

Extension Impact: Education Makes a Difference Financial Programming in Waupaca County Continues to Grow

- Connie Abert**
(on leave)
4-H Youth Development
- Jessica Beckendorf**
Community Development
- Christi Beilfuss**
FoodWise
- Greg Blonde**
Agriculture
- Kelly Hammond**
FoodWise
- Sandy Liang**
Family Living
- Penny Tank**
4-H Youth Development

Programs designed to build financial capability—the ability to manage one’s resources based on knowledge, skills and access—help families improve long-term financial security. For the past three years, Waupaca County Head Start and Early Head Start parents have been connected to a program called *Money Smart in Head Start*, a program that provides monthly educational newsletters and workshops. For eight months, parents in the Waupaca, New London and Clintonville programs receive a newsletter focused on topics related to financial knowledge and skills. Recently, Family Living Programs initiated new efforts to strengthen families’ financial capability.

Workshop for Helping Professionals

This past fall, 24 home visitors and case managers from CAP Services Inc –a non-profit organization offering programs to address poverty—attended a training facilitated by Family Living Educator, Sandy Liang and Peggy Olive, a Financial Capability Specialist from UW-Madison’s Center for Financial Security. Participants learned how to initiate conversations related to finances with families. Helping professionals often have established trust and frequent contact with their caseloads, which means they have an important role in sharing resources and knowledge. The feedback from the workshop showcased its value—100% of participants found all 8 concepts introduced as “useful” and 90% of participants at 2-weeks follow-up had already used the information learned.

Financial Coaching

Financial coaching through the Family Living Program is a fairly new service. This one-on-one “coaching” approach helps people to refine their goals to be specific, measurable, realistic, and time bound. This holds people accountable to the goals they set. Liang has been working to expand awareness about this opportunity. One example is reaching out to limited income families through Head Start because households who receive newsletters *and* additional financial education have even greater gains in behavior change (*Figure 1*). The control group (no newsletters or other education) reported the highest difficulty in same areas.

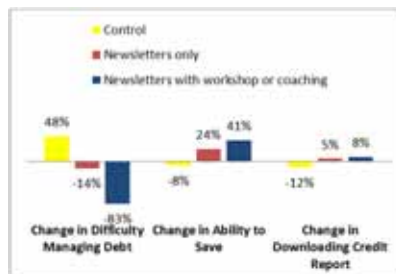


Figure 1. Financial Education Type(s) and Reported Change in Behaviors*

Taking part in programs related to financial capability is associated with both positive attitudes and behaviors. By offering financial education through multiple ways (e.g. newsletters, training for professionals and coaching), individuals and families are equipped to make progress toward financial security and self-sufficiency.

~Sandy Liang

*Data from a 2009-2011 study on Money Smart in Head Start participants

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Cow College 2017

Dairy remains the most important economic farm enterprise in Waupaca County based on income, jobs and more than \$800 million in overall economic impact each year. Consequently, the annual UW-Extension Cow College program for dairy farmers and industry professionals held in Waupaca County three consecutive Tuesdays in January featured strategies to increase dairy farm profitability with improved breeding and mastitis management practices.



Larry Tranel discusses the economics of robotic milking systems with 2017 Cow College participants

Greg Blonde, Waupaca County UW-Extension Agent, discussed his recent publication on barn design recommendations that affect hoof health. Blonde also published a related article in the February 2017 WI Agriculturist magazine. Feature stories of each Cow College presentation were also published in the WI State Farmer and Country Today. Other guest speakers included UW-Extension specialists Paul Fricke and Pam Ruegg, as well as Dr. Dorte Dopfer from the Vet School at UW-Madison. Larry Tranel, regional dairy specialist from Iowa State University, discussed the economics of robotic milking systems.

More than 100 farmers and Ag service providers from Waupaca and surrounding counties participated in one or more of the Cow College events. Feedback was extremely positive with several follow-up contacts regarding financial analysis for robotic milking systems. One participating dairy farm also agreed to host the UW Vet School graduating dairy students this spring to evaluate his robotic dairy operation.

~Greg Blonde

4-H Music and Drama

The performing and communication arts continue to be an important part of our society. The 4-H program is no exception, with talented young people performing during the annual 4-H Music, Drama, and Speaking Contest on April 1st. This talent festival is a great opportunity to be in front of an audience, practice public speaking, gain confidence, problem solve, use creativity and other benefits that come with live performance.



