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UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION

Stoddard County

2025

Annual Report

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 **Extension**
University of Missouri

an equal opportunity/ADA institution



Office of Extension
and Engagement
University of Missouri

VICE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

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Dear County Commissioners, Elected Leaders, and Friends of MU Extension and Engagement,

As I reflect on the past year, I am struck by the remarkable progress we have made together. MU Extension continues to deliver on its mission of linking the University of Missouri with every community across our state, ensuring that Missourians have access to the knowledge, resources, and partnerships they need to thrive.

Through the dedication of our faculty, staff, councils, partners, and advocates, MU Extension continues to make a measurable difference across Missouri. Last year, we had more than 1.5 million educational contacts and generated more than \$1 billion in economic impact. Building on that momentum, your support also helped secure a \$5 million recurring increase in state funding. This important milestone is already being invested in people, programs, and facilities to strengthen agriculture, improve health and well-being, support local economic development, and prepare youth for leadership through 4-H.

We have also adapted to new realities. Even as the sunset of federal SNAP-Ed funding forced hard choices, our commitment to delivering nutrition and health programs to families in need has not wavered. We are expanding investments in rural health, civic leadership and community development to address the priorities Missourians tell us matter most. We are also aligning our work with university, state, and federal priorities to maximize impact, whether in rural healthcare, agricultural innovation or workforce development.

Our strengths remain clear: people, programs, and partnerships. From nearly 6,000 4-H volunteers to county council members, master gardeners, and master naturalists, Extension thrives because of the dedication of those who serve. Our trusted, research-based content was accessed nearly 2 million times and downloaded more than 76,000 times last year, and innovative programs, from soil testing to urban revitalization initiatives, continue to meet Missouri's evolving needs.

Thank you for your continued partnership. MU Extension belongs to all Missourians, and together we will keep building resilient communities, fostering innovation, and preparing our state for the future.

With appreciation,

Chad Higgins, PhD
Vice Chancellor, MU Extension and Engagement
Chief Engagement Officer, UM System

WHO WE ARE – Part One

Faculty and Staff



Scotty Smothers
Field Specialist in Agronomy



Victoria Trammell-Simpson
4-H Youth Program Associate



Jeanie Huey
Nutrition Program Associate - Retired



Toni Wheatley
County Office Support Staff

OUR COMMUNITY

Every year Missourians turn to the University of Missouri (MU) Extension for practical knowledge, problem-solving, and guidance in navigating change. As a key resource for informed decision-making, we play a vital role in delivering this knowledge, fostering progress, and empowering individuals and communities to thrive.

OUR MISSION

As a land-grant institution, our mission is to **Bring Mizzou to YOU**. We bring the University of Missouri's cutting-edge research and expertise to the residents of the county, helping individuals, businesses, and municipalities make informed decisions that improve quality of life. Through our educational programs, we aim to strengthen communities, boost local economies, and promote sustainable growth by offering accessible, relevant, and responsive solutions backed by the resources of the University of Missouri System.

OUR MAIN PROGRAM AREAS

- › Agriculture
- › Business & Workforce Development
- › Community Development
- › Health and Human Science Initiatives
- › Nutrition & Health Education
- › 4-H Youth Development

WHO WE ARE – Part Two

Faculty and Staff Resources



Sarah Denkler
Regional Director -
Southeast Region



Amber Childers
Extension Engagement
Specialist



Randy Stephens
Field Specialist in
Ag Business



Traven Crocker
Field Specialist in
Horticulture



Teresa Green
Nutrition Program
Associate



Audrey Johnson
Human Development
Specialist



Alexis Stumpe
Livestock Specialist



Jennifer Hall
4-H Youth Development
Educator

Council Members

2025 Stoddard County Extension Council

Chris Rowland, Chairman

Kelly Midkiff, Vice-chairwoman

Lora Rowland, Secretary

Robinn Daves-Huey, Treasurer

Anthony Bockhold

David Duncan

Lynn Fortner

Wes Howard

Michael Lee

County Commission & Clerk



C.D. Stewart
District I
Commissioner

Greg Mathis
Presiding
Commissioner

Wes Howard
District II
Commissioner



Cecil Weeks
County Clerk

BUDGET AND MORE

Appropriations Budget

Income	
County Appropriations	57,000
Total Income	57,000
Expenses	
Salaries/Benefits	41,300
Travel	4,000
Telephone	1,800
Office Supplies/Services	3,900
Insurance	600
Total Expenses	51,600

Return on Investment

University System	100,000
Donations	14,000
Program Revenue	4,087

For every dollar invested by the county, MU invests \$1.77.

