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## After Nearly a Century, Extension Is Still About Leadership and Local Partnerships

Formalized by an act of Congress in 1914, the Cooperative Extension System was designed, and continues, to be the most unbiased and effective vehicle for providing relevant, scholarly, researched-based information to the public to improve our quality of life as citizens, communities and businesses.

For almost 100 years, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County has used the wealth of community experience, knowledge and expertise — linked with federal, state and local public and private institutions and agencies — to address local needs and build strong, healthy, vibrant communities. It is the only program of its kind and has proved tremendously adaptive to an ever-changing society. Extension has become expert at working this wide-ranging, versatile partnership model.

Although primarily rural and farm-oriented 100 years ago, Cooperative Extension today is a network that serves all families and communities with the latest research-based information. Inspiring leadership, supporting volunteers, building local partnerships and coalitions, Cooperative Extension addresses issues in three major areas: Family and Community Well-Being; 4-H Youth Development; and Agriculture/Horticulture/Environment.

Cooperative Extension educational programs are available to all citizens of the state using the wide array of educational technologies and methods available today.

  
James A. Mason  
Board President

  
Paul Bonaparte-Krogh  
Executive Director  
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County

THE MISSION:

Strengthening youth, adults, families and communities through learning partnerships that put knowledge to work.



## Parenting Workshops Accentuate the Positive

Encouragement... Can Do... Choices... Self-Control... Respecting Feelings.

"Those are the five skills which are explained, discussed, and practiced in a Parenting Skills Workshop Series," says Anna Steinkraus, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County, Parenting Education Coordinator. Two-hour sessions meet once a week for seven weeks. "During the sessions the skills are applied to real life situations that participants share with the group."

The Parenting Skills Workshop Series is a form of democratic parenting based on respect for oneself and others, acknowledging that with practice a person can control and change their behavior and that often a child's behavior will change when a parent's behavior changes. The first session explores our parenting roots, child development, and the impact a parent's behavior has on the children. The subsequent weeks introduce each of the skills, with two weeks spent on Self-Control, a helpful tool for anger management. Participants must attend a minimum of five sessions to receive a certificate of completion.

Participants learn about the program from friends, schools, agencies, or other graduates. They come for a variety of reasons, including to get some tips on parenting their children, or for help with aspects of parenting they're struggling with.

Facilitated Visits is another component of Parenting Skills and consists of twelve, two hour visits with a parenting educator, the parent(s) and child(ren). In this program the skills are also explained, discussed, and practiced, this time during real life situations.

The Parent Education Network offers ongoing support for parents on select Monday evenings. Topics vary throughout the year from parenting infants and toddlers, to step-parenting, to grandparents raising their grandchildren, to parenting teens.

Participants in all these programs often feel a greater sense of confidence in their parenting. They realize aspects of parenting they are doing well, feel less isolated, and find the skills really work!

*"During the sessions the skills are applied to real life situations that participants share with the group."*

"Parenting Skills Facilitators treated me like a person. They didn't tell me what to do or how to do it, or how to act. It was cool, normal...I pay better attention to my daughter's feelings and it makes it easier to stay calm and understand the situation. I pay more attention to how I talk to her and talk to her more, focusing more on feelings and the five skills and thinking more about how and what I'm doing than what I am saying. She tries to communicate with me more, too. Instead of just screaming, she points to show what's wrong."

"Parenting Skills is a positive way to learn about positive discipline. Discipline is not negative. It is a method to keep things running smoothly."

— PSWS Participant

## Cooking Can Be Fun and Constructive, Too

One brings together a group of children from many countries who live at the West Village apartments. Another targets middle school girls in Lansing with information on healthy eating and activity habits. A third works with elementary school girls at the Beverly J. Martin School in Ithaca.

All three are Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County after school programs that help youth learn about food and nutrition and can teach other valuable lessons in the process. Yet each program stemmed from a different part of the county's network of Cooperative Extension activities.

At BJM, fourth and fifth-grade at-risk girls were recruited last spring for Cooking Up Fun, a program that teaches food preparation skills. "It was supposed to last six weeks," said Helen Howard, who supervises Extension's Food & Nutrition Education program, "but it was so successful that the girls begged us not to stop."

BJM after-school program coordinator Marie Vitucci came up with the idea of reaching the girls with food activities after seeing a number of such food and nutrition programs around the county in her other job, as associate coordinator of Extension's Rural Youth Services program.

