving relationships with families and community resources to better support families. Annually, the Touchpoints Project reaches an average of 500 participants.

Family-Focused Parenting Education

In Spring 2012, nine Latino families in Burlington comprised of 13 parents and 11 youth successfully completed the evidenced-based Strengthening Families Program. Strengthening Families is a family-focused program for youth ages 10 to 14 years old and their parents that improves parents' and youths' ability to communicate, set limits, and resolve problems together as a family. Through the program, youth gained valuable skills in handling stress and resisting peer pressure especially related to alcohol, drugs, and delinquent behavior. Strengthening Families is part of the Children, Youth, and Families As Resources (CYFAR) program, a five-year grant that focuses on Burlington's Latino families with the goal of building stronger connections with schools and community resources. Our Family Living Program will continue to work with schools to increase parental engagement in education that fosters academic success.

Increasing Knowledge of Local Resources

Knowing where to turn for information and support is important in helping Racine County families become more resilient. The Family Resource Directory and Quick List: Resources for Families brochure are two ways that we work with the Racine County Human Services Department to ensure that families and direct service providers that work with families can easily access information on community resources. Each year, we compile these resources into a comprehensive booklet, which focuses on resources for families with children under the age of 18. A recent survey of Human Services case workers shows that the Family Resource Directory is an important resource in their jobs. Over 50% of case workers report using the directory on a weekly basis. Nearly two-thirds of case workers report that they give the Quick List to families with an estimated 1,800 brochures distributed every year. In addition, the Family Resource Directory is distributed to over 200 direct service providers in Racine County at annual networking breakfasts for social services agencies.

Building Family Financial Security

Earning, spending, saving, borrowing, and protecting are the U.S. Treasury's five core financial competencies. In 2012, the Annual Money Conference reached 195 participants through a partnership with Asset Builders and local community organizations working together. Participants at the "Teaching Kids about Money" session took away activities to use at home including ways to teach kids how to save. UW-Extension is part of the Racine Coalition for Financial Fitness focused on expanding educational outreach around the five core financial competencies. Upcoming goals focus on building credit worthiness through the Check Your Free Credit Report Campaign and the Money\$mart in Head Start program.

Raising kids
Eating right
Spending smart

Living
Well.





Horticulture

Horticulture programming in Racine County is multiplied 150-fold through efforts of trained Master Gardener Volunteers (MGVs) working on 19 diverse community projects. In 2012, MGVs contributed 8,846 hours of volunteer time and participated in 3,119 hours of continuing education. Garden design and maintenance at Ridgewood Care Center and De Koven Center brought the benefits of therapeutic horticulture to the public. Families in need appreciated fresh produce from the Garden of Giving and The Teaching Garden, and thousands of youth learned about plant science from MGVs volunteering in the elementary schools.

Two additional MGV projects impacting our community are Green Works training for adults with disabilities and Plant Health Advisors:

Green Works Expansion – Community Partners Strengthening Programs for Adults with Disabilities

Green Works addresses an ongoing need for training and healthy activities for adults with disabilities. Each year, 7 to 9 participants learn many aspects of growing, maintaining and selling plants. Relationships with local agencies helped to identify specific needs for basic gardening lessons, staff training, and for a program that satisfies State and Federal guidelines for pre-vocational training. As a result, over 100 lesson plans were designed to work as prevocational or gardening activities to emphasize sensory and therapeutic aspects of working with plants. Several agencies are currently using our Green Works curriculum to teach their participants about the green industry and growing healthy plants.

Master Gardener Volunteers Answer Yard, Garden and Environmental Questions

All MGVs impact the community through their volunteer efforts, but there is a special group who undertake hundreds of hours of additional training to become Plant Health Advisors. These are the volunteers who answer, “Why does my maple tree have spots?” or “My tomato plants are wilting, what’s wrong?” Research-based answers often provide multiple options for solutions so the client can make the best decision for their situation.

In 2012, 22 MGVs contributed 1,045 volunteer hours answering homeowner questions. Horticulture Helplines at the Ives Grove Racine County Office Building (886-8451) and at the Burlington Western Racine Service Center (767-2919), in addition to booths at Farmers Markets and County Fair, are offered to better serve all Racine County residents.

Agriculture

The Racine County UW-Extension agriculture program offers programming to a variety of audiences. Farmers in Racine County receive access to local and state resources that include soil labs, diagnostic advice, a variety of specialists and much more. Youth receive training in Quality Assurance programming, as well as youth tractor safety. Individuals who own rural land or aspire to become farmers can also access information through the agriculture program.

In collaboration with a variety of partners, most notably Illinois Cooperative Extension, we have offered programming to the equine community for over 10 years. Our cross-state equine program has included in-person traditional workshops and has utilized technology to offer distance education. The Rural Landowner Conference is a long-standing annual event connecting many partner organizations—Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service and local Land Conservation Departments—to offer workshops focusing on conservation, entrepreneurship and general farming topics. In 2012, the Rural Landowner Conference hosted its first e-waste recycling event, collecting approximately 6 tons of materials.



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