

Positive Youth Influence:

4-H and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program

Developing the Best 4-H Camp

4-H Camp participants learned to develop new skills, make new friends and became more independent by attending 4-H Camp for a week. The social, moral and physical growth of each camper can be enhanced by well-planned camping programs like the ones offered by MSU Extension.

Many times we focus on the logistics of program planning and forgo some of the attention needed on the goals and purpose. 4-H teens received basic youth development training by incorporating aspects of the 4-H Eight Essential Elements to intentionally design the best camp possible. Teens determined what combination of elements were necessary.

The Eight 4-H Essential Elements are:

1. Positive relationship with a caring adult.
2. A safe emotional and physical environment.
3. An inclusive environment.
4. Engagement in learning.
5. Opportunity for mastery.
6. Opportunity to see oneself as an active participant in the future.
7. Opportunity for self-determination.
8. Opportunity to value and practice service to others.

Each of these elements is critical for positive growth and development of youth. Intentional focus on these elements allows youth to benefit from participating in hands-on, experiential activities and events, feeling nurtured in a safe environment, mastering new skills and abilities, and knowing that they are contributing to their communities in a positive way.



Previous camp activities were modified by the teens to better meet the eight essential elements. They were able to easily

identify areas that needed to be improved and made adjustments to make the activities better.

Counselors really took ownership in camp. They all shared how proud they were of each improvement and the success of 4-H Camp 2016.

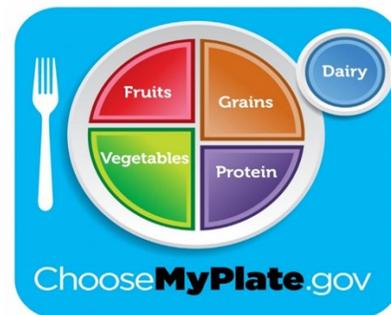
Youth Understanding MyPlate (YUM)

Since the early 1980's the rate of childhood obesity in the United States has tripled. Children who are overweight or obese are at a higher risk for weight related problems as adults. According to the Community Health Needs Assessment of Yellowstone County, 28.7% of Yellowstone County children aged 6 to 17 are overweight or obese and nearly 50% of school-age children have three or more hours per day of total screen time for entertainment (television, computer, video games, Internet, etc.).

Nutrition Educators in Yellowstone County have introduced the new USDA approved curriculum "Youth Understanding MyPlate" to youth in Title 1 schools. YUM is a six lesson curriculum designed to teach children the messages of MyPlate through experiential activities that encourage healthy eating choices and physical activity.

To meet the new Health Enhancement and Physical Education Standards for Montana, the YUM curriculum helps children understand concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention. It gives them a chance to demonstrate the ability to practice health enhancing behaviors. Youth will learn skills to achieve a higher level of physical fitness and exhibit personal and social behaviors that respect themselves and others.

From October 2015 through September 2016, Yellowstone County EFNEP taught 1,066 first, third and fifth grade youth how to eat healthy and be active. Additionally 369 adults were taught to prepare healthy, nutritious meals for their families while stretching food dollars. EFNEP programs impacted a total of 1,898 family members through these educational efforts.



Agriculture

Family and Consumer Sciences

Livestock Loss Due to Death Camas

Steve Lackman, MSU Extension Agricultural Agent in Yellowstone County was contacted by a producer that reported a death loss of four cows in a two-day period. A field inspection confirmed the large presence of death camas (Zigadenus spp.). Death camas can be a highly toxic weed in the spring,

especially the underground bulb. Death camas is one of the first plants to green in the spring making it a desirable plant when other forages are still in dormant stages or in low supply. In this instance forage was in short supply where three of the cows perished in a single night. The plant also seemed to be more abundant and toxic than previous years. Death camas is a plant that most ranchers are familiar with and try to avoid in early spring grazing, however, losses of livestock are very rare. Minimizing the concentration of toxins is the only way to safeguard against mortality because there is no cure for death camas poisoning.



