



**Extension Education in Parker County**  
*Making a Difference*

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has long been dedicated to educating Texans. Extension education evolved nationwide under the 1914 federal Smith-Lever Act, which sought to extend university knowledge and agricultural research findings directly to the people. Ever since, Extension programs have addressed the emerging issues of the day, reaching diverse rural and urban populations.

**EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE**  
*Providing Solutions*

In Texas, all 254 counties are served by a well-organized network of professional Extension educators and some 100,000 trained volunteers. Extension expertise and educational outreach pertain to the food and fiber industry, natural resources, family and consumer sciences, nutrition and health, and community economic development. Among those served are hundreds of thousands of young people who benefit annually from Extension's 4-H and youth development programs.

Texans turn to Extension education for solutions. Extension agents and specialists respond not only with answers, but also with resources and services that result in significant returns on the public's investment. Extension programs are custom-designed for each region of the state, with residents providing input and help with program delivery. Here are just a few highlights of Extension impacts on this county and its people.

## **Parker County – Summary of 2015 Educational Contacts**

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### **2015 Contact Summary (YTD)**

<b>Total Education Programs Conducted</b>	<b>563</b>
<b>Total Contacts including Group &amp; Individual</b>	<b>20,342</b>
<b>Contact hours via educational programs</b>	<b>37,504</b>
<b>Office Contacts</b>	<b>1,771</b>
<b>Site Visits</b>	<b>417</b>
<b>Phone Calls</b>	<b>3,631</b>
<b>Newsletter/Mail/Email Contacts</b>	<b>11,021</b>
<b>News Releases</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Volunteer Service Value to Parker County</b>	<b>\$564,499.83</b>

***Improving Health and Wellness***

*Kathy Smith, CEA-Family & Consumer Sciences, Parker County*

**Relevance**

Obesity is a growing and complex problem in Texas and Parker County. Almost 66 percent of Parker County residents are estimated to be overweight or obese. Thirty-four point five percent are considered obese. Obesity can have long term consequences. These can include diabetes, heart disease, stroke and cancer. These are the leading causes of death in Parker County.

**Response**

Parker County Extension offered several programs this year to help with the goal to improve health and address chronic disease. These programs were planned and implemented under the guidance of the Family and Consumer Sciences Committee along with the Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School Taskforce.

- Step Up and Scale Down is a 12 week weight management program that was designed to address diet and physical activity. The program targeted adults and was offered in a group setting allowing participants to support and encourage each other.
- Dinner Tonight program encouraged family mealtime by providing quick, healthy and nutritious, cost effective recipes to through the Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School.
- Do Well Be Well with Diabetes II, was a class series that was delivered in five sessions. The program focused on the importance of self-care and nutrition.

**Results**

**Step Up and Scale Down**

There was 1 male and 10 female who participated in the series. All were non-Hispanic. All participants indicated that they had tried to lose weight in the past using a variety of methods including Weight Watchers, weight management, portion control, walking and counting calories.

The lowest beginning weight was 155 and the highest beginning weight was 325. Fifty two pounds were lost total with the greatest amount of weight lost being 25 pounds. The greatest results showed that behavior change and physical activity was the greatest influence in losing weight

**Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School**

- Conducted Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School, reaching 80 participants.
- Evaluation data was collected from 41 participants. 77 percent were completely satisfied with the program Posted video demonstrations through email.
- Posted information about Dinner Tonight and Healthy Hints on Facebook.

**Table: Pre Means, Post Means & Percent Change**

	Your understanding of . . .	Mean Before	Mean After	Percent Change
1	<i>Key components of the Mediterranean Meal Plan.</i>	2.10	3.50	46.7%
2	<i>Sodium (salt) content of the foods you prepare.</i>	2.88	3.40	17.3%
3	<i>Types of fat used in the foods you consume and prepare.</i>	2.74	3.41	22.3%
4	<i>Calorie content of the foods you prepare.</i>	2.84	3.39	18.3%
5	<i>Fiber content of the foods you consume</i>	2.97	3.54	19.0%

Percent Change = ((Post Mean - Pre Mean) / 3) \* 100

**Do Well Be Well With Diabetes**

- 19 participants in people with diabetes participated in 2015.
- Volunteers and health professionals assisted in conducting the classes and promotion.
- 42% participants rated their feeling able to control their diabetes as excellent to good, reflecting an increase from 42% to 77%).
- 79% participants reported having no previous diabetes classes, indicating a critical need for diabetes education.
- 89% rated classes as excellent or very good.

