



Making a Difference

2015 – 2016

Family and Child Development Program Focus Team Healthy Early Childhood Action Plan

Grand Challenges

K-State Research and Extension: providing education you can trust to help people, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future.

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Situation

Research indicates that the first three years of life are critical in children's brain development. Effective and positive parenting, along with quality child care and early education, can greatly enhance a child's lifetime development. Positive, consistent, and engaged parenting is necessary for positive development in the early years of a child's life and prepares them for success in school, friendships and future roles in communities. Similarly, quality childcare and early education have been linked to positive social skill development, school readiness, and positive economic and human development outcomes. In addition, an individual's healthy growth and development into adulthood is greatly influenced by the quality of his or her early childhood (between birth to age 6) experiences.

What We Did

Our PFT's child development-focused programming initiatives across the state addressed healthy early childhood practices among primary care givers, family members, and early childhood education professionals. These efforts address the following KSRE Grand Challenges: Health, Developing Tomorrow's Leaders, and Community Vitality.

Outcomes

Forty-two program activities with 2,985 total participants for the Healthy and Active Early Childhood Action Plan were reported throughout the state. Extension agents provided KDHE-approved trainings to early childhood education professionals, with participants indicating improved skills in physical, cognitive, social/emotional, and communication development of children. Additionally, the PFT's efforts around Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) have resulted in additional capacity to use trauma-informed policies and procedures across the state. The Healthy and Active Early Childhood Action Plan activities included work in collaboration with police departments, schools, the Kansas Department of Children and Families, and faith-based community coalitions.

Success Story

The Bonding Thru Board Games Mega Event (in Wichita) had lots of volunteers. Several high schools and the Wichita Police Department officers contributed to the great turnout. Kohl's Department Store donated books and the stuffed animals to promote early literacy at the event and sent five volunteers. They were wearing the Bonding Thru Board Game volunteer shirts so they were promoting the event as well. It was a huge success!



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