Death camas, *Zigadenus venenosus* var. *gramineus*.
Photo courtesy of Dave Powell, USDA Forest Service (retired), Bugwood.org

The county agent's collaboration with Dr. Jeff Mosley (MSU Rangeland Specialist), Dr. Jane Mangold (MSU Weed Specialist), and Dr. Emily Glunk (MSU Forage Specialist) resulted in a rapid statewide warning. Dr. Mosley authored a Montana Ag Alert, warning producers that death camas could be a toxic weed problem on their rangeland. This early warning gave producers a chance to reconsider livestock grazing rotations, as pastures thought to be safe in previous years should be grazed with caution or avoided until later in the grazing season. This MSU collaboration reminded producers in Montana that poisonous plants exist on rangeland and steps should be taken to minimize livestock losses.

This example illustrates the ability of MSU Extension to respond rapidly as needs arise. The agent and specialists network worked well to bring timely information to a producer in distress and also provided a warning to other producers across the region.

Strong People and Arthritis Exercise Classes

Social interaction, humor, the ability to climb in and out of a boat and get down and up from the floor - would you believe all of these are a result of a 45-minute exercise class? MSU Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Agent in Yellowstone County, Jackie Rumph, teaches two research-based programs in her community, helping residents work toward their 150 minutes per week of physical activity recommended by the USDA. Both Strong People Strong Bones, and an Arthritis Exercise class, help to increase participant strength, mobility and endurance.

Ten classes of Strong People Strong Bones were offered to rural residents in Yellowstone County; both men and women were in attendance. An elderly woman, upon coming to the sixth class, shared how the Strong People Strong Bones program is helping build her strength. She is now able to get down on the floor to clean and then stand up without a struggle. At 81 years of age, she could not remember the last time she had tried that. She also announced she and her husband, who also attends the class, experienced so many benefits from the class that they would be continuing the free weights on their own through the holidays.

These programs have lasting impacts. An arthritis exercise participant shared her story: When she began the arthritis exercise class, she was unable to walk from her vehicle into the exercise room without resting. To stand up out of her chair without using her hands to push herself up or standing to make a sandwich in her kitchen, were impossible. After consistently attending six weeks of class, she was able to 'pop' out of her chair using only her legs to balance. Four months later she now works out on the machines at the gym, stands up to make a sandwich and climbs in and out of a boat to go fishing. She credits these impacts to beginning the arthritis exercise class.

Through the classes, participants now have ways to practice safe free weights in their home and experienced connection with others as they practiced the program together. Participants reduce their personal health care costs and the cost of health care for all Montanans by keeping active and staying strong. Health care professionals agree that the majority of the aging process is affected by factors within our control. Through Strong People Strong Bones and Arthritis Exercise, MSU Extension is helping local residents to enhance their health, reduce health care costs, and improve their quality of life.

Master Gardeners

4-H and the Military

Innovative Advertising Product - Wooden Nickels

This year, once again, came the challenge of trying to figure out something clever to hand out at the fair's Master Gardener Information Booth. While looking at all the options, keeping costs down, and trying to think of something folks wouldn't just toss, the classic wooden nickel became the item of choice. Not only was it a fun blast from the past, but it served to advertise both realms of the Yellowstone County Extension Urban Horticulture program's outreach.

One side is devoted to the Master Gardener program, complete with the web page address, to access class information and applications. The second side is devoted to the MSU Extension urban yard and garden program, with the direct phone number for the fastest access.



Not only were these an excellent value, but very successful with 1,500 nickels handed out during the 2016 fair. They are also a handy option to distribute to clients at the office. These will become a standard handout item at the summer farmers market information booths which are staffed by Master Gardeners and at various horticulture presentations.

Master Gardener Volunteer Impact

The impact of the Master Gardener program's outreach has expanded in our community, through its many hours of volunteer service.

