Check us out online:

**Human Environmental Sciences Extension**
http://extension.missouri.edu/hes/

**Focus on Kids**
http://missourifamilies.org/fok/

**AgrAbility**
http://agrability.missouri.edu/

**MoTax**
http://extension.missouri.edu/hes/taxed/vitasites.htm

**Stay Strong, Stay Healthy**
http://missourifamilies.org/sssh/

**Eat Smart in Parks**
http://extension.missouri.edu/mocan/eatsmartinparks/

**Health Insurance Education Initiative**
http://extension.missouri.edu/insure

**Healthy Homes Partnership**
http://extensionhealthyhomes.org/

**Missouri Families**
http://missourifamilies.org/

**HES Extension on Facebook**
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@MUExtHES
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- Eat Well, Be Well with Diabetes
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- Ounce of Prevention
- Powerful Tools for Caregivers
- Relationship Smarts
- Relatives as Parents
- SHED - grief education training
- Successful Aging
- Tackling the Tough Skills

To learn more about these programs visit us online at:
http://extension.missouri.edu/hes/
or http://missourifamilies.org/

or contact your local county extension office
http://extension.missouri.edu/directory/Places.aspx
Welcome

Human Environmental Sciences (HES) Extension faculty translate research into educational programs that help improve the quality of life for individuals and families. Our goal is to help people create solutions for better living where they live, work, learn, play and pray.

I am proud to share the 2016 edition of the Impact. This publication will give you a sample of the exciting programs available throughout the state of Missouri. Please do not hesitate to contact your local Extension office if you would like to learn more about these or other Human Environmental Sciences programs available in your area.

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The divorce rate in Missouri declined to 3.3 divorces per 1,000 people in 2014 from 5.1 in 1990, according to the National Vital Statistics System’s most recent data. However, that statistic provides little comfort to the thousands of children suffering emotional strain resulting from their parents’ divorce or separation. MU HES Extension’s Focus on Kids (FOK) program helps these young people by teaching parents how to address the particular needs of their children during and after a divorce.

Developed in 1995 by faculty at MU, FOK is a 2 1/2 hour educational program for divorcing or separating parents with minor children. MU faculty, graduate students and regional
specialists present the program in more than 50 counties across Missouri. The overarching purpose of the program is to improve the quality of the co-parenting relationship and thus reduce stress and anxiety for children. Parents learn how to nurture and support their children during and after separation and divorce. This leads to more children being raised in a healthy low-conflict environment. The benefits then ripple out to other community members by reducing the need for community health services for children.

“This is very educational for parents whom might need the extra guidance to better be able to deal with the other parent,” said a 39-year-old female FOK participant from Callaway County. “Definitely gets the point across to not put the child in the middle. Much more helpful than I anticipated.”

With more than 2,500 parents across Missouri served each year, evaluations of FOK have been overwhelmingly positive, with average ratings of more than four on a five point scale for most survey items. More than 90 percent of FOK participants perceive the program as beneficial to them with regard to both their parent-child and ex-partner relationships. One-year follow-up surveys indicate that nearly 75 percent of former FOK participants report the program as being helpful and worthwhile, credit the program with increasing their knowledge and use of positive co-parenting behaviors and report significant reductions in co-parenting conflict.

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Imagine a beautiful park. Sunlight and fresh air, children playing tag, teens playing soccer, adults jogging, a concession stand selling hot dogs and candy with soda to wash it down...which of these seems out of place? Parks promote good health by providing communities with facilities and programs to support physical activity. Yet, many park food service operations offer few healthy foods and beverages, thereby reducing their potential positive health effects. MU Extension’s Eat Smart in Parks (ESIP) project provides a solution to this dining dilemma. Eat Smart in Parks is a healthy food environment strategy that uses evidence-based practice to improve the healthfulness of foods offered at parks.

“Eat Smart in Parks is a great initiative,” said Jeremy Rogers, who collaborated with ESIP while director of Independence, Mo. Parks and Recreation. “It’s given us guidelines to go by. Healthy is a broad term. ESIP helped me define what is healthy. Eat Smart in Parks clearly states on their website...here’s what’s healthy, here’s what’s not.”

