



“Report to the Community”
Family and Consumer Science Programming
Kay County OSU Extension Center
January 1, 2006 – December 31, 2006

Family and Consumer Science Program

A review of major programming in 2006 . . .

Dr. Bruce Lutz Resource Room

The Bruce Lutz Resource Room honors the work and memory of Dr. Bruce Lutz, Kay County Health Department Psychologist, who died suddenly in the fall of 2004. This community resource was opened and dedicated in 2006. It is a partnership of area professionals who are partners in OSU Extension Center's Co-Parenting program, the OSU Extension Center, and the Kay County Health Department. The electronic catalog is maintained by the OSU Extension Center and can be accessed at <http://countyext.okstate.edu/kay/blrr.htm> or <http://countyext.okstate.edu/kay/fcs.htm>

Over 215 items in this room are available free loan to Kay County area professionals working with families and individuals. In addition, there are journals and workbooks intended to be *given* to clients. Items in the Resource Room are organized in six categories:

Professional Resources
Relationship / Marriage
Parenting

Grief / Loss
Character Development
Divorce

In addition to the Resource Room, every funeral home in Kay County received a number of books for children. These books explain in simple terms what death is, what to expect at a funeral, and other topics of interest to children.

I Can Problem Solve

In response to concerns related to high risk behaviors among our youth, "I Can Problem Solve" curriculum has been selected to be used with preschool and early elementary children. This curriculum teaches skill-building and alternative solutions to problems, and facilitates social interaction among peers in a game-like format. A five-year plan has been developed to reach all interested child care facilities and elementary schools. Ponca City elementary counselors received the training in 2006 and plans include expanding the program to Head Start, Child Development Center, and additional schools in 2007. Child care centers and homes will be targeted in 2008. A \$2665.00 grant from Kay County's Smart Start provides materials at no charge to all participating schools and child care facilities.

Cemetery Index Books

Oklahomans who want to trace their family tree now have the benefit of tracking down even the most obscure cemetery thanks to the dedication of Oklahoma Home and Community Education (OHCE) groups across the state. OHCE members throughout the state worked for several years to compile an index of each county that would include an alphabetical list of all 4,149 cemeteries, as well as a picture, driving directions, map and a brief history. This project was designated as an "official" Centennial project by the Oklahoma Centennial Commission and was completed when OHCE donated copies of all 77 books to the Oklahoma History Center in July 2006.

As part of this project, Kay County OHCE and the OSU Extension Center joined forces to complete the index of Kay County Cemeteries. The location, history, map and photo of twenty-five cemeteries, as well as two former cemeteries are listed in the Kay County Index. In addition, a copy of the Kay County Cemetery Index was given to every community library in Kay County.

Alan Wolfelt Grief Seminars

After receiving memorial funds following the death of local psychologist Dr. Bruce Lutz, it was decided to honor Dr. Lutz's memory by educating the public, as well as professionals, on the topic of grief, mourning, and companioning following the death of a loved one. A coalition representing the Kay County OSU Extension Center, Kay County Health Department, Co-Parenting Volunteers, Hospice of North Central Oklahoma, funeral home staff, clergy, Kay County Community Crisis Response Team, and Kay County Home and Community Education was formed.

Two grief seminars, featuring Dr. Alan Wolfelt, were offered in Ponca City. Dr. Wolfelt, is a psychologist, educator, and author of international reputation. He is known for his educational contributions in the areas of both childhood and adult grief. He has appeared on the Oprah Winfrey Show, the Larry King Show, the NBC Today Show, and Nick News. A past recipient of the Association for Death Education and Counseling's Death Educator Award, Dr. Wolfelt is Director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition located in Fort Collins, Colorado.

"Helping Yourself Heal When Someone Dies" was offered free of charge and provided support for personal grief experiences. This seminar was helpful to those experiencing grief. The second seminar "Death, Grief and Mourning: Wisdom Teachings for Caregivers" taught the art of "companioning" and explored a variety of topics surrounding the care of others who are grieving. This seminar was designed for family, friends, educators, mental health staff, social workers, health care staff, clergy, funeral home directors and any other professional or volunteer caring for someone in grief.