Howard assigned Ami Melendez, a Nutrition Teaching Assistant (NTA), to work with the girls one afternoon a week in the school kitchen. Extension Associate Patricia Thoney, and Carol Bisogni, Associate Professor of Nutritional Sciences in Cornell's College of Human Ecology, developed the curriculum emphasizing mastery of food preparation skills. Melendez worked with the girls on everything from menu planning and preparation to presentation and critiques of the recipes they used.

"The activities involved skills like reading and writing," Vitucci said, "and also exposed the girls who usually eat prepared or processed food to some very new ideas about food and nutrition. And they just loved it. After the sixth week they wrote Helen a letter and said, 'Please don't stop.' So we kept it going and we're doing it again this semester."

In Lansing, Rural Youth Services Program Manager Sephra Albert collaborated with NTA Tina Foster to create the after school program 'Movin' and Groovin'. This was in response to a request from the middle school health and physical education staff for a program exposing girls to a variety of healthy lifestyle choices. Some were overweight, others very thin, and there was a wide variety of activity levels. They spent Tuesday afternoons preparing healthy and inexpensive snacks and engaging in such group physical activities as step aerobics, hiking and kick-boxing.

The response was positive with a great deal of enthusiasm generated for the activities and new foods over the eight weeks of the program. Albert said that it convinced her that middle school girls are interested in health and fitness, and the group support helped the girls to try new healthy behaviors.

Cooking was just one aspect of the West Village Cooperative Extension Urban 4H program, but an important one. Youth from Ukraine, Asia and other regions have a chance to share dishes from their own cultures and sample American cuisine, working with international students recruited at Cornell.

At the end of the school year, the children were doing well enough in their culinary venture to cater a party for themselves and their parents.



*Melendez worked with the girls on everything from menu planning and preparation to presentation and critiques of the recipes they used.*

## Family Finance Program Leader in the State

NYSEG and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County have teamed up to make a difference in people's lives.

In exchange for participating in workshops on family finances administered by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County, participants in NYSEG's Power Partner program are eligible to receive \$75 in energy credits, reduced charges for basic service from NYSEG, new appliances, free home weatherization and other improvements designed to manage energy use, and an extended repayment plan with a matching reduction component.

Nowhere in the 42 counties where NYSEG offers the Power Partner program does it work better than here in Tompkins County, according to Pat Boynton, who manages the NYSEG program. The success is thanks in large part to the efforts of Consumer and Financial Management Educator Ann Gifford and Financial Management Education Program Manager Angela Northern.

The One-on-One component of Power Partners, developed by Gifford and Northern, is outstanding, Boynton says. In fact, it has been copied by three other counties with another about to start it and four more waiting their turn. "I think this is the most successful component in helping people make the changes they choose to make," Boynton said, "because it recognizes their strengths and values." Power Partner participants receive a \$25 credit for attending a two-hour workshop on family finances. They are then given the opportunity to receive an additional \$50 credit for completing the series of six One-on-One sessions with a financial teaching assistant.

"The people who choose to participate in the One-on-One really want to make positive changes in their lives," Northern said. "They are motivated, very determined to save money and pay their bills. We work on identifying their goals. Participants track their spending and determine where their money is going. Then we encourage them to consider options that maximize their resources and adjust their spending pattern. With specific goals in place spending decisions become much easier to make."

The idea of starting out individually — one-on-one — is one that Gifford wholeheartedly endorses, even though it consumes more staff time than group sessions would. "This approach allows participants to identify their goals, outline their specific plan of action, and try it out while at the same time connecting with community resources," she said. "It is *not* counseling. We never tell people what to do with their resources. It is a strength-based approach to education and decision making."

The One-on-One sessions have spun off another program called MoneyTalk\$, which consists of group sessions for those already in the program who want to meet with others who face similar challenges. Two Money Talk sessions are offered each month. The participants determine what the money related topic of the day will be. Some participants come to share their successes, others for support.

NYSEG's Boynton says, "Saying, 'something's broke and we're going to show you how to fix it,' does not work. What we're using here is a family development approach that uses people's strengths to develop goals and then being there to help them reach their goals. It's clearly a concept that works."