Since 2016, 90 new participants have attended the Master Gardener Education classes. These classes consist of eight, two-hour sessions for Level 1 and Level 2, and a 3-day class taught by MSU Master Gardener Coordinator Toby Day, for Level 3.

With an ongoing base of nearly 120 active Master Gardeners, the impact has been substantial, with 7,270 hours donated the past two years.

Volunteers make it possible for the zoo to have its spectacular gardens on a limited budget. They are entirely responsible for preparing, planting, and maintaining these gardens. Dedicated Master Gardeners also invest heavily in coordinating the annual Geranium Festival, put on by the Botanical Society at ZooMontana. This is the major



fundraiser for zoo garden maintenance. MontanaZoo's Sensory Garden is one of Billings go-to locations for beautiful summer weddings and other special events.

As a result of the excellent care given through this volunteer program:

- These gardens will be classified as American Botanic gardens, by the American Botanical Society.
- The gardens are expected to become a public test garden for the PlantSelect program through Colorado State University. This program introduces new high plains and intermountain plant varieties.

Each year new opportunities develop and are presented to Yellowstone County Master Gardeners for consideration. These are seen as opportunities to project our program's outreach even further.

4-H and the Military Working Together for Youth

Montana has over 7,000 children living within its military families. When military parents are deployed, their children have unique needs for special support. With the help of the MSU 4-H Center for Youth Development and 4-H/Military partnerships across the State, the Yellowstone County 4-H Program is reaching out to those military youth.

The Yellowstone County 4-H/Military program is focusing on critical life skills taught through the 4-H Mission Mandate areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (S.T.E.M.), Healthy Living and Citizenship to better prepare our young people for the future. Last year, over 500 military youth were impacted across the state, by being involved in the following workshops and events.

S.T.E.M. – Robotics, Aerospace, Renewable Energy, National Youth Science Experiment (Drone Discovery) and Spy Science. These workshops engage children in

4-H and Military Youth: Saddle and Paddle Camp

research, mathematics, problem solving and team building.

Healthy Living – In a series of classes, youth gained a better understanding about ways to prepare healthy meals with a limited income. They learned ways to improve their lifestyle with better eating habits and fun physical activities.

Citizenship – Youth spent time thinking about issues they are passionate about changing and how to write a bill and present it. Several of these participants wrote bills to interview for citizenship trips to Helena and Washington D.C.

Camp – A Saddle and Paddle camp for youth in Air Force families was held in Yellowstone County in 2016. Participants enjoyed fun, high adventure opportunities such as white water rafting, horseback riding, hiking and swimming. Activities and workshops held throughout camp helped youth build positive relationships, and gain a greater sense of resiliency to help them become a person of good character and a contributing citizen in their community.



While the servicemen and women of Montana continue to step up to fight for our freedom, their families need our support. Yellowstone County is committed to continuing a support network in our community and across the state. Our service members are better prepared to focus on the mission at hand, confident that their children and families have the education, support and services they need to cope while they are deployed.

Contact Us



EXTENSION

Yellowstone County

Roni Baker
4-H/Youth Development Agent

Steve Lackman
Agriculture Agent

Jackie Rumph
Family and Consumer Sciences Agent

Amy Grandpre
County Horticulture Assistant

Brandy Butler
Leslie Idstrom
Administrative Assistants

Melody Harris
4-H Military Program Manager

Phyllis Hansen
EFNEP Agent

Melody Harris
Debbie Holman
Lynn Olson
Aimee Carlson
EFNEP Nutrition Assistants

Norma Seder
EFNEP Administrative Assistant

www.msuxextension.org

Yellowstone County Extension
PO Box 35021, Billings, MT 59107

Phone (406) 256-2828

E-mail yellowstone1@montana.edu

Web www.msuxextension.org/yellowstone/

Montana State University Extension is an ADA/EO/AA Veteran's Preference Employer and provider of educational outreach.