Lunch was provided to allow networking and informal visiting with Dr. Wolfelt. A bookstore was set up with a variety of his books for those wanting to purchase them. Certificates of attendance for both seminars were provided and CEU's were approved for LCSW, LPC, LMFT, Psychologists, EMT's, and Funeral Directors. Over \$12,000 was raised through donations and registration fees to cover the cost of the events. A few of the many comments received from the 331 participants included:

"I don't think I'll be ashamed of my mourning any longer. It's normal and I'm not crazy, only normal."

"Ponca City was blessed to have you here. We needed to hear what you know. You are a great communicator with a great sense of humor, plan to read your books. Come back again soon!"

"Thanks. I have been to more costly workshops but this one gave me the best, most useful information to change my practices."

"This wonderful workshop has empowered me to be a better care giver as a pastor. Dr. Wolfelt was a top notch speaker/teacher."

Co-Parenting Classes

Co-Parenting classes for divorcing parents of minor children are offered each month. This court-ordered class provides parents with skills to make the divorce less stressful on the children, now and in the future. In 2006 217 parents attended, benefiting 379 children from 17 area communities. Volunteer professionals from schools and area agencies have assisted in teaching these classes and have contributed funds to purchase additional educational resources to use with children.

Evaluations have been positive and show a change of knowledge, attitude, skills and aspiration. In exit evaluations 96.1% of the participants had positive things to say. (78.9% of all participants ranked the class as “very helpful” while another 17.2% ranked the class as “helpful”). These quotes are typical responses from participating parents:

“Yes, although I can not control others and their actions, I can do my best to properly control my actions. I can make a positive difference for my children and their ability to cope with the changes in their lives.”

“I see the relationship between my girls and their mother to be more important than I thought. I’ll try harder”.

“The DVD examples and group discussion has made me focus on the reality of the changes in my situation and changed the focus of the end of the marriage to the future of raising my child.

Ready-Or-Not Tots

The Ready-or-Not Tots electronic dolls teach child care skills to pre-teens. For older teens these dolls serve as a tool to prevent teen pregnancy, teach parenting skills, and prevent child abuse and neglect. These dolls are programmed for a 72-hour cycle, crying at various times of the day and night. It is the teens’ job to provide 24-hour care for the baby, determine the reason they are crying, and remedy the situation. The dolls come with an infant carrier and a fully supplied diaper bag to give our teens a little taste of caring for a baby. These dolls are available to Kay County schools, agencies or organizations. During 2006 147 male and female teens age 14-18 from Ponca City, and Blackwell participated in this activity.

One participating teacher said, *“I think it makes them think twice about premarital sex. They value their freedom and don’t want to be tied down. They find out very quickly how much sleep a parent loses and how much time they take. They also do not want to be loaded down with so many things to carry when traveling with an infant.”*

Student evaluations prove this teacher’s assessment to be accurate. When asked about time and effort, it was evident that they learned babies take a lot of time and a great effort whenever the baby is not sleeping. (The experience did not focus on responsibilities other than direct child care.) The hardest part of parenting appeared to be having patience when the baby cries, waking at night, and learning to understand a baby who cannot talk.

As preparation for having children, students suggested finishing school, finding a job and saving money, and becoming educated on parenting issues.

Students commented that babies change your life. Quoting one student “You are constantly putting your need aside to take care of someone else.” They also commented that you lose a lot of sleep, babies change your life, you have to grow up, make adjustments, accept responsibility, and care for someone else. To sum their thoughts, one student said “it would uproot my life”.

Character Critters Education Program

Character Education has been identified as a need across the United States. Good character does not develop automatically, nor is it a hereditary trait. Character must be consciously fostered in our children. Teaching children to exhibit character is an investment in tomorrow and starts the day a child is born.

