



## Family and Consumer Sciences

BUILDING STRONG FAMILIES IN THE 21ST CENTURY



### • THE CHALLENGE •

**Being a parent isn't easy.** The goal is to guide children in such a way that they mature into happy, healthy, well-functioning adults who are productive and contributing members of society. Yet a variety of social, economic, and other factors create a wide range of challenges for parents. For example, 25 percent of Ohio's population is under 18 years of age, which means 2.9 million children live in the state. Of those, 18 percent live in poverty. In addition, 31 percent of Ohio's families are headed by a single parent. And, unfortunately, 30 percent to 50 percent of all children of divorce experience moderate to severe emotional difficulties.

According to the 2004 Monitoring the Future study, 21 percent of eighth-graders, 40 percent of tenth-graders, and 51 percent of twelfth-graders reported using an illicit drug within their lifetimes. In addition, the Federal Bureau of Investigation reports that juveniles accounted for 17 percent of all arrests and 15 percent of all violent crime arrests in 2002. To help parents cope with these and other challenges they face, Ohio State University Extension's Family and Consumer Sciences program has developed a wide variety of parenting education and materials.





For more information or to partner with us on OSU Extension's Healthy Relationships programming, please contact your county Extension Educator in Family and Consumer Sciences, or our center specialist in this area:

Cynthia Burggraf Torppa, Extension Center Specialist  
torppa.1@osu.edu, 419-422-6106



## • OSU EXTENSION'S RESPONSE •

Statewide, Extension educators offer a wide range of parenting education. In 2004, we reached over 15,411 parents in 50 Ohio counties. We provide:

- Information and training to first-time parents about basic infant care.
- Basic knowledge and skills about child development, limit-setting, and appropriate methods of discipline to general audiences of parents, grandparents, and foster and adoptive parents, as well as to those referred by agencies.
- Court-mandated parenting classes for divorcing parents of minor children. These classes increase divorcing parents' awareness of how their actions affect their children, and demonstrate how they can reduce conflict and co-parent cooperatively.
- Truancy-diversion parent education.
- Education on basic parenting skills to incarcerated parents.
- Knowledge, skills, and aspirations to fathers so that they participate more fully as actively engaged parents.

## • BENEFITS FOR OHIOANS •

Research demonstrates that parenting education is beneficial to both parents and children. Parents who participate in educational programs:

- Have increased confidence in their parenting abilities.
- Develop more positive, effective, age-appropriate guidance and discipline techniques.
- Better understand ways they can facilitate their children's positive development—emotionally, socially, and intellectually.

OSU Extension has begun documenting the impacts of our parenting programming. Over time, this information will help identify more successful programs, which will in turn allow us to focus our energies on conducting the most successful evidence-based education for Ohio's parents.

OSU Extension embraces human diversity and is committed to ensuring that all educational programs conducted by Ohio State University Extension are available to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, age, gender identity or expression, disability, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, or veteran status.

Keith L. Smith, Associate Vice President for Agricultural Administration and Director, OSU Extension

TDD No. 800-589-8292 (Ohio only) or 614-292-1868



Family and Consumer Sciences  
BUILDING STRONG FAMILIES IN THE 21ST CENTURY