***Do Well Be Well With Diabetes Economic Impact to Parker County***

The potential lifetime health-care cost savings for their remaining years of life, resulting from improved management of diabetes by these participants, is an estimated to be \$1,107,119

**Future Programming**

Step up and Scale Down will be offered in 2016 along with Walk Across Texas. There will be an effort to offer more Do Well Be Well with Diabetes classes along with Cooking Well with Diabetes.

**Acknowledgement**

We would like to acknowledge the Extension Specialists: Dr. Jenna Anding and Dr. Carol Rice who have been inspirational in developing these programs to help improve lives. Thanks and appreciation goes to the Family and Consumer Sciences Committee, Dinner Tonight Coalition, Co-workers Brittany Coop and Kayla Neill and Parker County Extension Education Association who have supported these programs.

**VALUE**

**Obesity Prevention and Reduction**



The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service engages children and adults in programs that teach them how to eat nutritious foods and engage in regular physical activity to promote health and reduce their risk for obesity. The Texas public benefits through a healthier population, reduced health care costs, and increased productivity.

***Older Adult Wellness In-Depth Summary***

*Kathy Smith, CEA-Family & Consumer Sciences, Parker County*

**Relevance**

Research indicates up to half of community-dwelling older adults experience fear of falling and that many respond to this concern by curtailing activity. A majority of falls occur during routine activities and are usually caused by a variety of issues. In fact, a large portion of falls are preventable. Being inactive may result in loss of muscle strength and balance. It can also compromise social interaction and increase the risk for isolation, depression and anxiety. Fear of falling can actually contribute to falling.

**Response**

Under the direction and guidance of the Family and Consumer Sciences Committee a fall prevention program was planned and implemented. *A Matter of Balance* is an evidence-based fall risk reduction program that emphasizes practical strategies to reduce fear of falling and increase activity levels. There were three sessions conducted and taught by County Extension Agents Kathy Smith and Kayla Neill. Two volunteers assisted with the series.

Participants learn to view falls and fear of falling as controllable, set realistic goals to increase activity, change their environment to reduce fall risk factors and exercise to increase strength and balance.

Because *A Matter of Balance* is certified by the Administration on Aging and the National Council on the Aging, there is an abundance of data from national studies to indicate the program’s effectiveness. Nationally, after completing *A Matter of Balance*:

- 97% of participants are more comfortable talking about fear of falling
- 97% feel comfortable increasing activity
- 99% plan to continue exercising
- 98% would recommend A Matter of Balance

**Results**

As a result of participating in *A Matter of Balance* in **Parker County**, participants increased confidence that they can manage falls risk better and actual falls if they occur and that they can take action to help reduce the risk of falling. In addition, participants indicated that their concerns about falling are interfering less with their social activity and they report that they have increased their exercise levels.

Statement	Response (N=28)		Percent Change
	Pre-Series	Post-Series	
	Scale: Very Sure (4), Sure (3), Somewhat Sure (2), Not at All Sure (1)		
I can find a way to get up if I fall.	2.37	2.63	11%
I can find a way to reduce falls.	2.71	2.94	9%
I can protect myself if I fall.	2.00	2.50	25%
I can increase my physical strength.	2.76	3.24	18%
I can become more steady on my feet.	2.59	2.88	12%
	Scale: Extremely (5), Quite a Bit (4), Moderately (3), Slightly (2), Not at All (1)		
During the last four weeks, to what extent has your concern about falling interfered with your normal social activities with family, friends, neighbors or groups?	2.19	2.00	(9%)