The Family and Consumer Sciences Advisory Committee for the OSU Extension Center expressed the need for character building seven years ago. Since this time, a Character Critters partnership of 53 teachers, school counselors, and community volunteer groups has been built for the purpose of reaching children age 3-6. This partnership now includes:

- 2 High Schools
- 24 Child Care Facilities (including 2 Tribal Child Care Facilities)
- 4 Community Organizations / Agencies / Junior Main Street
- 23 Elementary School counselors/teachers

The program consists of lesson plans, take-home sheets, activity notebook, and parent newsletter on six character traits (responsibility, respect, trustworthiness, fairness, citizenship, and caring). There are also lesson plans for parent meetings. Puppets, videos, posters, etc. are available if a school or childcare center chooses to make that purchase. During this year teachers from 2 additional elementary schools were added to the partnership. Eight schools used a new “character library” of 28 story books to supplement the curriculum.

Virtually every person involved in Character Critters has positive things to say. Teachers appreciate the easy-to-use curriculum and enjoy seeing the excitement on the children’s faces when they enter the classroom with the Character Critter puppets. Children have talked to their parents about what they learned by working on the take-home sheets together. Partners for 2006 reported reaching **2,694** different children with Character Critters. Comments made by new partners in 2006 include:

- “When a child isn’t using good character traits, it is so easy to remind him of appropriate behaviors by mentioning the appropriate critter! They know exactly what I mean!”*
- “My child care program has benefited from character critters on several levels. The children have improved interaction. Parents are pleased their children have a concrete base of character traits and I am pleased with the improved behavior. Thank you!”*
- “I think it has made a HUGE difference in my students. They seem to want to improve their behavior and be more like the character critters.”*
- “I like the program because it helps the primary grades understand good character.”*
- “Increased understanding of character – children showing respect to students and teachers.”*
- “It is a GREAT age appropriate curriculum! Kids love it – they remember the character and ask when they will be back. The stories and supplementary lessons are great.”*
- “The books have been read to P-K, K and 1st graders. They are then led in discussion concerning the topic of the book. They have been well-received and much needed.”*
- “I LOVE this program! Even 3 year olds sit still and listen to those puppets. And the older kids don’t realize it, but they are learning more than they are teaching.”*
- “Parents were delighted to have some positive character instruction given to their children while in childcare. What positive instruction! I will continue to use it over and over.”*
- “Parents tell me their children talk about the character critters.”*
- “Parents are telling me their students are referring to characters in appropriate situations and are seeing improvement in behavior at home.”*

Kay County Community Crisis Response Team

The Kay County Community Crisis Response Team developed from a Family and Consumer Science needs assessment in February of 2000. In response, a three-day training presented by the National Organization for Victims Assistance (NOVA) was offered in January 2001. The focus of this training included the effects of crisis on individuals and techniques used to conduct critical incident stress debriefings (CISD) following a community crisis.

CISD's are a powerful tool for normal people reacting normally to an abnormal event. They follow the work of police, EMT's, firefighters, and other public safety officials and are best conducted 24-72 hours after an event. Although they are not therapy, and not necessarily conducted by therapists, they are therapeutic. CISD's are extremely helpful in reducing the occurrence of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in victims, witnesses, family members, and first responders and can be used with children, teens, adults and senior citizens. The majority of individuals who participate in a CISD do not require intensive counseling.

Evaluations of that training indicated a desire to form a network of volunteer professionals to provide critical incident stress debriefings to county residents following a community crisis. A steering committee was formed with the goal of making this a reality. The KCCCRT began offering services in June 2003, and has served the area since.

Additional training has been offered each year to keep volunteers trained and ready to respond to a crisis. This year a Refresher Training was held in June and all members were encouraged to attend the two Wolfelt seminars on grief.