MU Extension is a unique funding partnership

Extension funding is a three-way partnership of federal, state and county government. Federal and state money, through the University of Missouri system, pay professional staff salaries, training costs, computers and communication equipment. County funds support the local office, secretarial and youth assistant salaries, staff mileage and council expenses.

The Stoddard County Extension Council, faculty and staff would like to express our appreciation to the Stoddard County Commissioners for their continued support of extension programs.



Local support

Did you know you can donate directly to Stoddard County Extension with a gift to be used immediately or as an endowment contribution for long term efforts. Monies put into the endowment are left forever to earn interest with the county office benefiting each year. You can also direct your donation to a specific program such as 4-H or Master Gardeners.

Key Outcomes

- ❖ There are 429 active certified private applicators in Stoddard County. Of those, 82 were recertified or newly certified in 2025 [through extension \(MDA database\)](#).
- ❖ 461 contacts related to direct office engagements
- ❖ Hired a much-needed Youth Program Associate in July to help with our 11 4-H clubs.
- ❖ One student from Stoddard County was among other students who attended the 4-H Ignite Conference in Washington, D. C. in March of 2025
- ❖ Very successful Ag Safety Day in October
- ❖ Facebook Engagement – Reached: 45,252

Follow MU Extension in Stoddard County on Facebook.



Follow Stoddard County 4-H on Facebook.

UM SYSTEM COUNTY IMPACTS

MU Extension in Stoddard County Community Impact Report

This report offers a detailed overview of how MU Extension positively impacts [Your County] County, showcasing the meaningful ways local engagement supports residents. It includes data on the number of students, employees, retirees and alumni affiliated with the University of Missouri System, along with the healthcare and extension services provided over the past year.

In addition, the report highlights the broader contributions of the UM System across Missouri in key areas such as education, research, healthcare, economic development and public service. It features metrics like job creation, financial aid distribution, research investment, healthcare access and broadband expansion.

This report is a valuable resource for understanding the measurable benefits the UM System brings to Missouri communities. It supports informed decision-making, advocacy efforts and strategic planning by illustrating the tangible impact of university-driven initiatives at both the local and statewide levels.

[Stoddard County's Impact Report](#)



GRAND CHALLENGES

Grand Challenges

The Grand Challenges — Economic Opportunity, Educational Access, Health and Well-being, and Agricultural Stewardship — represent the most pressing issues facing Missouri communities. They are important because:

By focusing on these challenges, MU Extension in Stoddard County can better leverage university resources, data and partnerships to empower people to improve their lives, businesses and communities.

This report presents localized data and insights in how MU Extension in (your county name) is addressing these challenges. Each section breaks down county-specific statistics compared to state averages.

[Stoddard County's Grand Challenges](#)



Stoddard County

Missouri 4-H

Local Impact

Stoddard County 4-H had a successful year in 2025. With over 100 4-H members and 15 volunteers, Stoddard County continues to provide excellent opportunities for leadership and civic growth in our youth. Our Clubs include 4-H Rebels, Advance Clovers 4-H, Crowley Ridge, Empower Homeschool Club, Farm and Fun, Puxico Warriors, Richland Rebels, Shooting Sports, Show-Me 4-H Club, the Star Banner Club, and True Grit. We held a 4-H Youth Farm Animal Art Show with 81 participants, taught classes at the Heritage Reformed Homeschool Academy in Puxico, and participated in community events like Christmas Around the Courthouse and the Halloween Trunk or Treat event.

In addition, we have six youth and three adult chaperones who will be attending the 4-H Ignite Conference in Washington, D. C. in March of 2026, so we have been fund raising for this event. We are excited for this event and the experiences and leadership opportunities that these young people will have stemming from this trip.