**Family and Consumer Sciences**

	Scale: Moderate, 3 or more times per week (6), Moderate, less than 3 times per week (5), Infrequent for over a month (4), Trying to start (3), Do not but thinking of starting (2), Do not and do not intend to start (1)		
How much are your walking or exercising now?	4.12	4.82	17%

Regarding the overall series

- 93% feel more comfortable talking with others about their fear of falling.
- 82% felt more comfortable about increasing their activity.
- 86% would recommend the class to a friend.
- 64 % will continue to exercise

**Futures Programming**

Fear of falling by older adults will continue and there will continue to be a need for a fall prevention program in Parker County. *A Matter of Balance* will again be offered in 2016

**Acknowledgements**

Thank you to Extension Specialist Andy Crocker, North Central Texas Area Agency on Aging, Laura Wolfe, Volunteers Jackie Luther and Martha Tandy.

**Better Living for Texans In-Depth Summary**

*Kathy Smith, CEA-Family & Consumer Sciences, Parker County*

**Relevance**

More than 3.7 million individuals receive benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), historically known as food stamps. Studies have shown individuals who live in poverty (including SNAP recipients) have dietary intakes that are not in agreement with current USDA Dietary Guidelines. This audience, may not recognize their risk for foodborne illness. Having enough food to eat is also a challenge; for many households.

**Response**

The BLT Program is a cooperative endeavor among Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), and the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) of USDA. A component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), BLT offers food and nutrition education to SNAP recipients, applicants, and other low-income audiences to help improve their quality of life,

During 2015, Parker County 745 contacts were made through BLT programs with the help of the BLT taskforce as well as the many collaborators that AgriLife Extension works with. The programs conducted included the following:

- **Back to Basics** Series that promotes meal planning, stretching food dollars, and adopting selected behaviors that can reduce the risk of foodborne illness. In 2015 197 individuals participated in the series and completed the follow-up surveys. The typical participant was female (72%) and 78% were not Hispanic. The median age was 40.
- **What’s On MyPlate?** Series included lessons that addressed positive food choice related to the Dietary Guidelines for American and MyPlate. There were 103 individuals who participated in the series.
- **Three Easy Bites** Series taught best practice behaviors related to breakfast, snacking and dinner. Forty-six completed the series along with the pre and post surveys..
- **Don’t Get Bugged from Foodborne Illness** a three-part program that focused on reducing the risks for foodborne illness and adopting food safety techniques. Eighty people completed this program series.

**Results**

**Back to the Basics** -Intent to change behaviors was examined by evaluating the pre and post surveys of those individuals who completed the program series.

Behavior	Current behavior		Intent to change		Follow-up	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Plan meals in advance</b>						
Always	67	32.2%	96	46.8%	13	40.6%
Sometimes	117	56.3%	104	50.7%	15	46.9%
<b>Shop for food with a list</b>						
Always	111	54.1%	146	71.2%	17	54.8%
Sometimes	72	35.1%	52	25.4%	11	35.5%
<b>Compare prices when shopping</b>						
Always	129	62.6%	147	71.4%	17	54.8%
Sometimes	60	29.1%	53	25.4%	11	35.5%
<b>Use unit pricing when shopping</b>						
Always	59	28.6%	107	52.7%	10	32.3%
Sometimes	87	42.2%	77	37.9%	16	51.6%
<b>Run out of food before the end of the month?</b>						
Always	36	17.4%			6	20.0%
Sometimes	108	52.2%			9	30.0%

**Other findings as a result of all the programs conducted:**

- Sixty percent of the participants identified BLT as their first exposure to AgriLife Extension. This suggests that the program is reaching new audiences.
- For participants who completed the pre, post and follow-up surveys, the percentage who rated their perceived ability to plan and prepare nutritious meals as either “good” or “very good” was 76.7% before and 82% after.
- The participants rated the BLT program 54% rated the programs “excellent” while 27% rated the program as “good.”

**Three Easy Bits**, Self-reported behavior improvements were noted during the time the series was taught. Participants’ best practices behaviors with the greatest improvement include reading the Nutrition Facts label, healthy snacking, planning meals ahead and eating enough fruits and vegetables.