“Eat Smart in Parks is a great initiative...It’s given us guidelines to go by. Healthy is a broad term. ESIP helped me define what is healthy. Eat Smart in Parks clearly states on their website...here’s what’s healthy, here’s what’s not.”

—Jeremy Rogers

Park managers and concessions vendors across the state have had similar experiences to Rogers with ESIP. Kansas City Parks and Recreation (KCPR), in collaboration with ESIP, withdrew all of the vending machines from their community centers in January 2015. They then began offering concession items at the front desk of their centers. At the three centers...
in the South KCPR district, 60 percent of concession items meet the ESIP nutrition guidelines.

At parks in Liberty, Mo., the number of concession items that met the ESIP guidelines increased from 12 to 18. Through a partnership with a Hy-Vee supermarket, Liberty Parks and Recreation (LPR) was able to source specially packed healthy items, such as fresh grapes, that sold out multiple times throughout the summer of 2015. In addition, they increased their signage that informed consumers about their healthy options. LPR is now considering adopting a healthy concessions policy for their system.

The number of concession items that met the ESIP guidelines increased from three to eight in areas managed by Moberly Parks and Recreation. They also increased their signage for healthy options. Sedalia Parks and Recreation added additional healthy items to their park menus. They also initiated an employee incentive system that rewarded the employees that sold the largest quantity of healthy items. In a 2014 survey of Missouri Park and Recreation members, more than 50 percent of the respondents indicated that they had changed a policy, rule or practice to support the sale of healthier items in their concession stands.

ESIP brings together multiple groups, including the MU School of Journalism’s Health Communication Research Center (HCRC), MU’s Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, MU Extension health and nutrition specialists, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, Missouri Park and Recreation Association, Missouri Foundation for Health, municipal parks and recreation departments and local health departments. Together these organizations provide nutrition, marketing training and technical assistance to parks, local public health agencies and other partners.
Moberly Parks and Recreation signs promote healthy options.

To learn more about Eat Smart in Parks, contact Cindy DeBlauw, Extension Associate, 1205 University Ave, Suite 300, Columbia, MO 65201, 573-882-2399, deblauwc@missouri.edu

Youth show the items they are taste testing at Southeast Community Center.
Caring for 120 cows and sheep on a 1,400 acre farm, while being a husband and father, would challenge anyone. Lee Howerton manages just that despite his limited vision. For nearly a decade, MU Extension’s AgrAbility program staff have helped Howerton succeed although he is extremely nearsighted with limited depth perception and painful sensitivity to light. Staff provided him with information on how to manage his disability and coordinated with funding agencies to acquire specialized equipment for Howerton. For example, Howerton received a closed-circuit television device that magnifies printed materials. He uses the device to peruse farming publications as well as to read stories aloud to his youngest son, Tage. Howerton also received an enclosed all-terrain vehicle for accessing boggy or hilly areas, a text-to-speech device, a high-definition magnifying glass and other items, all of which allow him to work more safely and effectively. The equipment also reduces the need for his wife, Sara, to serve as his eyes.

“AgrAbility helped me find practical solutions to everyday problems brought on by low vision,” said Howerton.

“AgrAbility staff provide education, assistance and support to farmers, ranchers and farmworkers with disabilities and their families. These disabilities range from traumatic injuries to chronic health issues, such as arthritis, heart conditions, visual impairments and respiratory diseases. Through the combined expertise of the cooperative extension system and nonprofit disability organizations, AgrAbility helps individuals overcome barriers and succeed in their chosen agricultural professions. Participants’ needs drive this program, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Measures of success include improvements in participants’ financial stability and greater access to life activities, along with enhancements in AgrAbility staff’s capacity to deliver services in a timely and satisfying manner. AgrAbility’s efforts fell within
four categories: education, assistance, networking and marketing.

Assistance efforts filled gaps left by other organizations. To date, more than 50 farmers, ranchers and family members have received direct, customized assistance from project personnel, including farmstead assessments, help with farm management plans and referrals to other community-based social agencies or organizations. During the past year, assistive technology valued at more than $678,000 was placed on customers’ farms as a direct result of AgrAbility services and facilitation of networking opportunities.