4-H also participated in the Ag Safety Day held at the fairgrounds by the Stoddard County Extension. We held a class on animal feed and animal husbandry.

Stoddard County 4-H employees are Victoria Trammell-Simpson, Youth Programming Associate, and Jennifer Hall, 4-H Youth Development Educator.



Many 4-H youth participate in the Stoddard County Fair. Whether showing an animal, working a fair booth, or entering a project for judging, the Stoddard County fair remains a staple of the 4-H experience in Stoddard County.

4-H projects give youth the opportunity to explore their gifts and talents. They are then able to display them in the fair setting and receive a rating for their work. The many entries, from jellies and jams, to artwork, to Lego creations, to sculptures highlight the unique projects in which 4-Hers can participate.

Stoddard County

Missouri 4-H

Profiles and stories



Our Shooting Sports Program has had a great year! Youth had range time in archery and shotgun, and quickly progressed in their skill level. At the State shoot, in Archery 300 Individual, we had students finish in 4th, 7th and 9th place. Our Archery 300 Team won 1st place. In Air rifle, our team won 1st place as well as a 1st place winner in the individual Senior category!

The Heritage Reformed Homeschool Academy has invited 4-H to teach classes for them once a week for two classes each semester. In 2025, we taught Beginning Sewing, Healthy Living, Exploring Space, and Chemistry Basics.

Our 4-H Youth Farm Animal Art Show is a favorite among schools in Stoddard County. Youth from Kindergarten to 12th grade are welcome to participate by entering a two-dimensional art piece into the local show held at the Stoddard County Courthouse. From there, the top 3 of each grade level are advanced to the regional show at the Margaret Harwell Museum in Poplar Bluff.

Pictured is our first-grade winning entry, "Duck, duck, sheep."



Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Private Pesticide Applicator Training (PPAT)

Agricultural producers in Missouri are required to attend a state approved safety training before purchasing or applying Restricted Use Pesticides. MU Extension is tasked with providing access to those trainings. In 2025, there were 5 trainings offered and 47 producers were certified to purchase and apply Restricted Use Pesticides.

Soil Tests

The University of Missouri offers soil testing and recommend amending practices to the public. In 2025 there were 65 samples submitted through the County office representing 791 acres.

Ag Safety Day

In 2025 Stoddard County Extension held an Ag Safety Day. The day was intended to bring safety awareness to local high school students. 115 local students attended. Counties represented were Stoddard, New Madrid, and Butler. In addition to those that attended, there were 27 volunteers that helped set up, cook and serve students and school faculty. Presenters addressed 11 different topics. Several area business donated supplies, money or door prizes to the event. We plan to grow this event in the future to reach others.



Stoddard County

Agriculture and Environment

Profiles and stories



Southeast Missouri Outlook: I began a newsletter in April that is sent out monthly to 1318 farmers, ag business professionals and ag lenders in the region. The newsletter has been a huge success. Feedback from recipients, as well as data from Dot Digital, our email platform, indicates a total open rate of 81%. However, it will never replace in-person classes and workshops.

Southeast Missouri
Update Newsletter



Farm Safety Day: I worked with other Extension faculty, council members and community volunteers at the first annual Stoddard County Extension council's Farm Safety/Ag Field Day. Based upon feedback from local FFA Advisors who had students in attendance, the program was a tremendous success.



Canola Budget: New to the MU Extension line-up of crop budgets is a winter canola budget. I worked with industry representatives and other MU faculty to develop a winter canola budget that will be available to producers to view and download. Interest in canola production has grown in Stoddard county, as well as neighboring counties as a result of new markets that are available.

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Alexis Link, Field Specialist in Livestock

In 2025, the Show-Me-Select Heifer Replacement Program marketed 1,689 heifers statewide. Sales conducted in Southeast Missouri generated \$318,350 from fall-calving heifers and \$164,350 from spring-calving heifers. Through the program, producers apply total quality management practices to on-farm heifer development, strengthening herd management, reproductive performance, and genetic quality through retained ownership or by marketing heifers for added income. Buyers benefit from improved herd quality and reduced rates of dystocia and calf or heifer losses.