Behavior Questions	Pre-survey %	Follow-up survey %
How often do you plan breakfast ahead of time?	20	50
How often do you use a shopping list which includes breakfast items when you go to the grocery store?	46	66
How often do you plan snacks ahead of time?	27	50
How often do you snack in front of the television?	22	33
How often do you use the Nutrition Facts serving size information to determine how much of your snack to eat?	6	50
How often do you plan dinner ahead of time?	55	66
How often do you have enough fruits and/or vegetables to cover half of your dinner plate?	41	80

**What’s on My Plate** showed a trend in behavior in switching to a lower fat milk. Also there was improvement in eating more fruits and vegetables.

Behavior Statements	Pre-survey %	Post %
I switched to lower fat milk	60	71
I eat more than two vegetables every day	82	85
I drink fruit drinks that are 100% juice	69	71

**Don’t Get Bugged** Series noted the adherence to behaviors improved greatly.


- Washed hands before eating 79% to 100%
- Washed hand before cooking 88% to 100 %
- Rinsing fruits and vegetables before eating 92% to 96%
- Wash rinsing and sanitizing cutting boards after cutting raw meat 83% to 96%
- Thawing food in a refrigerator from 33% to 71%
- Most participants are keeping

**Acknowledgements**

Thank you to Dr. Jenna Anding for compiling the information. Also thank you to Weatherford I.S.D., Weatherford Library, Spring Gardens, Texas Workforce Solutions and the BLT Taskforce and FCS Committee for supporting programs conducted by the BLT program.

**VALUE**

**Better Living for Texans**



These nutrition programs teach low-income audiences to prepare nutritious meals, stretch their food resources, improve their food-safety practices, and participate in regular physical activity. This not only improves the quality of life and reduces the risk of chronic disease for participants, but also lowers public health care costs.



***2015 Lake Country Child Care Conference In-Depth Summary***

*Lynette Babcock, Alinda Cox, Tanya Davis, and Kathy Smith*

**Relevance**

Sixty-seven percent of children under age 5 receive some form of child care on a regular basis from persons other than their parents (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). The Texas Workforce Commission estimates that there are over 100,000 child care providers caring for more than 760,000 children under the age of 13 in licensed or regulated child care facilities in the state of Texas. Additionally, child care is one of the fastest growing industries in the state, generating approximately 145,000 jobs and \$2.3 billion in wages for Texans.

Researchers have found that quality matters when it comes to child care. Children who receive high-quality care develop better language, math, and social skills; exhibit fewer behavior problems; and tend to be better prepared for entrance into school.

Child care providers are required to have at least 20 hours of continuing education each year. Having a well-trained child care workforce is essential to providing the high quality child care that children need to reach their developmental potential. Evidence indicates that professional training is linked to higher quality care environments for children (Zaslow, Tout, Maxwell, & Clifford, 2004). Licensed and registered child care providers are mandated by the state to obtain training in a variety of area associated with the care of children.

There are 92 registered or licensed child care facilities located in Jack, Palo Pinto, Parker, Stephens, Wise and Young counties.

**Response**

The multi-county cluster of Jack, Palo Pinto, Parker, Stephens, Wise and Young counties have provided the eastern area of District 3 for several years. The group of County Extension Agents met to plan a child care conference that was held on April 25, 2015.

- The cluster met several times to plan the Child Conference.
- The cluster collaborated with the Early Child Development Department of Weatherford College to co- host the conference.
- Agents communicated with the staff at Weatherford College on a regular basis to plan the event.
- The cluster worked with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Specialist Dr. Stephen Green and Dr. Jean Paulsel to plan the conference that focused on Inclusion.
- County Extension Agents were involved in helping to market the event in their respected counties.
- Agents assisted the specialists in conducted the pre- and post evaluation.

**Results**

One April 25, 2015, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service conducted a 6-hour workshop in Weatherford for child care providers and directors on the best practices for including children with special needs in child care settings. Sixty-seven participants attended the training.

