

Local Extension Centers

Bollinger County

302 Union Street
Marble Hill, MO 63764
573-238-2420

Cape Girardeau County

684 W. Jackson Trail
Jackson, MO 63755
573-243-3581

Madison County

137 W. Main
Fredericktown, MO 63645
573-783-3303

Mississippi County

109 N. First Street
Charleston, MO 63834
573-683-6129

Perry County

321 N. Main, Suite 1
Perryville, MO 63775
573-547-4504

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Preserving your Garden Harvest

Bethany Bachmann, County Engagement Specialist in Nutrition and Health Education

In 2020, we have seen a substantial increase in the number of households that are both planting a garden and also in those who are preserving their produce at home. The increase in households preserving food has led to a local shortage of canning supplies such as lids, jars, pectin, and other mixes. Having the proper supplies and recipes will ensure a safe product for your family to enjoy. Here are some tips for making sure all of your home preserved products are as safe as possible for consumption.

- **Update your methods** - Granny's recipe that has been passed down through the generations has probably not been tested for safety. What does it mean if a recipe has been tested for safety? It means that the ingredients, procedures, methods of preserving, and length of time in processing have been tested to ensure that botulism spores do not exist in the finished product. In other words, the recipe has been proven to be safe if you follow it as written. You can find approved recipes at your local MU Extension Office (or their website), Ball Blue Book, USDA or the National Center for Home Food Preservation website.
- **Use correct supplies** - Along with having enough supplies, you must also have the *correct* supplies. For safe home food preservation, it is critical to have jars made specifically for canning. These jars have been made to withstand the high heat and pressure placed on them during the preservation process. Old mayo jars and pickle jars should not be used. Two-piece lids (flat and ring) should be used when canning. Make sure you also toss out all of the rusty and bent rings. Rust and dents can cause problems during the canning process. If you are having a hard time finding these lids locally, check with stores in neighboring counties. Many are willing to ship items to you. Many online stores also have these lids available for shipping.
- **Try an alternative to canning** - While many are focusing on canning their garden produce, freezing is also a great option. MU Extension Offices can provide information on proper procedures for freezing produce, including how to prepare the produce for freezing, proper storage containers, length of time the produce will hold well in the freezer, and much more.
- **Preserve the best of your crop** - While many people want to preserve the "less than perfect items" from their garden, it is important to remember that when preserving food your end product will only be as good as what you start with. Choose produce that is ripe and at peak quality for preserving.
- **Have your pressure gauge tested** - Pressure canner lids should be checked every year. This can be done at your local MU Extension center. The gauge will be tested for accuracy, gaskets will be examined, and the overall safety of the lid will be checked.
- **Ask questions** - Need help? Confused about what method to use? See some misleading information online? Contact your local MU Extension Office for help with all of your canning questions and ask about upcoming food preservation classes in your area.

On-line Home Food Preservation Course

This self-paced course provides research based information needed to safely and successfully preserve food at home. Participants of all levels of food preservation experience are welcome, including individuals with little or no previous food preservation experience. Anyone with an interest in food preservation and food safety may enroll. This course covers pressure canning, boiling water bath canning, steam canning, dehydration, and freezing. Highlights of the course include preserving salsas, pie fillings, pickling, sweet spreads, and harvesting and storage of produce.

The course is broken into the following 10 modules:

1. Welcome
2. Before You Start to Can, Learn the Basics
3. Steps to Successful Home Canning
4. Salsa and Fruit
5. Sweet Spreads
6. Pickling
7. Dehydration
8. Freezing
9. Harvesting and Storing
10. Wrapping up

After completing the first three lessons, you will be able to pick which of the other lessons you want to complete.

For more information and to register for this class go to: <https://extension2.missouri.edu/food-preservation-2020>



Being a Tourist in your Hometown

Have you ever thought about what it might be like to be a tourist visiting your hometown for the first time? This is a fun way to spend a day with a friend or loved one while also visiting local businesses and restaurants.

Here are some ideas on how to be a tourist in your hometown:

- Try a new restaurant for lunch or dinner that you have not tried before
- Visit a local museum (most small towns have historical museums packed with interesting information)
- Try a new wine or craft beer at a local winery
- Visit known historical sites
- Stay at a bed and breakfast or locally owned Airbnb as a staycation
- Take a hike at a natural area, or state or local park that you have not had a chance to visit yet
- Shop at a new boutique or antique shop



Building Respectful Relationships

Ashley Bales, County Engagement Specialist in Community and Economic Development

Time and trust are the two key components of building respectful relationships. Relationships are not built overnight, whether it be personal or business. We spend time nurturing the connections that we feel are valuable; whether that be dating before marriage or having multiple meetings with a corporation before sealing a major deal.

