

EXTENSION FOND DU LAC COUNTY OCTOBER 2024 HIGHLIGHTS



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
FOND DU LAC COUNTY

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS



*The Extension Institute of **Human Development & Relationships** provides the tools Wisconsinites need to thrive as well-rounded, capable individuals and families. We support families in caring for each other in ways that promote growth and understanding. Our programs promote aging-friendly communities, coach effective parents and help families put technology, mindfulness and financial awareness to use.*

Carol Bralich, Human Development and Relationships Educator

All families experience transitions in life, and many will experience divorce, separation, or changes in the custody of their children. Divorce and separation can have profound consequences for children, parents, and families, although adequate support can mitigate negative outcomes in childhood and adolescence. The quality of parenting and the presence of parental conflict are key drivers of children's well-being and are often the focus of court-mandated parent education during this time. Extension's Human Development & Relationship's program in Fond du Lac County partners with the family court to provide parent education for parents and caregivers experiencing divorce, separation, or changes in the custody of their children. Living Apart and Parenting Together is a three-hour program in Fond du Lac County that provides divorcing parents and caregivers with valuable skills for reducing parental conflict, improving communication with co-parents, supporting children during periods of uncertainty and understanding the legal custody process. The program is offered in-person co-facilitated with a family court social worker. As a result of the co-parenting program, parents improve their understanding of parental well-being, co-parenting relationships, and parent-child relationships. Most parents who respond to the post-program survey feel more prepared to coach their child through difficulties related to divorce or separation and are more confident they can keep their child out of the middle of parenting issues. Most parents also report learning new strategies to communicate effectively with their co-parent. The impact of this co-parenting program is important because changes in family structure can have profound impacts on child and parent well-being, findings well documented by research. Parents who receive and engage with parenting classes during family structure changes can learn valuable and effective communication and parenting skills that act as major buffers from the effects of instability. Over the last 3 months (August, September, October 2024), 87 parents completed the Living Apart and Parenting Together co-parenting program in Fond du Lac County.

AGRICULTURE



If it happens on a farm or in a field, the Extension Institute of Agriculture works with you to achieve better results. Our innovative dairy management programs range from genetics to farm and business management. Extension researchers work hand-in-hand with row crop, forage and fresh produce growers to provide best practices for every aspect of the growing phase. We also advise communities on using sustainable practices to create inviting spaces free from invasive species.

Crops

Liz Gartman, Regional Crops Educator

- A pest trapping network where I monitored traps during the growing season for economically important insect pests that can create issues in grain and forage crop production. This trapping network informs UW researchers and the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection so research and outreach can be crafted to assist producers in reacting to pest pressures and protecting their crops.
- Planning a session at the Wisconsin Water and Soil Health (WWASH) conference in collaboration with other Extension educators. The goal of the session is to provide insight into opportunities to include diverse cover crop species into dairy forage programs with the end result being additional cover crop acres incorporated into livestock production systems, resulting in improved soil health.
- An ongoing planning effort to prepare for the 2024 Badger Crops and Soils Update at three locations across Wisconsin and one virtual meeting by selecting meeting topics, recruiting speakers, and providing regional crops and soils information. This program is designed to share agronomic updates with sales agronomists and crop consultants to assist with recommendations to their growers to increase farm profitability and natural resource stewardship.

WELCOME! Manuel Peña – Regional Dairy Educator; Sheboygan, Fond Du Lac, Dodge, and Ozaukee

Manuel is the new Regional Dairy Educator for Sheboygan, Fond Du Lac, Dodge, and Ozaukee Counties. He is originally from Duitama, a small city in Colombia, 3 hours north of Bogotá, the capital city. He received his bachelor's degree in Animal Science at Universidad Nacional de Colombia. In the last semesters he worked for a national breeding association. After graduation he did an internship at NC State University working on Dairy management and another one at University of Florida working on forages and nutrition. Working at UF he linked with a Clemson's University professor who later would be his adviser on his master's and PhD degrees. His research has been focused on ruminal nutrition and forage management for the dairy industry. Manuel is looking forward to giving back to the community, helping as much as possible with their issues as much as to learn from their success and working together with other specialists.



In his free time, he enjoys outdoor activities and sports but also listening to music, reading and writing and even though he is not a great player he enjoys chess a lot.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Community Development provides educational programming to assist leaders, communities, and organizations realize their fullest potential. We work with communities to build the vitality that enhances their quality of life and enriches the lives of their residents. We educate in leadership development, organizational development, food systems, community economic development, local government education and much more. In short, the Community Development Institute plants and cultivates the seeds for thriving communities and organizations.

Noah Reif, Community Development Educator

A workshop on nonprofit financial development practices to support local nonprofits in their own efforts to increase their funding sources and become more financially sustainable.

The Greater Fond du Lac Area is home to over 700 nonprofits that generate over \$1.2 billion annually. Of these nonprofits, 68% employ less than 10 staff. During the educator's needs assessment, county nonprofit stakeholders identified financial development as an area of primary need. The educator developed a Nonprofit Financial Development curriculum based on existing Extension resources and their own professional experience. This curriculum can be delivered as a single session or a series of sessions. A key part of the curriculum is the creation of an organization specific action plan to provide immediate next steps for participants to implement. A single-session workshop on Nonprofit Financial Development was held on October 2, 2024 and attended by 4 county participants representing 3 organizations. Participants were evaluated by their growth from the beginning of the workshop to the end of the workshop in the following competencies as they relate to financial development: Technical Skills, Action Planning, Donor Outreach, & Financial Sustainability. Evaluation shows that participants all felt "more confident in their ability" in these competencies because of the workshop. Based on this, the educator is exploring partnering with local stakeholders to offer this curriculum at a to be determined interval moving forward.

