

# Compassion to Action: Courts + Schools + OSU Extension = Partnerships Making a Difference

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## INTRODUCTION

A previous partnership between Ohio State University Extension and Scioto County Juvenile Court focused on working with teens involved with the court system and their parents. The Behavior Modification program was very reactive in nature and while some individuals made changes it was felt more impact could be made using a different approach.

Based on evaluation data and existing research, a new partnership was formed creating a more proactive approach to reduce youth involvement in risky behavior. The implementation of parenting strategies is more successful when youth are younger and have not had significant involvement with the court system. The local school systems became a new programming partner in the implementation of the Compassion to Action program.

## Schedule

Sessions were conducted immediately after school. Youth participants attended sessions on character education and nutrition education while parents received parent education. At the end of the session, a meal was provided for the entire family and parents and children were encouraged to eat together.

## Additional Support

If families had children younger than 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, a SNAP-Ed program assistant and another adult would provide nutrition education for them while parents and siblings attended class.

## METHODS

Prior to implementation of the Compassion to Action program, planning sessions were held with all partners to discuss ways to recruit participants, types of incentives to offer and timeline for the program.

### Role of Courts

- Assist in recruitment of participants
- Coordinate scheduling
- Provide funding
- Provide assistance with transportation, if needed

### Role of Schools

- Recruit participants – both youth and adult
- Provide classroom space
- Provide location for family meal at end of each class

### Role of Extension

- Teach sessions
- Collect and compile evaluation data
- Order supplies and food for each session

### Incentives

- \$10 fuel card provided to each parent/caregiver who drove to the session
- \$100 department store card provided if parent/caregiver attended all five sessions
- One gift card per school provided for family (up to 4 people) at a local state park for one night, meals and activities all included

## RESULTS

“Compassion to Action bridged a gap between parents/caregivers and our school. Our kids are asking when we will do it again!”

Melyssa Shannon  
Counselor, Northwest Local Schools

“I have enjoyed the collaboration with Ohio State University Extension and the local schools. The Compassion to Action Program has been a huge success.”

Judge Alan Lemons

### It Begins with Me

School	Question	Pre	Post	Change
Minford	Other people should not control who I become.	2.83	4.0	41.3%
Bloom Vernon	Other people should not control who I become.	3.2	3.6	12.5%
Valley	Other people should not control who I become.	3.85	3.62	-5.9%
Northwest	Other people should not control who I become.	3.08	3.57	15.9%

“I learned that I can create my destiny and not let others negatively influence my life.”

Youth participant

### SNAP-Ed

Behavior	Pre	Post
Am physically active every week	17%	57%
Utilize myPlate when choosing foods	4%	32%

## Active Parenting

School	Question	Pre	Post	Change
Minford	I know how to build courage and self-esteem in my child.	2.0	3.75	87.5%
Bloom Vernon	I know how to build courage and self-esteem in my child.	2.77	3.81	37.5%
Valley	I know how to build courage and self-esteem in my child.	2.91	3.82	31.3%
Northwest	I know how to build courage and self-esteem in my child.	2.88	3.67	27.4%

“There is comfort in knowing you are not alone.”

Parent Participant

## CONCLUSIONS

**There are some indicators that lead us to believe we made greater impact with smaller groups of parents and youth when conducting the program. Perhaps a greater measure of success is the development of positive relationships between parents/caregivers, students and other public entities including Juvenile Court, schools and OSU Extension.**

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