Trust can be more complicated, especially in the world of business. How do we build trust with others who may not know much about us or our history? In short, it takes competence, commitment and communication, but there are multiple ways to incorporate these three “Cs” into day-to-day business interactions.

Respect the time of others. Show up before the meeting starts and be prompt about returning e-mails and phone calls. Your reply may be the one that is needed to move forward on a project. Cannot make the meeting at all? Give as much notice as possible and be sure to follow-up.



Be honest. Make a mistake? Own up to it. Make a promise? Keep it. If you get caught in a lie, it will be difficult to rebuild those trust relationships. In the world of social media, errors often get aired in the open, so be prepared to answer to issues that might come up.

Under-promise and over-deliver. Delivering more than others expect adds value and you can almost guarantee that your efforts will be talked about.

Create mutually-beneficial relationships. Try not to be the person who just asks for things and be prepared to offer something that creates value for the other party as well.

Be tolerant of the mistakes of others. No one is perfect and trust is built quickly when you can find alternate solutions to unexpected problems. Remember that you may have to ask for flexibility sometime in the future as well!



Youth Mental Health - How to Help

Mary Engram, Field Specialist in Human Development

The pandemic has taken its toll on the world in recent months. No one escapes the uncertainty that it has brought. In recent weeks, headlines have brought our attention to the fact that our young people may be struggling more than we know. In a recent poll by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) in Chicago, twenty-five percent of young adults rated their mental health as fair or poor. The same survey found 67% of young adults say they have at least sometimes felt that they were unable to control the important things in life.

It can be hard to tell if a young person is showing signs of a mental health problem, or if they are just showing typical age-appropriate behaviors. But if troubling symptoms persist for weeks or months, and begin to interfere with daily life at home, at school or with friends, then it is time to seek professional help.

A family physician or pediatrician can be a good first contact or point of referral for mental health services. Try not to skip regularly scheduled visits. A physician's office usually does a routine depression screening which might open the door for further conversation about mental health concerns.

Teens and young adults need to have a close bond with at least one adult in their lives. This is one of the most important protective factors against suicide. That adult could be a parent, grandparent, youth leader, coach, teacher, or anyone else who maintains a consistent positive relationship and connection.

Often young people do not recognize what is happening if a mental health problem arises for them, so they are unlikely to ask for help or disclose that they feel like something is not quite right. That is another reason they need attentive and trusted adults they are comfortable with and who can reassure them that they can get better. Just as it is important to seek treatment for a broken leg or some other physical injury, it is also important to treat mental health problems.

Another consideration is that parents set the tone in the household. Talk of doom and gloom for the future can negatively affect young people and leave them feeling hopeless. Keep lines of communication open and allow for expressions of dreams and goals for the future. Being a good listener for an adolescent or young adult can be the lifeline that they desperately need.

Finally, consider taking a Youth Mental Health First Aid class offered by MU Extension - because sometimes first aid is not a bandage, CPR or calling 911 - sometimes first aid is You!



Suicide Warning Signs in Youth

- Expressing hopelessness, no reason for living or having no sense of purpose in life.
- Having rage, anger or seeking revenge.
- Acting recklessly or engaging in risky activities, seemingly without thinking.
- Feeling trapped.
- Increasing alcohol or drug use.
- Withdrawing from friends, family or society.
- Having a dramatic change in mood.
- Sleeping all the time or being unable to sleep.
- Being anxious or agitated.
- Giving away prized possessions.
- Threatening to hurt or kill himself/herself.
- Seeking access to pills, weapons or other means.
- Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide.

Any of the warning signs above should be taken seriously. If the situation is urgent call 911 or take the person to an emergency room. Give the first responders or Crisis Response Team information about the person's state of mind so that they can understand that it is a mental health concern.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
800 273-8255

For information about a Youth Mental Health First Aid class contact Mary Engram at:
engramm@missouri.edu.

Mental Health First Aid is the help offered to a young person who may be becoming unwell or experiencing a mental health crisis until professional help is found.