First-Time Home Buyer Education Class

A First Time Home-Buyers Education class was held so that families could purchase a home with a reduced down payment, no down payment, or reduced interest rate, allowing purchase of more "home" with less money. Lenders sometimes offer these benefits because participants make better informed decisions when purchasing a home.

The class offered information to help assess the advantages and disadvantages of homeownership, shopping for a home, money management, credit, mortgages and lenders, real estate professionals, consumer rights, closing, special loan programs, home inspections, maintenance and improvements.

Speakers included three Certified Homebuyer Education Professionals and OSU Extension Educators and professionals representing banking, consumer credit, home inspection, and homeowners insurance. The class was offered free of charge due to sponsorships of Pioneer Bank and Trust, Ponca Tribe, and the Kay County OSU Extension Center.

Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage Seminar

The Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage (MPDC) was an opportunity for Medicare beneficiaries to reduce their out-of-pocket expenses for prescription drugs. Although Part D is an opportunity to protect against catastrophic prescription drug expenses, many Medicare beneficiaries were confused as the registration deadline approached and were letting the opportunity pass by. This free educational and informative seminar was held to answer their questions. Handouts from Medicare were available and a local insurance agent explained the Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage and answered questions. The Medicare web-site was demonstrated to compare options based on current medications and the city and state in which you live.

Evaluations conducted after the workshop showed:

- ✓ the most significant reason for not enrolling in a MPDC plan was due to confusion surrounding the topic.
- ✓ every participant except one had an increase in knowledge of Part D. She said the seminar gave her confidence that she did understand it and was thankful to be reassured.
- ✓ all individuals participant reported increased ability to evaluate / select MPDC plans.
- ✓ most participants planned to actively investigate their options and/or enroll with a professional of their choice. The one exception was a woman whose husband was already enrolled in a “creditable plan” and she learned in this seminar that they need not make any change to his insurance coverage. However, she said the information received in this seminar will help at the time of her retirement later this year.

Other comments shared included:

“I am happy to see that my husband and I can afford a prescription plan and still buy groceries. We thought before that we were going to have to make a decision between the two because that is the only flexible part of our budget. I feel so much better!”

“I received a letter stating I was enrolled in a plan but I never signed up for it. I’m glad now to know why I received the letter and that I will not need to pay an additional insurance premium. I thought I had to do so, yet really can not afford to. I cringe to think I may have enrolled in a plan and paid the extra premium needlessly.”

“I have an relative who applied for financial assistance for this coverage and was denied. She thought this meant she was not eligible for the insurance at all and had not enrolled in any plan. She was denied financial assistance to pay the insurance premium, but WAS eligible to enroll in a plan of her choice. After attending the seminar, I was able to help her select a plan and enroll her through her insurance agent. I was so glad to get this done, and so was she. It will save her a lot of money.”

Follow-up responses were received from 81% of the participants 6 months later. Those who shared dollar figures reported an annual savings of \$10,749.24 collectively. Four found no need to incur the expense of purchasing a policy, representing savings of unknown value. (Using the average premium cost for this area, this is an annual savings of \$3,600.00, collectively, for these four families.) In addition to financial savings, seven participants reported more confidence, peace of mind, increased knowledge, greater happiness, better night’s sleep, improved relationships with others, and life changes. Two participants were able to confidently select a plan. Two participants decided to change policies this year and again next year. Four participants reported reaching a total of 13 other people with information learned. It is anticipated that coming years will produce equal or greater savings for these families.

Fresh Start: Nutrition and You

Through funding provided by DHS grant dollars, adults receiving food stamps or living in subsidized housing may enroll in our “*Fresh Start: Nutrition and You*” program. Schools with significant numbers of children receiving free or reduced lunch are also now involved. Participants receive education on nutrition, meal planning, food budgeting, and food safety through weekly classes in the comfort of their own home, or group settings if they prefer. Participants also share in free produce donated by Ponca City Discount Foods. Nutrition Education Assistants Carrol Belair and Monica McChristian are supervised by Mary Rhyne. Evaluations indicate a change in knowledge, behavior, and health among those who participate in this program.