More than 150 Stoddard County residents were reached through SMQA programming, on-farm visits, FFA Field Day, the Black Vulture Meeting, and direct producer consultations. Educational topics included, but were not limited to, nutrition, reproduction, disease management, heifer quality, herd health, small ruminant production, and youth livestock education. Producers are able to apply this information to strengthen management practices and enhance the productivity and sustainability of their operations.

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Traven Crocker, Horticulture Field Specialist

MU Extension's horticulture programming

in the county focused on delivering personalized consultations, site visits, resources, and solutions. These efforts strengthening community connections to a local business and several individuals.

Impact:

Across 4 program activities, 6 participants engaged with Extension resources and hands-on learning. Direct contacts provided timely problem-solving and technical support to residents, totaling 15 one-on-one interactions.

Soil test, horticulture: 2

Program Examples:

- Site visit: 4 total, 6 participants

Direct contacts Topics: 15

- Fruit tree management
- Fire blight
- Pruning
- Integrated pest management
- Landscape management

Collaboration with local Stoddard County business to address landscaping issue.



A dead Japanese maple tree in landscape.

Poplar Bluff Extension Master Gardeners

In 2025, the Poplar Bluff Area Master Gardener chapter contributed 375 volunteer hours and 124 continuing education hours. These efforts are valued at \$13,046.25, based on the Independent Sector's 2025 rate of \$34.79 per hour. The Poplar Bluff Chapter is composed of members from Butler, Carter, Ripley, Stoddard and Wayne.

Chapter Projects

- Ag Day, 83 participants
- Sierra Girls Garden and Grow, 6 participants
- Popeyes demonstration garden
- Butler County Exhibits and More, 165 participants
- Women's Aware event
- Mums fundraising sale

Extension Master Gardener Training: 2 sessions

- Spring, 1 participant
- Fall, 2 participants

Indirect & Virtual Reach

- Two radio interviews on Show Me Today reached approximately 60,000 listeners statewide.
- The Garden Hour virtual series drew 1488 attendees across 12 sessions through the year and delivered horticulture education.
- Sessions are available through live Zoom and posted on the [MU Extension Integrated Pest Management](#) YouTube channel.



Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact



The Agricultural Business and Policy (ABP) program drives the growth of Missouri's agriculture economy by equipping farmers, ranchers, landowners and agribusinesses with the knowledge and tools to make sound farm management decisions. ABP provides interactive programming and tailored resources such as enterprise budgets and farm accounting tools and valuable executive education through its annual Agricultural Lenders School and seminars. These programs deliver key insights, market outlooks, policy updates and practical tools to help lenders and their clientele navigate volatile farm economies. ABP conducts unbiased comprehensive surveys on farmland values, custom farming rates and cash rental rates. These surveys for farm operators, ag lenders, government agencies and industry stakeholders provide valuable insights into trends and indicators of farm financial health.

Pearls of Production

The Pearls of Production is a statewide educational program for women involved in livestock production. In 2025, MU Extension offered five virtual sessions providing practical, research-based education on critical topics, including on-farm biosecurity, herd health management, nutrition strategies for pregnant cows and heifers, vaccination and disease prevention, innovative marketing tools such as artificial intelligence, and hands-on programs for new beekeepers. In Stoddard County, one participant engaged with the program, gaining knowledge and resources to make informed management decisions, improve farm productivity, and promote sustainable practices.

Pearls of Production

PROVIDING A LEADERSHIP AND HANDS-ON TRAINING OPPORTUNITY FOR WOMEN INVOLVED IN LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION IN MISSOURI

Women Teaching Women

Extension

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QR codes are located at the bottom left and bottom right of the collage.

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Bloomfield, Mo. – John & Janet Davis and family of Dudley were among the Missouri families honored at the 68th annual Missouri Farm Family Day on August 11 during the Missouri State Fair in Sedalia.

The Davis family was chosen as the Stoddard County Missouri Farm Family by University of Missouri Extension and the Stoddard County Farm Bureau. The family includes children Jeff and the late Barbie Davis, Janell and the late Chuck Stewart, Jennifer & Oliver McMeans, eight grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Each year, the Missouri State Fair designates a day to celebrate farm families from across the state who are engaged in production agriculture, demonstrate strong community involvement, and participate in outreach and youth development programs such as 4-H or FFA.