Item	% Yes	% No
Relevance of Information presented	95.5	4.5
New Information learned	95.5	4.5
Will use information or make changes as a result of this training	95.5	4.5
Would you recommend the training to others	95.5	4.5

## Family and Consumer Sciences

- 90% were satisfied with the training
- 92% felt the information was accurate
- 90% were satisfied with the quality of the training

### **Acknowledgements**

Thank you to the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Specialist Dr. Stephen Green and Dr. Jean Paulsel for the information and training material. Thank you also to Weatherford College Staff member of the Early Childhood Education Department Sandra Hartnitt and Carolyn Boggs Thank you to the County Extension Agents – Family and Consumer Sciences for the support in helping to plan and implementing the event: Lynette Babcock, Alinda Cox, and Tanya Davis. Also thank you to County Extension Agents who are no longer with Extension, Penny Berend and Christian Curtin.

### **Future Programming**

This cluster will continue to offer Child Care Training to child care providers in this cluster. A conference will be offered in another part of the cluster.

## ***2015 Food Protection Management In-Depth Summary***

*Lynette Babcock, Alinda Cox, Tanya Davis, Dawn Dockter, Sherri Halsell, Elsie Lacy,  
Kathy Smith, Jennifer Trufan, Monica Walker, and Beth Whitener*

### **Relevance**

Each year, **nearly 1 in 6 people** become ill from the food they eat. Symptoms of foodborne disease include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramping, fever, and headache. While some people may view this as a mere case of “food poisoning” foodborne illness has serious health and economic consequences. In fact, foodborne illnesses from five pathogens alone (Campylobacter, Salmonella, Listeria monocytogenes, E. coli O157:H7, and E. coli non-O157:H7 STEC) cost more than \$6.9 billion in medical expenses, lost productivity, and even death. All of us are at risk for foodborne illness, but older adults, pregnant women, young children, individuals with chronic disease, and those with a compromised immune system are at an increased risk. Since half of our food dollars are spent on foods eaten away from home, it is imperative that employees who work in retail food service handle food safely.

### **Response**

To meet the need for quality food safety education in Texas retail food establishments, the County Extension Agents for Family and Consumer Sciences in District 3, met together to plan and implement the Food Protection Management program (FPM) program. The program that consists of several components was developed by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension specialists and agents. Throughout District 3 agents have worked in teams and as individuals to present lessons for each of the three components.

1. The first component is the Certified Food Manager (CFM) program. Using the curriculum, *Food Safety: It's Our Business*, this program is conducted at the county level with usually one or two counties hosting the training together. The class is a two day and/or one day format. The program's educational lessons and activities focus on the following areas:
  - Enhanced use of temperature control measures in food service such as thermometer use, time and temperature control, safe internal cooking and holding, thawing and general storage temperatures.
  - Increased adoption of proper hygiene and handwashing practices of food service employees and managers.
  - Increased adoption of practices to avoid cross-contamination including proper storage, washing and sanitizing of utensils and equipment.
2. The second component of the FPM program is the accredited food handler course, *Food Safety: It's in Your Hands*. This two-hour course is offered in the counties and is targeting front line food service workers. It focuses on time and temperature abuse, personal hygiene and cross contamination.
3. The third component of the FPM program is the Cottage Food Course. This course was created to help residents who prepare and sell specific foods from their unlicensed residential kitchen to do so properly and safely. The course included the accredited Food Handlers for Cottage Food Businesses. The course is required for the owner of a Cottage Food business. The course covers the basics in food safety practices and meets the requirement of the state of Texas.

### **Results**

During 2015, six CFM Classes were held. 60 people in District 3 participated in the FPM program and completed the certified food manager program and exam.

**Certified Food Manager Participant characteristics (n=26)**

Female	80%
Caucasian	61%
High School Degree	38%
Some College/College Degree	62%
More than 16 years of food service experience	34%
No food safety training within previous 12 months	81%
Previously completed a Certified Food Managers Course	46%
First exposure to AgriLife Extension	57%

**Pass rate for Certified Food Manager Exam was 82%.**

**Food Handlers Food Safety and the Cottage Food Safety Course**

During 2015, **217** people in **District 3** completed the food handler program. This included participants in the Cottage Food Courses that was held along with the food handlers' class. A pre/post survey was used to evaluate the food handlers training program. The results showed an increase of knowledge as score averages increased from 72 to 89.