Food Preservation Workshop Offered

With the right skills, excess garden produce can safely be preserved for tasty meals during cold winter months. Many families enjoy home-canned produce preserved using old recipes treasured by their family. However, some of those techniques may not be currently recommended due to new varieties, equipment, and research findings and could put a family at risk..

Twenty-two adults and 4-H members attended a Food Preservation Workshop in June. This workshop was offered by Mary Rhyne and Barbara Brown, OSU Food Specialist and was conducted in the Blackwell High School Family and Consumer Science classroom, courtesy of Blackwell teacher, Janell LeValley.

Participants preserved fruits and vegetables using both hot and raw pack techniques in hot water bath and pressure canners. Pressure gauges were tested at no charge. Since these canned items qualified for entry in the Kay County Free Fair, entry rules, categories, judging standards, and awards were explained.

Fruits and Vegetable Activities for Youth

Blackwell’s Huston Center is a member of Schools for Healthy Lifestyle. As part of the program requirements we presented a short lesson on fruits and vegetables and conducted a tasting party consisting of broccoli, carrots, tomatoes, cucumbers, strawberries, kiwi, pineapple and cantaloupe for 99 boys and girls in the 5th grade. Evaluations showed:

- without fail, students liked these eight foods better after the Tasting Party than before.
- 90% said they would begin eating more fruits and vegetables each day.
- 98% of the students liked the lesson and activities
- 65% said they had tried a new food that day
- 88% said they liked trying new foods

County Fair

The Kay County Free Fair is the largest county fair in Oklahoma. It provides fundraisers for non-profit organizations, boosts community spirit and camaraderie while evaluating the work of youth and adults and building skills in our citizens.

To increase participation in the fair, awards were solicited for Fine and Domestic Science and HCE Best of Show exhibits. Training for fair volunteers in Domestic Arts and Sciences and HCE was held the week before the fair began. Clothing Construction Judging Contest was added for both youth and adults, allowing participants to test their skill judging clothing. Blackwell and Tonkawa Schools entered record number of entries in an effort to involve their students in their community.

Flip Flop Workshop

Flip flops are popular footwear for young people. Although flip flops are safe to wear periodically, podiatrists often see foot problems in those who wear them too frequently. A 4-H workshop was offered for children to learn to decorate flip flops, as well as to learn foot health, good grooming techniques, and appropriate occasions for flip flop wear. In addition, participants learned at least one crochet stitch in decorating their sandals.

Evaluations of the six children attending this workshop showed:

- every 4-er planned to wear flip flops less frequently than before.
- while some did have good grooming habits before the workshop, all participants planned to make more effort in grooming after the workshop.
- five participants reported an increase in their crochet skills after the workshop. The sixth participant, who already knew how to crochet, did report learning how to use that skill to decorate flip flops.

Three months later one participant approached me and proudly offered that she had made crocheted 8 pair of flip flops for friends and family since the workshop. One week later, during 4-H camp, the same girl approached me and said she had made a ninth pair to bring to camp with her.

Oklahoma Home and Community Education, Inc.

Previously known as “Home Demonstration” or “Extension Homemakers”, this organization continues to be active in Kay County. Groups are organized throughout Kay County and membership is open to all regardless of gender, race, color, age, disability, religion, status as a veteran, or national origin.