**"Angela helped me to stop and think. When I was working, there always seemed to be more than enough money for the things I needed. Now I was getting \$360 a month in support and my monthly rent was \$400. That just wouldn't work.**

**"I feel in control of things again. The things I learned from those first six sessions made an incredible difference."**

**-Cindy Cole, One-on-One participant**



## Ithaca's Urban 4-H has an International Flavor

The West Village apartment complex in Ithaca has been a magnet for immigrant families for many years and Peggy Robinson knows many of them well.

As family liaison for the Ithaca City School District's English-as-a-Second-Language program, Robinson tries to ease the often-difficult period of adjustment for newly-arrived youngsters from foreign-speaking homes. For all the good work done in schools to acclimate these youth, she says, there is nothing more important for them than the Urban 4-H program run by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County.

"This is one of the best thought out efforts I've seen to create links that work for these kids," Robinson said. "It's invaluable for them to have homework support and field trips to places like the ScienCenter. Many families are without cars, so they can't often do many things we take for granted. The field trips also play a role in expanding vocabulary. Having an experience to hang a new vocabulary word on makes all the difference in learning a new language."

A sliding fee structure allows participants' families to pay what they can, and promotes parental involvement without denying any child access for lack of funds. It is consistent with Extension's philosophy for all its programs in the county.

Shari Haldeman, Urban 4-H Program Manager, credits the Tompkins County Youth Bureau and Abbott Associates, owner of the West Village complex, for enabling the program to offer transportation and important academic, cultural and social support in after-school and summer-camp programs.

"Bruce Abbott gives us space in West Village and provides other support for the program," Haldeman says. "This is something the Abbott family has been doing for 25 years now and it is really remarkable. Bruce says he wants these kids to have the kind of opportunities he did. The same attitude and spirit carry over to Parkside Gardens, where management provides free use of an apartment for after-school programming initiatives."

The Urban 4H program is staffed by college work-study students, volunteers and program graduates. Last year, over 70 college students from abroad were enlisted as volunteers through Cornell's International Students and Scholars Office. "It was a valuable and empowering experience for both kids and the volunteers," Haldeman said. "They learned from each other's cultural backgrounds through dance, storytelling, and art. The program continues as an annual spring semester series that culminates with a delicious international feast."

Haldeman tracks various achievements of the Urban 4-H kids in a daily log. One milestone is the level of participation. "We had a 98% attendance record for our after-school program last year," she said, "Because when someone doesn't show up, one of the other kids goes and knocks on doors."

That is the sort of peer pressure any educator can love.

**Bruce Abbott says his family's connection with Urban 4H actually predates the 25-year-old program itself. It's been 30 years since his father, David M. Abbott, built the 235-unit West Village apartment complex for middle income families on West Hill. David Abbott, known to many Ithacans as the longtime owner of the Woolworth's building, died three years ago.**

**Once the complex was up and occupied, Abbott says, his father noticed that many younger residents were idle after school and in the summer. "Dad came to me and said, 'We've got to do something with these children. They've got nothing to do.'**

**After several attempts to create a youth program at West Village, Abbott connected with 4-H in 1977. "Over the years all the wonderful young people from Extension who have run the program have left their mark. We've had art programs, reading, recreation." Most recently, Abbott provided a neighboring apartment that is now a computer room, and the kitchen allows the youngsters to have a cooking and nutrition program.**

**Bruce Abbott recalls, "My dad had an overriding philosophy. 'I don't care who's renting an apartment,' he said, 'We have an obligation to treat everybody the same.' And that meant the same as we were treated. My father's family was Syrian, my mother's Yugoslavian. Their people came to Ithaca to work in the salt mine. They understood the immigrant experience."**

## Tompkins Towns Shape Rural Youth Activities

"We call it 'the Big Borrow,'" Penny Boynton said with a laugh.

A group of boys and girls descend on the young adult and junior aisles of the main branch of the Tompkins County Library to select a couple of hundred new titles for the county's satellite library in Caroline Town Hall. Boynton manages the Caroline Rural Youth Services program that these youth are taking part in.

"They take it very seriously because we've sort of adopted the reading room as one of our projects," said Boynton, a former Caroline town councilwoman who is also the DeWitt Middle School family liaison. More than 40 middle and high school youth helped raise money for the reading room again last summer by making crafts and selling them on Saturday mornings at the town hall.

The program in Caroline is one of eight administered by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County in partnership with the County Youth Bureau and local municipalities as part of the Rural Youth Services program. Much of the funding comes from federal and state grants, but it is in the localities that the programs take shape.

