

# Making a Difference

## Parker County

### *Improving Family Life – Parenting, Child Care Training and Twogether in Texas 2015*

#### Relevance

Children are influenced by many elements of the environment. Parents are the primary influence in the lives of their children. Parents' contributions to their children's development are unparalleled, especially during their early childhood. Sixty percent of children from birth through age 6 receive some form of child care. Children who grow up with actively involved parents and child care providers reap benefits, including better school performance, increased self-esteem, and healthier relationships with peers, healthier sex-role development and greater access to financial resources. In addition, children who are raised in environments in which parents are fully involved are less likely to be involved in behaviors that put them at risk for a variety of physical and mental health problems.

Quality educational programs can assist parents and child care providers in developing the skills they need to effectively raise children. The qualities/skills that is common to effective parents include unwavering love, sensitivity to and feelings, clear and consistent limits geared toward a child's stage of development, firm but not harsh disciplines, encouragement of child's emerging independence, parental involvement in child's education, and being a positive role model can be taught through a series of parenting and child care classes. The classes allow parents opportunities to discuss and practice desired skills.

#### Response

With the involvement of the Family and Consumer Sciences committee and other volunteers. Extension has conducted several programs with the goal to improve family life and caring for children. Children are influenced by many different elements in their environment.

**Parenting classes** have been provided six times to parents. In addition news articles and single-sessions seminars have been offered. There have been The objectives were to increase knowledge of key parenting and caregiving concepts and to improve parenting and child care giving skills.

**Child Care Provider training** was offered five times in Parker County. The trainings focused on topics that were relevant to child care providers.

One **Safe Sitter** class was conducted that trained youth agent 11 through 15. These classes focused on caring for children safely including CPR and Choking training.

Two **Twogether In Texas** classes were held that covered components to a healthy marriage.

**News articles** - were prepared for the local newspaper that addressed parenting issues including family meetings, communication and conflict. There are four newspapers in the county that publish the articles and reach 6,000 to 8,000 families.

#### Results

## Parenting

There were six parenting series that were conducted in 2015 by two volunteers and this agent. Fifty-five parents completed the series. Evaluations were completed in classes and customer service evaluation was completed as well. The evaluation measured the best parenting practices before and after the parenting series. Completed evaluations demonstrated improvement in parenting practices in the following: Complement and praise; Having realistic expectations of child based on age and stage of development; redirecting for more appropriate behavior, encouraging children and listening to their children. Satisfaction with course ranged from completely satisfied, quality of course, value of program as excellent.

Participant Satisfaction evaluations were also conducted on of the results showed that 14 out of 15 were satisfied with the class. They highly rated the helpful ness and relevance of information given. A high rating of 92 percent were completed satisfied with the knowledge and response to questions of participants.

## Child Care Training

The total number of child care providers reached in through the various trainings in Parker County was 217. These were reached through five two hour child care trainings were hosted by conducted by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension in Parker County in 2015. One hundred percent were satisfied.

## Safe Sitter Classes

CEAs Kayla Neill and Smith trained five youth safe sitting skills. The classes covered the child care business, behaviors, CPR and First Aid. Participants took a test at the end of the class and 100 percent past.

## Twogether in Texas

Six couple completed the 8 hour pre-marriage series, Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts. All couples were satisfied with the classes.

## Interpretation

Results of efforts to help people in Parker County to eat better have been interpreted to stakeholders during meetings with the Parker County Commissioners Court. Also presentations have been made with the BLT taskforce, Family and Consumer Sciences Committee and the Leadership Advisory Board.

## Future Programs

In 2016 there will be an effort to increase the number of participants in parenting classes, new education venues and programming options are being looked at.

V A L U E	
Parenting Education	
	Parenting programs from the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service increase participants' knowledge, skills, and abilities, which are essential to a child's development. Parents who are consistent, respectful, involved, and serve as positive role models increase their children's potential for success and help prevent delinquent behavior during the adolescent and teen years.

*Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.*