AgrAbility staff’s educational work involved teaching participants how to accommodate disabilities and avoid secondary injuries. After attending an AgrAbility educational program, 98 percent of participants reported improved knowledge, skills or understanding of assistive technologies for farmers, ranchers and farmworkers with disabilities. All participants reported increased knowledge and confidence, along with a better understanding of the importance of seeking disability assistance from University of Missouri Extension.

Zane Volkmann understands AgrAbility’s value. Volkmann suffered a severe brain injury and broken back while riding his horse in 2012.

Now, he credits AgrAbility, in cooperation with the Brain Injury Association of Missouri, with helping him to develop the courage and skills to safely get back in the saddle and plan for a successful life as a horse trainer and farrier, in spite of ongoing challenges.

“"AgrAbility helps you in every aspect of your injury,"
Volkmann said. “They drive me forward. Just because you have a brain injury, it doesn’t mean you can’t perform at your full potential.”

In addition to the Brain Injury Association of Missouri, AgrAbility staff networked with numerous other organizations to deliver services to

"AgrAbility helps you in every aspect of your injury, They drive me forward. Just because you have a brain injury, it doesn’t mean you can’t perform at your full potential."

—Zane Volkmann

participants. This year, to cultivate more partnerships, staff conducted informative presentations about AgrAbility for representatives from thirty-five potential and existing collaborators, including the Missouri Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Missouri Rehabilitation Services for the Blind, Lincoln University Extension and the University of Missouri’s Medical School and School of Health Professions.

One of those groups, the Missouri Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, worked with AgrAbility to help Chris Allen continue farming 500 acres of row crops and pasture after a stroke impaired his memory while arthritis hindered his movement. Through his struggles, Allen had someone special in his corner guiding him to resources specific to his needs. His partner, Sherry Nelson, was a human development specialist for MU’s HES Extension and the AgrAbility co-coordinator for the Northeast Region.

To reach Missouri farmers who aren’t in relationships with personnel, AgrAbility staff intensified their use of marketing tools, such as press releases and public service announcements created with the MU Extension Media Group. Staff also conducted outreach activities and made media appearances. For example, Brownfield Ag News’ “Hoofbeat” radio program interviewed Joe Brajdich, AgrAbility farm health and safety intern, about using horse-riding helmets to decrease the risk of head injury.

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interviewed Joe Brajdich, AgrAbility farm health and safety intern, about using horse-riding helmets to decrease the risk of head injury. Other mass media promotions included 25 press releases sent to local and regional media outlets, in addition to 10 public service
announcements and five print advertisements. Seven programmatic Web sites were modified to include AgrAbility awareness content, newsletters and electronic notices. Outreach efforts included 15 awareness activities that informed key audiences about the AgrAbility program and seven public appearances featuring hands-on interactive displays and program-related materials.

To learn more about AgrAbility, contact Karen Funkenbusch MO AgrAbility Program Director 301 Gwynn Hall Columbia, MO 65201 (573) 884-1268 funkenbuschk@missouri.edu

Health Insurance Education Initiative works to demystify the Affordable Care Act

At 1,990 pages and 363,086 words, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) would be difficult for anyone to understand. Political conflict makes the legislation, popularly known as Obamacare, even more confusing. MU Extension’s Health Insurance Education Initiative (HIEI) works to demystify the ACA by providing Missourians with nonpartisan information about significant changes that resulted from the legislation.

HIEI team members aim to ensure that all Missourians have the resources and skills they need to make informed health insurance decisions for themselves, their families and their businesses. Beyond deciphering the ACA, the program builds participants’ understanding of health insurance options. Participants also learn to make effective use of health insurance once they have it. Health insurance issues affect everyone in Missouri, directly or indirectly. Therefore, statewide education about these issues exemplifies the goals of MU’s mission as a land grant university.

Since the program’s launch in 2013, HIEI team members have conducted 375 public presentations statewide. These presentations reached roughly 4,000 individuals, families and employers. The majority of participants reported that the workshops increased their understanding of insurance options and how ACA affected them, according to evaluations conducted before and after HIEI sessions. Overall, participants’ responses reflected that the HIEI classes moved them towards a better understanding of health insurance and the implications of the ACA.