A series of 1:1's with the Fondy Food Panty's board that support their efforts to hire an executive director. A member of the organization's leadership contacted extension seeking support as they seek to hire an executive director. A series of 1:1 meetings where the extension educator coaches organizational leaders on designing the role, developing hiring practices, and creating a communication plan.

A workshop on social identity to support The Salvation Army of Fond du Lac's effort to increase their staff and core volunteers effectiveness when working with guests who hold marginalized identities

Based on their prior partnership with a project that resulted in the community warming shelter, The Salvation Army of Fond du Lac contacted the educator. Specifically, looking to increase their staff and volunteers effectiveness when working with community members who hold marginalized identities. The educator developed and delivered a workshop that explored the concepts of social identity, advantaged and targeted identity groups, and how those identities are reinforced through socialization. Through the workshop, participants will gain a greater understanding and empathy to those with different social identities than their own, which will lead to a greater level of effectiveness when working with community members.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



Positive Youth Development prepares the youth of today to become the effective, empathetic adults of tomorrow. Our research-based youth enrichment programs like teens in governance build youth and adult capacity and partnerships that help both sides grow. 4-H clubs, camps and after-school programs give young people the hands-on experiences they need to develop an understanding of themselves and the world.

4-H

Tracy Keifenheim, 4-H Program Educator

- An Educator club visit during the Busy Bees 4-H club meeting for youth members and adult volunteers, where youth discussed business, performed demonstrations, participated in recreation, and received feedback from the Educator to build relationships and provide support to the club for the new 4-H year.
- A meeting for youth where they learned about LEGO building skills and participated in a LEGO Build Challenge. This effort is designed to encourage engineering, use of technology, and increase knowledge of LEGO building skills.
- An annual Fall Kick-Off event, where youth and club leaders learned about how to build a welcoming club. This effort aims to provide a welcoming environment for new families and for the club officers to plan out the year and learn new facilitation skills so they can lead these activities at club meetings.
- A radio interview for Fond du Lac County listeners, where they learned about upcoming 4-H events/activities. This effort is designed to educate the listeners as well as expand access.

Community Youth Development

Kelly Dione, Community Youth Development Educator

Planning and developing an in-person financial course for young people ages 15-26 who are currently living or have lived under the foster care system, with essential financial knowledge and skill-building opportunities. The goal is for participants to learn how to gain control of their financial future, assess assets, and build economic security long term.

Independent living skills for foster youth aging out of the system was identified by the Fond du Lac County Executive as a need in the community. It became an ask for the UW-Madison Extension educators in HDR and CYD to collaboratively work on a pilot program in 2023. The HDR and CYD educator partnered with DHS Independent Living Coordinator to pilot a program called KEYS. Two students graduated from the 6 session program. A workgroup has been created since their graduation to collaborate with other educators in different counties to build on the curriculum, discuss relevant field trips, and strategize on how to foster youth engagement. In the second year, we plan on getting more feedback from youth who are or have been in foster care through focus groups and revising curriculum materials. Participants will have increased confidence associated with personal finance and other independent living skills. Increase partner outreach to promote youth participation in the KEYS program. Increase foster parent awareness of KEYS program goals and resources.

FOOD SECURITY, HEALTHY EATING, AND HEALTHY LIVING



FoodWise advances healthy eating habits, active lifestyles and healthy community environments for families with limited incomes through nutrition education at the individual, community and systems levels. *FoodWise* reaches individuals and families through local community partners by providing nutrition classes in-person and virtually, indirect education (newsletters, etc.), and social media/marketing. *FoodWise* is an obesity prevention program that addresses policy, system and environmental changes through local and state public health efforts.

FoodWise is federally funded by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP).

Health & Well-Being works to catalyze positive change in Wisconsin families through evidence-based programs focused on nutrition, food security and safety, chronic disease prevention, mental health promotion, prevention of substance abuse and health insurance literacy. Local health coalitions efforts are supported by coalition capacity building tools and health equity frameworks. Rooted in both urban and rural communities, we're working together to help solve the state's most pressing well-being needs and to ensure that all Wisconsinites live stronger, healthier lives.

Amanda Miller, FoodWise Coordinator, Health & Well-Being Educator

- Planning follow-up meetings with Network Health, Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership/ farmers market, and Public Health to discuss the first year pilot of the new fruit and vegetable prescription program. The goal is to increase access to local, healthy produce for community members experiencing food insecurity.
- Planning for a partnership with the Robert E. Berry House Drop-In Center to offer classes for individuals with mental health conditions. These classes will teach individuals how to make healthier, better food choices for their overall health and well-being.
- Preparing to be an AmeriCorps Member host site. This position will be responsible for coordinating the 'Farm to Early Childcare Education' pilot project in Fond du Lac County, which focuses on getting locally grown, healthy produce to young children.

*Cindy Sarkady
Area Extension Director*

*Diana Hammer
Community Development Educator*

*Noah Reif
Community Development Educator*

*Carol Bralich
Human Development and Relationships Educator*

*Tracy Keifenheim
4-H Program Educator*

*Misty Jimenez
4-H Associate Educator*

*Kelly Dione
Community Youth Development Educator*

*Amanda Miller
FoodWise Coordinator
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*Melanie Phillips
Christine Birschbach
FoodWise Educators*

*Liz Gartman
Regional Crops Educator*

*Manuel Peña
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*Patty Percy
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