The Davis family operates a 3300-acre row crop farm. In 1966, the Davis Family began producing corn, soybeans, milo, and wheat. Years later, rice production would cover most of the acres. The family has adapted to the changing farming and conservation practices along with implementing many new technological advancements.

Farm Family Day is made possible through the support of the Missouri Farm Bureau, the Missouri Department of Agriculture, the Missouri State Fair Commissioners, the University of Missouri College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, and MU Extension.



Front row L to R: **Janell Stewart, John & Janet Davis, Jeff Davis, Jacob McMeans, Jennifer McMeans**

Back row L to R: **Garrett Hawkins**, President, Missouri Farm Bureau; **Kevin Roberts**, Chairman, Missouri State Fair Commissioner; **Jerald Andrews**, Missouri State Fair Commissioner; **Chad Higgins**, Vice Chancellor for MU Extension and Engagement, and Chief Engagement Officer, UM System; **Christine Chinn**, Director, Missouri Department of Agriculture; **Jared Hill**, Missouri State Fair Commissioner; **Randy Little**, Missouri State Fair Commissioner

Business and Community

Local Impact

Extension Tax Schools

University of Missouri Extension coordinated and offered tax education through one summer and three fall tax schools. The summer school was in person and live online. Fall schools were in Columbia and Springfield and an online school. The schools were designed for those who prepare taxes including enrolled agents, tax preparers, CPAs, individuals, and attorneys.

The training included updates on legislation, rulings and cases, individual taxpayer issues, agricultural and natural resources topics, ethics, trusts and estates, agriculture and natural resource tax issues, business tax issues, business entity tax issues, IRS issues, installment sales, tax benefits of home ownership, retirement tax issues, and individual tax issues. The schools were approved for up to 16 hours of continuing education credit by the IRS, Missouri Bar and for CFP continuing education. Total continuing education hours reported to IRS for the schools was 4,024 hours.

The teaching teams included CPAs, a former IRS stakeholder liaison, an IRS certified retired ag economics professor, an attorney, a certified financial planner, Missouri Department of Revenue, MU faculty and extension ag business specialists.

The evaluations had many positive comments and helpful suggestions. One comment from an online participant was “The video was outstanding – best I’ve seen on any CPE I’ve done live.”. Planning is underway to offer trainings in 2026. Local county residents benefit when local tax preparers have the opportunity to gain knowledge, which benefits their clients and communities. The tax schools are a program of the ag business and policy program of MU Extension, coordinated by Mary Sobba with help from a team of ag business specialists throughout the state.

The resources for the schools included the IRS, 2025 National Income Tax Workbook from the Land Grant University Tax Education Foundation, and materials written by the instructors.

The 2025 school attendance totaled three hundred eighty-nine people, which was an 11% increase from 2024. The participants were from throughout Missouri and two from out of state. There was one participant from Stoddard County.



Health and Human Science - SNAP

Profiles and stories

Jeanie Huey, Nutrition Program Associate

SNAP Education

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Education or SNAP-Ed) brought over \$11,419,598 in federal funds to Missouri in 2025 to support engagement with 70,722 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program recipients and eligible citizens. Through direct education, newsletters, health fairs, food pantries, and the Show Me Nutrition helpline, 1080 direct and indirect contacts were reached in Stoddard County.

MU Extension nutrition educators work with individuals and groups in a variety of settings throughout the state to meet a wide range of needs. Whether reaching out to youth and adults through direct education or working with communities to promote healthy policies, systems and environments (PSE), our goal is to help participants make behavior changes to achieve lifelong health and fitness. Often people tell us how the program has impacted their lives, even years after they have participated. Each day there are new stories that bring home the same important message: The MU Extension Family Nutrition Education Program makes a difference, a difference that means better health and fitness for a lifetime.

1080 participants (both youth and adult) received education in Stoddard County in 2025.



