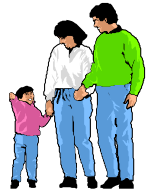




Extension Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) 2008 Major Program Areas, Impacts, and Success Stories



► **Managing in Tough Times**

FCS helps individuals and families find ways to reduce costs of living by:

- assessing net worth, developing a spending plan, and building an emergency fund
- saving money on groceries and at the gas pump
- doing things as a family for less
- offering daily “solutions for your life!”

► **Environmental Education = sustainability (Water/Energy/Recycling and Disaster Preparedness)**

FCS helps Pasco residents by:

- promoting how to make a difference in the environment at home and work with GREEN options
- teaching how to protect their family/pets, home and environment by using less toxic chemicals
- building and retrofitting homes to conserve water, energy, and use recycled products
- removing and preventing mold/mildew
- modifying homes so seniors will be better able to live longer in their own homes
- learning how to prepare for a storm/other disasters and cleaning up afterwards to protect their biggest investment, their home

► **Personal/Employee and Family Well-Being**

FCS teaches Pasco residents (families/individuals/employees) how to:

- develop healthy lifestyles to reduce medical costs
- manage money and save for the future
- reduce stress
- manage time efficiently
- communicate effectively
- provide quality customer service
- build strong teams at home and work

► **Nutrition, Health and Food Safety**

FCS:

- teaches nutrition, shopping, meal planning and preparation to adults to improve health and reduce stress
- educates pre-K through 12th grade children about nutrition through the Family Nutrition Program (FNP) funded by a \$600,000 USDA grant.
- helps low-income families eat nutritiously while stretching food dollars and utilizing WIC, Food Stamps, SHARE, etc. also through FNP grant.
- teaches food safety classes to individuals and certifies restaurant food managers

A total of 3,014 FCS volunteers donated 7,694 hours at the value of \$150,129.45 (\$19.51/hour according to the independent Sector for 2007.)

Situation / Impacts

Due to recent economic downturn there has been a 26% increase in food stamp-eligible participants by December 2008. By the end of March 2009, over 50% of public schools now qualify for the Family Nutrition Program (FNP) because 51% or more students are on free/reduced lunch. In just the first year of the FNP program, over 53,000 citizens of all ages learned how to eat healthy to avoid obesity and high medical costs. These facts substantiate the need for more programming in all these areas. Extension FCS programs “Help people, help themselves, through education!”

Success Stories

USDA—Family Nutrition Program Grant

“Make Mine WHITE Milk!”—This is the new mantra of local elementary school students after several visits from the Family Nutrition Program’s program assistant. Going from table-to-table in the school cafeteria during lunch, the assistant played the “Healthy Choices Game.” The children (689) were quizzed on what were good, better and best choices on their trays. By the end of the week, the cafeteria manager was running across the street to the middle school to trade cases of the less popular chocolate milk for the new favorite = low-fat WHITE! By making the change, the children were able to reduce sugar (4 teaspoons added sugar per serving) in their diet.

Clean Hands and Desks Keep Kids in School—In Avon, OH a study involving 285 elementary students over a nine-week period showed that by using alcohol-based hand sanitizers during the day and cleaning desks/other frequently touched surfaces with disinfecting wipes after school, absenteeism for gastrointestinal illness decreased by nine percent. So what percent will that increase to in Pasco county schools after completing hand washing classes throughout October? That’s 1,372 children in just five elementary schools, so far, who have learned “seeing is believing” when it comes to making sure you’ve got the germs off, using special “germ” powder and a black light!

Nutrition Programs for Elders

MyPyramid just got a facelift for older adults!—Specialists at UF/IFAS just released a new version of *MyPyramid* to assist county Family and Consumer Sciences agents across the state to help visually teach older consumers how to eat properly. Pasco county’s population of age 65 years and older is 27% compared to the state average of 18% and national average of 12% (all these numbers are increasing as baby-boomers join this group daily). Presentations were made at local senior centers, health fairs, and club/community gatherings to educate residents. Elders learned the importance of eating a variety of foods from all groups and including physical activity to maintain a healthy lifestyle to live longer. By following these guidelines, seniors can feel better and reduce health costs.

Food Manager Certification Program

Restaurant managers learn to *ServSafe*—Did you know that close to 87 million cases, 371,000 hospitalizations, and 5,700 deaths occur each year in the United States? Since the symptoms of foodborne illness often mimic the flu, many cases go unreported. After six hours of training and a two-hour final exam, 27 restaurateurs gained valuable knowledge from FCS agent to keep their customers safe from foodborne illness. Attendees read the manual, participated in class, completed the proctored exam of which 74% passed with an average class score of 80% (minimum score of 75% is required to pass). Certification is good for five years.

Environmental Programs for Youth

You are never too young to start...RECYCLING!—At a local day care, four-year olds eagerly gathered in “criss-cross applesauce” style, anxious to meet R.E. Cycle, UF/IFAS recycling cheerleader. Made popular in the late 1980s, he reappeared to help Family and Consumer Sciences agent in Pasco county excite and motivate youth to do their part and make a difference. A total of 146 youth and teachers, too, listened to the presentation and signed on for the cause. As a result, this facility now has their own recycling center, and children are adding up their monetary rewards to help fund special class projects!

Environmental Education for Adults

GREEN Living “Inside-the-Box!”—Hurricane Katrina left a lasting impression and has everyone looking for quickly built housing alternatives. Family and Consumer Sciences agent researched current and innovative housing trends and discovered several new ideas. Modular housing can now be built to withstand hurricane-force winds and even placed on stilts in flood-prone areas. The re-emergence of stick-built house kits was also intriguing, but the most interesting concept was reusing cargo storage containers. These containers are often discarded rather than shipped back overseas but can be stacked like building blocks to create some pretty amazing structures. Some containers already come with insulation and teak wood floors. Family and Consumer Sciences professionals were amazed at the variety of new housing ideas featured during this presentation at their state meeting. They learned it is easy going GREEN!

Pasco County Employee Workshops

Looking for ways to s-t-r-e-t-c-h your paycheck?—Employees (120) signed up for one of six classes provided by Extension FCS to help participants learn new money management skills to help get them through these tough times. Topics included: making a spending plan you can live with; paying yourself first (saving); managing your credit; planning for retirement and protecting your assets. At the end of the two-hour class, participants completed a survey to determine knowledge gained. Although significant improvement was made in all areas, the section on credit was rated the highest (99.5%). Attendees learned the best ways to reduce debt and that just giving up buying lunches out daily (\$10/day), the savings can make a big difference in just one year! (almost \$1,500/year; invested for 5 years at 8%, almost \$9,000!)