A study of Wisconsin 4-H Arts and Communications project members showed that 88% of youth in a 4-H arts or communication project report they are comfortable doing creative activities. The study also showed that the 4-H Arts and Communication Program provides participants a supportive and nurturing environment in which to explore creativity, take risks, and assume leadership. (Talen 2007)

In Waupaca County this year, five 4-H'ers chose communication pieces to perform including, poetry, prose, storytelling and an original speech.

The Music and Drama Contest showcased 4-H'ers talents in dance, a variety of instrumental solos, vocal, skit and sign language interpretation. Three youth were selected to repeat their performance at the Wisconsin State Fair in August. The Waupaca County 4-H Leaders' Association sponsors cash awards and ribbons for all participants, with placings being determined by two judge's scores.



~Penny Tank

FoodWise is Implementing Grocery Store Tours into their Programming



For the past nine years, FoodWise, formerly known as the Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program (WNEP) has responded to the needs of Waupaca County residents with limited resources by helping make the healthy choice the easy choice when residents live, learn, work and play. In Waupaca County, youth nutrition education has been a large part of FoodWise programming efforts over the years with little outreach for parents. Although youth programming will remain a large part of FoodWise efforts, shifts have been made to reach more limited resource parents through FoodWise efforts over the past two years.

Empowering families with limited financial resources to choose healthful diets and become more food secure by spending dollars wisely and teaching parents how to plan and prepare healthy meals are two main objectives FoodWise programming aims to address. In Waupaca County, nutrition educator Kelly Hammond became a *"Cooking Matters at the Store"* tour leader after completing a series of online courses. This has allowed FoodWise to begin implementing Grocery Store Tours as part of their programming outreach to parents and adults with limited resources in the communities of Waupaca County.

Cooking Matters at the Store is a free program of the No Kid Hungry campaign that empowers families to stretch their food budgets so their children get healthy meals at home. The guided grocery store tours teach low-income adults how to get the most nutrition for their food dollars. During the 1.5 hour-tour, participants are empowered with four key food skills: reading food labels, comparing unit prices, finding whole grain foods, and identifying three ways to purchase produce. Cooking Matters at the Store often ends in the \$10 Challenge, an activity where participants use the skills they've just learned to buy a healthy meal for a family of four, for under \$10. Participants also take home a booklet with recipes and shopping tips, a reusable grocery bag, and \$10 worth of healthy groceries.



This picture shows Nutrition Educators Kelly Hammond and Ashley Clark leading a grocery store tour in Piggly Wiggly with the LIVE Program through the Waupaca High School. LIVE is an acronym for Lifelong Independent Vocational Education.

Currently in Waupaca County, grocery store tours are being offered in Waupaca, Clintonville and New London. If you are interested in learning more about grocery store tours in Waupaca County please contact the UW-Extension FoodWise office at (715) 258-6479.

~Christi Beilfuss, Kelly Hammond and Ashley Clark

Got a minute? Tell us how Waupaca County UW-Extension programs and people have helped you learn, grow or succeed. Visit <https://uwcx.org> to share your story.



The purpose to which we commit...
"We teach, learn, lead and serve, connecting people with the University of Wisconsin, and engaging with them in transforming lives and communities in Waupaca County."





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Extension Impact: Education Makes a Difference

Join Us for the Graduation of Leadership Waupaca County



On behalf of this year's participants and all those involved in the development of the Leadership Waupaca County program, I would like to extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to the county board, sponsors, and the community for your continued support of this beneficial program.

The best way to experience first-hand the effort and care that go into developing community leaders in Waupaca County is to attend the graduation ceremony. This year, the program will be held at the Manawa Masonic Center on May 11, 2017 at 5:00 pm. The evening will include a dinner, participant presentations and the graduation ceremony. Many in the past have told us how they would love to hear the LWC project presentations, so this year I have incorporated it right into the graduation ceremony. We have two ways to make your reservations for this event – mail in or online (<http://bit.ly/2n7Vh3E>). The cost is \$20/person and includes dinner.

I am proud of Class XVII and am excited to share the community projects they have put so much work into. This year, the issues they worked on were broadband expansion, support for young professionals, access to drug treatment options, and instilling the value of volunteerism in our youth. It has been another wonderful year getting to know this very special group of leaders. Please join us in celebration of their graduation.

~Jessica Beckendorf

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