More than 5,000 additional Missourians were reached though other education and outreach activities. For example, HIEI team members participated in community forums and events, where they answered questions. In other cases, HIEI content was incorporated into existing
extension programs.

In addition to working directly with the public, HIEI personnel have completed numerous projects to improve the quality of their materials and coordinate with other organizations. Faculty and staff produced two comprehensive and peer-reviewed curricula: “Health Insurance Education: Options for You and Your Family” and “Health Insurance Education: What the Affordable Care Act Means for Businesses.” More than 90 regional MU Extension faculty were trained to deliver HIEI programs to individuals, families and employers in every county of the state. One hundred and fifty individuals associated with Cover Missouri, a health insurance advocacy group, received HIEI training to strengthen their ACA-related content knowledge, network with partners, give feedback on materials, receive educational materials and develop partnerships with MU Extension.

HIEI personnel did this by producing videos, public service announcements, podcasts, radio spots, targeted email content, feature stories and news releases about HIEI and health insurance issues.

As HIEI progressed and the needs of communities changed, program staff began giving presentations to health insurance professionals such as insurance agents and brokers, as well as Cover Missouri partners, including health insurance marketplace navigators and certified application counselors.

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Tax prep assistance puts money in Missourians’ pockets

Albert Einstein once said that the hardest thing in the world to understand is income taxes, according to his accountant, Leo Mattersdorf. Even Einstein needed an accountant, but many Missourians lack access to tax preparation assistance or economic education. For those citizens and residents of the Show-Me State, the Missouri Taxpayer Education (MoTax) initiative provides financial education through tax preparation assistance.

“I don’t know what I would have done if you did not come and do my taxes, there is just no one around I can afford,” said one participant.

In 2015, MoTax prepared 9,085 federal tax returns for the citizens and residents of Missouri. Over the life of the program, more than 43,000 returns have been prepared. With tax preparation counseling, MoTax reaches taxpayers right when they most want financial education and can see its relevance to their lives. Sometimes, the benefits of MoTax reach beyond the ledger and checkbook.

“This program is such a blessing to me,” said another participant. “I’m using the money this year to get my teeth fixed. I wanted to last year, but my daughter was in an accident and that took all my money. She was in the hospital for three months and rehab longer. I am so thankful to you for helping me in more ways than one.”

Taxpayers are receptive to MoTax financial education because the program provides the resources to implement change. When a MoTax participant receives a sizable refund, it gives that taxpayer the resources to put their MoTax education to work. Plus, participants are more receptive to education from a trusted source, specifically, the MoTax volunteers who just worked with them and examined their financial documents.
MoTax education to work. Plus, participants are more receptive to education from a trusted source, specifically, the MoTax volunteers who just worked with them and examined their financial documents.

“I really appreciate this service,” said a third participant. “I had my taxes done last year and it cost me $150. This is money in my pocket.”

“I really appreciate this service. I had my taxes done last year and it cost me $150. This is money in my pocket.” —MoTax participant

In addition to the improved refunds and increased knowledge, the savings to Missouri taxpayers are also significant. On average, a tax return preparation costs $200 for low-income families. To provide this service for free, MU Extension regional specialists coordinate a team of IRS-certified community volunteers. These volunteers prepare both federal and state tax returns for free. Through MoTax, participants can electronically file and direct deposit their refund. This reduces the wait time and cost compared to other refund acceleration services.

Since 2009, the program has received more than $286,933 in grant funding from the IRS.

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Missouri Healthy Homes Partnership

Missourians, like most Americans, spend on average about 70 percent of their time at home indoors. Safety hazards, contaminants, and other problems in a home can have a dramatic effect on the health, well-being and quality of life for Missouri families. Anyone can suffer from housing-related illnesses and injury; however certain groups such as children, the elderly, low-income or individuals with chronic illness are more at risk. In order to better assist Missouri families with these problems, Housing Educators in MU Extension provide resources and expertise from the national Healthy Homes Partnership.

In its fifteenth year, the Healthy Homes Partnership is a federally-funded, public outreach education program that addresses housing deficiencies and risks and its relation to the health of all family members. The Healthy Homes Partnership directly assists Missouri families through comprehensive guides, tools and resources addressing topics such as mold and moisture, lead poisoning, radon, safe drinking water, carbon monoxide poisoning, home pesticides, asthma triggers and household chemicals.