"The kids in Caroline are really doing it," says Amanda Verba, who is Extension's Community Youth Development Program Coordinator. "They thought up the idea of a crafts market themselves and did their own market analysis of what would sell to generate funds to support local community initiatives such as the reading room. And in addition to raising funds for the reading room, they staff it as volunteers, working with the younger children."

In addition to Caroline, there are programs in Danby, Dryden, Enfield, Groton, Lansing, Trumansburg and a joint Ithaca Town/Cayuga Heights.

"The concept is to create hands-on experiences for youth based on the needs in their community," Verba said. "We talk with guidance counselors, teachers, administrators, parents and, of course, with the youth themselves."

As with all Extension programs, Rural Youth Services is educational in nature and not geared to offer direct counseling or similar services. But Verba says it can be a great tool for the counselors to use. "Our target group is 10 to 14-year-olds, mostly middle schoolers, and we are especially interested in including kids who are at risk," she said.

### Actual activities can run the gamut:

- In Trumansburg, where educators expressed concern about breaking down lunchroom cliques, 40 youth were engaged in guided job experiences. There were also open-mike nights at the Rongovian Embassy.
- In Lansing, 26 middle school girls gather after school to seek healthy alternatives to junk food and adopt an exercise regimen. Another activity there involved a bike rodeo.
- In Groton, where there was no children's summer program, Rural Youth Services stepped in with an eight-week K-5 half-day enrichment camp involving 250 campers and 30 middle-school counselors in training.
- In Enfield, a program in eco-forestry, horticulture, agriculture and woodworking engaged an astounding 98 percent of local youth in this age group.
- In Dryden, teens staged an improv-comedy theater, published a "teen zine", organized a dog walking and grooming business, and supervised kids games at the Etna Community Center.

Boynton says that an important element of the Caroline project involved paying youngsters for their time at the crafts market. "That also makes this a first job for a 14-year-old," she said, adding further incentive to producing goods that would actually sell. Participants produced and carefully tracked inventory sheets and developed a customer profile. If you are planning to sell food on a Saturday morning in Caroline, know this: cookies go, muffins don't.



# More than you

## A Thinking Parents' Approach

The week after attending an Effective Black Parenting (now, Culturally Sensitive Parenting) session on corporal punishment and the "Thinking Parents' Approach" as an alternative, a father of four children from 2 to 9 years old shared a testimonial. He started out by saying that when his kids would play in the house, throw the ball and get rough, he would get the strap and threaten or beat them "depending on what kind of day I'd had."

At Effective Black Parenting (EBP) he learned about the history of corporal punishment — that slave owners forced parents to beat their children in their presence and were beaten themselves if they did not punish the children hard enough. Owners would take slaves and their children to the "big house" to further emphasize their own power and control.

When the class facilitator Wilma Martin noted that in Africa it is not customary for parents to beat their children, this dad related his own experience as a child in Johannesburg, where he was beaten by his father, an uncle, cousins and other male family members when he "acted up." Realizing he was repeating the pattern made him think about the EBP question: "If there are other things you could do, would you be willing to try them?"

The next time his kids were "rough housing," he looked around for the EBP book. "What does the book say?" he asked anxiously. The kids were waiting for him to get the strap. He had already reviewed the "family rules" with the children about playing inside the house. He reminded them that they had all agreed to not play rough in the house, as they would outside. They were shocked and surprised that he didn't get the strap.

Later he reflected on how conscious he has become about parenting his children. EBP was the turning point for him and his wife, who was always distressed about the beatings. Now, they look at how they are parenting together and discuss the effect it has on their family.

"Now I know that when things in the house happen that I don't like," he told the others at EBP, "I need to think about it before I apply discipline. And, I'm willing to keep trying."

*"The idea of promoting local products made sense to me from a health standpoint, a freshness standpoint, an economic standpoint and environmental standpoint."*

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## Extension's Best Crop? Why Farmers, of Course

No, you don't have to be a rocket scientist to be a farmer. It just happens that Dan Konawalow is both. A theoretical and computational chemist, he worked for Dupont and taught at the University of Wisconsin and at Binghamton University before joining the rocketry program Edwards Air Force Base in California. Then, when his wife accepted a position at Cornell's famed Theory Center, Konawalow decided it was time to try something different.