OHCE identifies local issues facing families which become the basis for educational programming and efforts of the organization. The organization’s goal is to educate its membership to be well-informed and able to handle change in their homes and communities, provide community services, and develop leaders. As advisor, the extension educators’ role includes preparing lesson materials, teaching the lessons, and attending their organizational meetings. OHCE educational leader lessons and workshops for 2006 have been:

Painted Glass workshop
Tin Punch workshop
Cabbage Rose workshop
Clear Through the Clutter
Healthy Snacks
Carbs: The Good, Bad and the Ugly
Decoupage Workshop
Around the World Dinner
Recovering/Refreshing Furniture
Food Safety

I Scream for Ice Cream
Taste of Hawaii
Recycling
Card Making Made Easy
Be the Best You Can Be
Flannel Sleep Pants Workshop
HCE Family Night
Home Furnishings Workshop
Quilt Fundraiser
Clothing Construction Workshop

4-H and Other Youth Development

Four-H projects in the area of Family and Consumer Sciences includes consumer education, fabrics and fashions, food science, personal development, health and fitness, family life, safety, leadership, and childcare. Workshops and competitive events as well as educational materials have been offered:

4-H Flip Flop Workshop
4-H Food Preservation Workshop
4-H Oakwood Mall Day
Assisted with Thrifty Fashions at 4-H Round-Up
Clothing Construction Contest
Dole 5-A-Day Fruit Games at 4-H Camp
East Middle School Health Fair Booth
Free Loan Curriculum to Blackwell, Tonkawa, St. Mary's
I Scream for Ice Cream 4-H Individual Learning Package
Monthly 4-H Newsletter Educational Articles
Newkirk Careers Class Program
Newkirk Library Program "Creatures Large and Small"
Snacking Smart 4-H Individual Learning Package

Monthly Newsletters

Newsline – 370 households receive up-to-date information on topics related to Family Economics, Family Relationships, Child Development, Food Safety & Preparation, Nutrition & Health.

Child Care Home News – Licensed directors of nearly 200 childcare homes receive news of the county organization and educational updates related to children, families, and child care.

OHCE – Members receive news about the past and upcoming events of the organization.

4-H News – Educational articles are included in 4-H News regarding foods, nutrition, health, family strengths, consumer education, etc.

Other Activities

Edwin Fair Mental Health Center's Mayfest Booth
Family and Consumer Science Program Advisory Committee Meeting
Guiding Young Children through a New Century program – NW District HCE meeting
Hyperthermia Program for Wheatheart Nutrition Center
Ponca City Leadership Class Presentation and Refreshments
Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program / "Within My Reach" Promotion
Second Century Initiative Legislative Day at the Capitol – Phase II

Advisory Boards /Organizations

Ambassadors Board of Directors
Child Care Links Advisory Board
Epsilon Sigma Phi
Family Resiliency Impact Team Curriculum Chairman
Kay County Early Childhood Planning Council Member
Newkirk Chamber of Commerce Member
Pioneer Technology Center's Early Care and Education of Children Advisory Committee
Ponca City Fire Prevention Council / Safe Kids Coalition Child Car Seat Check Volunteer
Ponca City High School FCCLA Advisory Committee

Professional Development Activities

- 3 R's of Volunteer Management
- Ambassadors Annual and Board Meetings
- Bridges Out of Poverty
- Career Ladder In-service Training
- Death, Grief and Mourning: Wisdom Teachings for Caregivers
- Dietary Guidelines In-service Training
- Family Resiliency Impact Team In-Service Trainings
- Family Science State Specialist Search Committee
- Gerontology State Specialist Search Committee
- Helping Yourself Heal When Someone Dies
- Kay County Community Crisis Response Team Refresher Training
- National Extension Association for Family and Consumer Sciences Annual Conference
- Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Conference
- Oklahoma Extension Association for Family and Consumer Sciences Conferences
- Oklahoma Smart Start Conference
- Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program Refresher
- Program Evaluation Training
- Statewide FCS/4-H OCES In-Service Training

Awards Received

Awards received this year from the Oklahoma Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (OEAFCS) include:

- National Award: First Place Written News Award
- State: Past President's Professional Development Award
- Educational Curriculum Package Award
- Written News Award

Grants Received

Smart Start/Success By 6 Kay County - I Can Problem Solve	\$2,035.00	for 2006
	2,665.00	for 2007
Leadership and Citizen Engagement Grant	500.00	
	\$5,200.00	Total

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