**Acknowledgements**

Thank you to Dr. Jenna Anding, Rebecca Dittmar and Julie Prouse for their expertise and visions involved in helping to implement the Food Protection Management programs.

**V A L U E**

**Food Safety Education**



Both those who work in food-service establishments and those who simply cook in their own kitchens benefit from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension's food-safety education programs. The resulting improvement in safe food handling benefits consumers by helping prevent food-borne illnesses and the public health care costs they cause.

## ***Parker County Youth Water Program In-Depth Summary***

*Kayla Neill, CEA 4-H and Youth Development, Parker County*

### **Relevance**

Drought response in Texas continues to be an immediate and relevant issue even with the measureable precipitation that fell in 2015. As Parker County continues to grow in population and land development, the access to, and quality of, water continues to be a growing concern. Studies have shown that the Trinity aquifer is having more water pulled out than is being recharged. It is critical that individuals understand the impact they have on water quality as well as the water supply and it is pertinent that youth are included in these educational efforts.

### **Response.**

The Parker County Youth Water Program emphasizes science, math, social studies and health through effective, hands on, learning activities. This program is designed to engage young people in water conservation techniques, identify water pollution sources and how to prevent water pollution, as well as help them to understand the impact they have on the quality and they supply of the water they drink. Classroom educational programs provided include:

- EnviroScape Watershed/Nonpoint Source Pollution
- The Incredible Water Journey
- Indoor/Outdoor Water Conservation
- Water on a Penny – The Special Properties of Water
- Water Purification
- 4-H<sub>2</sub>O – Introduction to Water Quality and Climate Change
- Building and Aquifer



The Leadership Advisory Board members of Parker County have continuously agreed that conducting water education programs with youth is an important aspect of the water educational programming being provided to the citizens of Parker County. As a result, Parker County Agents partnered with Brock Elementary to implement the Parker County Youth Water Program in their Gifted and Talented classes.

### **Results**

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Parker County partnered with Brock Independent School District to implement the Parker County Youth Water Program in the first through fifth grade Gifted and Talented classes at Brock Elementary School. In order to determine programmatic results of the Parker County Youth Water program, a post-test evaluation instrument was administered to the program participants. A total of 15 students participated in the program and 8 completed post-test instrument.

## 4-H and Youth Development

The teacher satisfaction survey reflects overall satisfaction with the Parker County Youth Water program and that students benefitted from the program. The teacher would also like to continue water programming in her class.

Results of the post-test evaluations to measure knowledge gained pertaining to water and water conservation from participation in the Parker County Youth Water Program include:

- 62.5% of participants that completed the post-test can identify the factors that cause erosion.
- 87.5 % of participants that completed the post-test understand that water is a non-renewable resource.
- 62.5 % of participants that completed the post-test understand that water conservation efforts should be practiced by everyone.
- 87.5% of participants that completed the post-test correctly identified “Evaporation” as the part of the water cycle in which water returns to the clouds.
- 87.5 % of participants that completed the post-test correctly identified “Aquifer” as an underground body of water.

### Future Program Actions

The Parker County Youth Water Program has proven to be a successful approach to educate the youth of Parker County in the areas of water quality and water conservation. The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service of Parker County will continue to provide water quality and conservation programming in 2016.

### Acknowledgements

Thank you to Brock Elementary and Stacy Jarrett for allowing the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service of Parker County to pilot our Youth Water program with their gifted and talented classes.