Last year, over 3,700 Missouri citizens benefited from Healthy Homes workshops, classes, presentations or one-on-one consultations about how to make their homes safer, cleaner and less toxic. The program benefits homeowners, renters, daycare providers, and homebuilders.

“This information has been very helpful to me,” said one participant in southeast Missouri. “I have children with asth-
ma. I had no idea all the things I can do to make a difference in controlling asthma attacks.”

Many participants have reported that their families overall health conditions, especially asthma, improved after implementing many of the low cost strategies they learned as part of the program. Participants reported that implementing some of the healthy homes strategies have reduced missed work and school days and have reduced unscheduled visits to physicians. The program is very popular with home daycare providers for their state mandated continuing education requirements.

In late 2014, this national program was moved from Auburn University to the University of Missouri, under the leadership of Extension housing specialist Michael Goldschmidt. Missouri now coordinates this national program for all 50 states with funding from multiple federal agencies. Since 2014, the program has received approximately $480,000 of grant money from the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Housing and Urban Development.

For more information about the National or Missouri Healthy Homes Partnership contact:

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Strength training builds more than muscles for older adults

From arthritis to diabetes to heart disease, the doctors at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend physical activity to fight the negative effects of aging on the body. Stay Strong Stay, Healthy (SSSH) is just what the doctor ordered. SSSH is designed to increase aging adults’ access to a safe, structured and effective strength-training program. Developed in 2004 by statewide faculty, SSSH is an eight-week program for middle-aged and older adults. The program’s goal is to improve health and quality of life. Sessions meet for one hour twice a week and include warm-up exercises, simple strengthening exercises with or without weights, and cool-down stretches. Participants are encouraged to do the exercises on their own one other time during the week. Over the eight weeks, participants learn the exercises and begin to improve strength and balance. At the conclusion of the program, participants are encouraged to continue this simple program at home or with a community group.

“The SSSH program was truly beneficial for me,” said Manjula Nathan, SSSH participant and MU associate extension professor of plant sciences. “It helped a great deal to make exercise a regular part of my week. Working with adults of similar age groups created an environment that was enjoyable and conducive to trying harder to do the strengthening exercises. I learned exercises that helped a great deal to improve my balance and the strength in my legs and arms. I enjoyed the classes and look forward to attending on a continuous basis.”

—Manjula Nathan
to attending on a continuous basis. Thanks so much to MU Extension for organizing these classes for adults and helping us stay strong and healthy.”

Each year, this program reaches and supports the health of more than two hundred aging Missourians. Evaluation and fitness assessment information from these participants has been positive and shows an increase in muscular strength for activities of daily living. Nearly all (99 percent) say they feel better because of the program and feel physically stronger. This program also helps participants to be confident and knowledgeable enough to continue exercising after the program.

In a three-month follow-up survey, more than 72 percent reported that they continued to exercise. 93 percent of participants reported that they maintained or increased their physical activity level and 72 percent agreed that everyday tasks are easier after completing the program. Fitness assessment results taken pre- and post-program supported participant responses. More than 91 percent of participants improved in at least one fitness assessment and 23 percent improved on all five physical fitness assessments.

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In a three-month follow-up survey for Stay Strong, Stay Healthy:

• More than **72%** reported that they continued to exercise.

• **93%** of participants reported that they maintained or increased their physical activity level.

• **72%** agreed that everyday tasks are easier after completing the program.

• Fitness assessment results taken pre- and post-program supported participant responses.

• More than **91%** of participants improved in at least one fitness assessment and

• **23%** improved on all 5 physical fitness assessments.
Childhood obesity is a growing problem in this country. More than 10 percent of children in the United States are overweight. One of the main problems is poor food choices. The Eating From the Garden program helps kids improve their eating habits by giving them a green thumb.

Eating From the Garden provides research-based information to high-needs youth in schools and community programs. Through nutrition and gardening activities, Eating From the Garden hopes to increase consumption of fruits and vegetables. With help from area partners and volunteers, the program promotes healthier food choices, gardening knowledge and physical activity.

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Young Eating from the Garden participant displaying his harvest.