

Impact

Sharing the difference CSU Extension makes in people's lives and their communities.

Changing lives through Family and Financial Security programs in Adams County

Innovative family and consumer science program is changing lives for the better while becoming a national model for assessing unique populations.

Issue

The construction boom that hit Colorado's Front Range in the late 1990s and early 2000s brought a wave of immigrant laborers and families to Adams County. The influx of newcomers shifted the county's demographics from an older, agricultural population to one that is younger and more culturally diverse. CSU Extension wondered if its programs were meeting the needs of Adams County citizens so it polled residents in 2006. We learned that food safety, health and wellness, financial management, and family and youth development were top community concerns.

Extension's Response

In 2006, Adams County Extension with several community partners integrated a collection of Family and Consumer Science programs to help county residents overcome many of the financial, parenting, and relationship obstacles challenging their lives. Family Success in Adams County (FSAC) emerged as a breakthrough effort that was funded from 2006-2011 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (Grant # 90FE0028)

From 2011 through 2014, financial literacy, parenting, communication and relationship classes continue to be delivered by one Adams County Extension Family and Consumer Science Agent to about 350 customers of partner agencies in the county each year. These partner agencies include Adams County Workforce and Business Center, Adams County Housing Authority, 17th Judicial District Probation, Adams County Government Human Resources, and several housing non-profits.



The Bottom Line

- FSAC fills a critical education gap by delivering life-changing programs in financial management, parenting and relationships.
- No other entity in Adams County has the resources and expertise to deliver programs of this nature to adults.
- Adams County Extension has become a national leader in demonstrating how family and consumer science programs can change people's lives.

By the Numbers

- 94 percent of participants would refer the program to a friend
- 94 percent of participants say the FSAC program they took was appropriate and useful
- 99 percent of participants say the quality of the instructors work was excellent

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Data show that FSAC programming helped participants make profound and successful personal change. They learned to control spending, handle anger, and become better parents and partners. Data gathered since 2011, show similar results.

Due to dramatically reduced funding and staff, data collection since 2011 has focused on financial goals. In the 6- 12 months after attending classes, forty-eight percent of participants report setting and sixteen percent reported achieving financial goals. Thirty-eight percent reported reducing their debt and forty-five percent reported saving between \$200 and \$500 dollars in that 6-12 month period.

In addition to these outcomes, participant feedback includes these comments:

- “ I have never felt so much like I could be successful. Now that my credit is getting better I feel like there is hope.” – single mother of 6 children under age 18
- “Having someone help me get my identify theft situation under control really makes a difference in how I feel about myself and my future.” – father of 2 children who was falling behind on child support because of employment problems resulting from identity theft.

In addition, the financial literacy portion of the FSAC program has won the ‘Right on the Money Award’ from the Consumer’s United Association in both 2012 and 2013.

FSAC Report

The FSAC final report is available on request. It highlights the immediate and long-term outcomes and explains the evaluation tools used to measure program success from 2006-2011. More about program outcomes can be found in *The Journal of Human Sciences and Extension*. Outcomes of a Multi-Component Family Enrichment Project: 12 Month Follow-up. Vol.2 No. 1, 2014. p. 18-36.

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