"Farming has always appealed to me," he said. "I grew up in the Depression and we had a very large garden out of economic necessity. My mother would can a hundred quarts of tomatoes, two hundred quarts of pickles. It got us through the winter. When I was in elementary school in Cleveland, there was a farming program. I remember I bought my first clay pot for a nickel and raised radishes, lettuce and carrots. Not bad for a nickel."

"I originally planned to grow wine grapes but after talking to the people at Cooperative Extension and reading a lot, I changed over to raspberries," he said. "We started our little truck farm operation in '94 and '95 with the first big planting in '96. Then when they started producing, we went looking for a market."

That is not exactly how it is supposed to happen, says Monika Roth, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County agricultural agent who is president of the board of the 14-county Finger Lakes Culinary Bounty (FLCB) program. Roth spends part of each winter running start-up workshops for people who want to get into farming.

"Our goal is to grow the farmers," she said. "We ask the question, 'Is this really the lifestyle I want?' We get 30 to 50 people a year, rural landowners, young college grads interested in farming as a lifestyle choice, second-career farmers. We hope that we get people to think about this from a business perspective. One attendee had 40 acres of crops and no market."

One growing effort to find markets is the Finger Lakes Culinary Bounty program. Dan Cerretani, a veteran of the regional dairy industry who is in sales for Ithaca Produce, was an early and ardent proponent of FLCB.

"We put together a network of producers, tourism folks, extension people, small processors and other interested individuals," Cerretani said. "We're just trying to work together to strengthen and promote the marvelous food and agricultural products we produce here. The idea of promoting local products made sense

to me from a health standpoint, a freshness standpoint, an economic standpoint and environmental standpoint. And I think it goes even further. It speaks to the whole culture of our region."

Cerretani acknowledges that it will take time to get every food processor and retailer to "think local," but says the concept is gaining each year, thanks in part to an annual FLCB trade show that showcases local products. Under the program, participating restaurants agree to feature local produce in at least three menu items throughout the year.

Konawalow was able to connect with an area chef and baker, Renee Senne, who has been enthusiastic in supporting producers. "Renee was my first call and my first customer," said Konawalow. He continues to supply raspberries and other produce to Senne's new patisserie in Cayuga Heights as well as 35 other regular customers, including Daño's, Just a Taste, the GreenStar Market and the Narrow Bridge Farm on Snyder Hill, which is part of Cooperative Extension's Community-Supported Agriculture promotion program.

"We are focusing on direct marketing instead of wholesaling," Roth said. "People who traditionally wholesaled have discovered that they can shrink 200 acres to a 20-acre orchard and make five times the money. For some it has meant the ability to continue farming. The market is there because consumers are demanding more local produce for freshness and quality and out of concern over food safety and security issues. And of course we are trying to spur the demand by educating consumers about some of these issues."

And even rocket scientist can learn a thing or two along the way. "We had a very good crop of beans for two or three years," Dan Konawalow said, "but I just about broke my back picking them. It didn't take a genius to figure out that if there was a market for it, you would do better with produce that can command a higher price and takes up the same space. So now, in addition to the berries, I grow high-end stuff like leeks, scallions and shallots."

Not too bad for a kid who ate canned tomatoes to survive the Depression and invested a nickel to raise his first crop.

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center at 615 Willow Avenue, Ithaca

Cooperative Extension also helps support new and existing community groups that share our mission, providing office space and infrastructure as they attain self-sufficiency. The Ithaca Farmer's Market, FoodNet, Housing Options for Seniors Today (HOST) and the Teen Pregnancy & Parenting Program (TP3) are several successful programs that got their start at Extension. Collaborating groups now sharing our umbrella are:



**Community Fly-Fisher (CFF)** was developed by the late Phil Genova, in partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County. Through small classes and an apprentice/mentor approach, CFF merges fly fishing instruction with natural resource education to reach a diverse audience of local young people, including "at risk" youth. CFF today includes six volunteer-run youth fly fishing clubs with over 60 members, an active apprentice program, and a youth-staffed retail store operation. The CFF store and education center at 1015 W. Seneca Street is open 10 to 6, Tuesday-Saturday. For more information, call Shahab Farzanegan at 272-2292 ext. 150 or visit the website at: [www.communityflyfisher.org](http://www.communityflyfisher.org)



## Under our Umbrella...

**Ithaca Children's Garden (ICG)** is a non-profit organization in partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County. Since 1998, ICG has been developing, implementing and evaluating educational programs in Tompkins County that mesh gardening and nature with the arts and science. ICG's goal is to establish a public children's garden at Cass Park that will include interactive learning, play, and growing gardens. The plan for the park and many of ICG's programs are highlighted on its website: [www.cce.cornell.edu/tompkins/ithacachildrengarden](http://www.cce.cornell.edu/tompkins/ithacachildrengarden). A fundraising effort to develop the garden is now underway. For more information, call Leigh MacDonald at 272-2292 ext. 122.