## ***2015 Parker County Learn, Grow, Eat & GO!***

***Kayla Neill, County Extension Agent, 4-H and Youth Development  
Parker County***

***An interdisciplinary approach to reducing child obesity through the Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! curriculum (a modification/revision of the Junior Master Gardener “Nutrition in the Garden”), Walk Across Texas, and the Coordinated Approach to Child Health program.***

### **Relevance**

The high prevalence of childhood obesity in Texas is cause for concern because it is linked to negative health consequences for children and their families. Schools are uniquely positioned to have a positive impact on children’s knowledge and behaviors associated with obesity. For example, vegetable exposure plus school gardening has been shown to improve consumption of fruits and vegetables. Adding more frequent and more vigorous physical activities during school has been shown to improve student fitness and weight. The home environment is also an important influence on a child’s eating and activity behaviors. The greater the frequency of vegetable consumption and physical activity by parents, the greater the consumption of these foods and exercise by their children. With child obesity rates among low-income children in Texas ranging from 10% to over 20%, engaging schools and families in prevention efforts is critical.

### **Response**

The Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! (LGEG) curriculum emphasizes science, math, language art/reading, social studies and health through effective learning activities with both the LGEG and WAT programs. The LGEG curriculum was designed to engage children and their families in school gardens, vegetable recipe tastings, classroom activities and take home family stories; therefore, the curriculum includes:

- Classroom raised bed or container garden
- Classroom vegetable tastings and food demonstrations
- Family stories for students to take home
- Option for the students to become LGEG certified through the JMG program
- Opportunities for “Growing Strong” section
  - o Walk Across Texas online team enrollment
  - o Family physical activity newsletters
  - o Physical activity walking BINGO
  - o Classroom “physical activity breaks” related to school subjects

Parker County agents partnered with Hoover Elementary to train to implement the LGEG program in their school. The Better Living for Texans Programming Assistant for Parker County was also recruited and utilized to help implement the program by providing interactive activities to introduce students to healthy eating choices.

## Results

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Parker County partnered with Azle Independent School District to implement the Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! curriculum in the fifth and sixth grade Physical Education classes at Hoover Elementary. A total of 441 students participated in the program.

- **(47.8 %)** of student participants were female and **(52.2%)** were male.
- **(18.8%)** were Hispanic, **(76.4%)** were Caucasian, **(1.6%)** were African-American, and **(3.2%)** listed other.

In order to determine programmatic results of the Parker County LGEG program, a post-test evaluation instrument was administered to a random sampling of 133 students.

*Nutrition:* Extension personnel led 4 raw vegetable tastings and food demonstrations to increase child preference. Child preference for vegetables is a high indicator for consumption of vegetables. The vegetables presented to program participants included tomatoes (red and yellow), beets, sweet potatoes, snow peas and carrots.

- **(15%)** of the students evaluated had never tried 3 or more of the vegetables presented.
- **(63.2%)** indicated that they liked the tomatoes, **(48.9%)** indicated that they liked the beets, **(53.4%)** indicated that they liked the sweet potatoes, **(97.3%)** indicated that they liked the carrots, and **(69.9%)** indicated that they liked the snow peas.
- **(56.4%)** of the students evaluated could correctly **list** all 5 of the food groups in MyPlate and.

*Physical Activity:* Physical activity programs are implemented by Extension personal and school staff to increase student involvement in physical activities and decrease sedentary behaviors.

- **(51.8%)** of the students evaluated correctly **listed** that 60 minutes of physical activity were needed each day.

*Garden:* Students participated in building, planting, maintaining, and harvesting classroom garden beds.

- **(43.6%)** of the students evaluated could **list** all 5 things plants need to grow (place, light, air, nutrients and time).
- **(70.68)** of the students evaluated already have gardens at home.
- **(78.94)** of the students evaluated would like to plant a garden in the spring.

*Teacher Satisfaction:* Teacher satisfaction surveys reflect overall satisfaction with the Parker County LGEG program and that students benefitted from the program. The Hoover Elementary Physical Education teachers would also like to continue LGEG programming in 2016

## Future Program Actions

The Parker County LGEG program has proven to be a successful approach to educate the youth of Parker County in the areas of healthy eating, physical activity and horticulture. The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service of Parker County will continue to provide LGEG programming in 2016.





# Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Parker County

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## Personnel

Kathy Smith  
County Extension Agent – FCS

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Ari Edgmon  
4-H Program Assistant

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