Jeanie Huey
Nutrition Program
Associate - Retired

Success Story

Eating Smart, Moving More

The curriculum included recipe demonstrations, food tasting, and physical activity. The participants were encouraged to set goals that aligned with each lesson and discuss nutrition and physical activity. After completing the six courses, the ten participants received their choice of one of the following small appliances:

- Air Fryer
- Blender
- Crockpot
- Food Processor
- Instant Pot
- Pots & Pans
- Small Microwave
- Toaster Oven



MU Extension **Serves MISSOURI and Delivers MIZZOU**
through credible statewide programs

Health and Human Sciences



Audrey Johnson
Field Specialist in Health
and Human Sciences

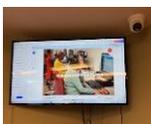
**Serving Bollinger, Cape Girardeau,
Dunklin, Mississippi, New Madrid,
Pemiscot, Perry, Scott, and
Stoddard Counties**

Extension Health & Human Sciences is dedicated to helping Missourians improve their lives. Using research-based education and proven strategies, Extension professionals work in partnership with communities to improve conditions that help Missourians live better where they live, learn, play and work. Our programs help individuals and families, rural and urban, reaching Missourians of all ages in every county and the city of St. Louis.

Senior Technology Classes

Five Senior Technology classes were taught, with a total of 41 participants, in the following counties: Mississippi(1), Scott(2), and Stoddard(3). The classes included:

- **AI All Round**
- **All Things Zoom**
- **Finding Information Online**
- **Protecting Your Personal Information Online**
- **Digital Coupon Tools**



Participants stated the classes were “Very informative”, “Good to get new knowledge”, “Need to keep up with increasing technology”, “This program (AI All Around) is informative and helpful to the generation we live in”, “Great opportunity to receive information.”

Surveys taken after sessions showed that of the 41 participants,

- 15 reported being interested in trying something new because of the program
- 11 reported wanting to learn more about the topic that was covered
- 11 stated it is extremely likely they would attend another Senior Planet program



Keep Your Keys

Keep Your Keys is a driver-safety program to help seniors stay on the road for as long and as safely as possible. Three Keep Your Keys programs were provided in Cape County (2) and Stoddard County (1) with a total of 19 participants. Surveys conducted after class showed:

- 95% of participants reported the class was informative
- 74% of participants reported if they could not drive(either short or long term) they would feel more prepared to approach driving retirement



**Agricultural Growth
& Stewardship**



**Economic
Opportunity**



**Educational
Access &
Excellence**



**Health
& Well-Being**

Health and Human Sciences - Education

EDUCATIONAL EVENTS HELD

During 2025, several educational events were conducted in the Stoddard County area. Community engagement efforts with The Lunch Box and Crossroads Court led to two one-time presentations focused on **Hypertension**. In addition, the **Performance Nutrition Program Series** delivered one-time presentations to community groups and schools in Bernie, Dexter, and Richland, totaling 13 one-time presentations across Stoddard County. These presentations are essential for building rapport within the community and increasing awareness of the nutrition and health programs MU Extension can provide to Stoddard County residents.

IMPACTS / OUTCOMES

Participants gained a better understanding of what hypertension is and how proper diet and physical activity, as promoted through MU Extension programs, can help manage and control the disease.

Student athletes received a competitive advantage through the Performance Nutrition Program Series one-time presentations on hydration and pre- and post-competition meals. These sessions helped students understand how proper hydration can enhance performance, recognize warning signs of dehydration, and identify appropriate meals to optimize performance before competition and support recovery afterward.

Mental Health First Aid equips people to recognize and respond to signs of mental illness and substance use challenges.

Your Mental Health First Aid is primarily designed for adults who regularly interact with young people (ages 12-17) facing mental health or addiction challenges while the adult version focuses on adults aged 18 and older. Participants learn how to offer initial assistance and guide individuals toward the care they need.



In Missouri, approximately 1 MILLION ADULTS and 72,000 ADOLESCENTS suffer from MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES.*

*Missouri Department of Mental Health 2020 Status Report



Stay Strong, Stay Healthy supports older adults in maintaining strength, balance, and mobility to fully engage in the activities that matter most to them. The program combines safe, effective exercises with practical information on nutrition and wellness, helping participants build confidence, connection, and **well-being** for lifelong health.

After eight weeks, participants in the Stay Strong, Stay Healthy program showed significant improvement in their STRENGTH, BALANCE and SLEEP QUALITY.