**Multicultural Resource Center (MRC)**, with a long and rich history of independent activity in Tompkins County, recently relocated to our Education Center. MRC provides information, contacts, support, workshops, trainings, books, tapes and celebrations around diversity issues to the people of our county. MRC helps to facilitate the community's work on diversity issues, to empower individuals around these issues, and to celebrate diversity. Call Audrey Cooper at 272-2292 ext. 135.

## Farmers' Markets Sprout Up All Over Tompkins County

First there was the Ithaca Farmers' Market, which opened in 1973 and settled in at the current Steamboat Landing site in 1988. Today the market is home to more than 125 vendors and attracts as many as 5,000 visitors on a busy Saturday. A second Tuesday market opened on Ithaca Commons in 1976 and moved to DeWitt Park in 1985. Then, a Sunday market was added at the Steamboat Landing pavilion in 1990.

For a quarter-century that seemed sufficient for a county this size. Then, three years ago, people decided that was not enough. Predictably, the idea for satellite farmers' markets was born and bred at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County. Staff there brought together the Tompkins County Health Department's Women, Infants and Children's (WIC) program, FoodNet, the Ithaca Farmer's Market, the Tompkins County Office for the Aging, and Extension's own Agriculture, Rural Youth Services, and Food Nutrition Education programs as well as some low-income customers of farmers' markets.

"It started as a pilot program on the lawn of a senior citizens' housing complex in Groton," says Helen Howard, Food and Nutrition Education Program Coordinator. Howard had organized a coalition of agencies interested in maximizing the impacts of the federal Farmers Market Nutrition Program, which provides low-income and elderly residents federal food vouchers toward purchases at the farmers' markets in Ithaca. The problem was that not many of them could get to Steamboat Landing on Saturday or even DeWitt Park on Tuesday.

"Groton seemed perfect," Howard said, "because there is no supermarket there. Seniors could buy fresh corn and squash and beans, produced by area farmers, and, through support from the Groton Youth Commission and Cooperative Extension's Rural Youth Services Program, could hire kids to sell the produce. Their part is important because it's hard to get farmers to stand in a market all day. They need to be in their fields. This way all they have to do is pick the crops. We tried three markets in Groton in 2000 and they were an immediate success. The seniors loved it and so did the kids. The 12-year-old son of a farmer from Groton sold his dad's produce that first year and then decided to plant his own garden and sell his produce the next year."

This past summer, Cooperative Extension programs collaborated with other town and village officials and youth commission members to start new markets in Trumansburg and Danby. Youth gained valuable work experience and 46 local gardeners and growers supported the new outlets for their produce and crafts.





## Head, Heart, Health? Sure, but "Hands" Is Her Favorite H

"The best part of 4-H is not always the end result," Brenda Carpenter said, "but rather it is often the process."

Carpenter, who is a 4-H Program Manager in Tompkins County, was talking about the Evergreens, a 4-H Club in Dryden, but she might have been describing any of three dozen local 4-H clubs across the county.

Nationally, 4-H celebrated its centennial in 2002, and it is more than alive and well here, involving about 400 youth and 100 adult volunteers in a range of activity culminating in the youth-run Tompkins County 4-H Fair.

The program's name derives from the 4-H pledge: "I pledge my **head** to clearer thinking, my **heart** to greater loyalty, my **hands** to larger service, and my **health** to better living for my club, my community, my country and my world."

"4-H clubs in Tompkins County reflect the diversity that enriches our daily lives," said JoAnne Baldini, the county's 4-H Youth Development Program Leader. "Currently about 35 clubs serve youth in locations as diverse as urban housing developments to rural dairy farms. The one thing they all share is the positive learning opportunities they offer young people. The 4-H club concept encourages families to participate together. Nearly all of the clubs are co-ed and involve parents in all aspects of their children's 4-H club experience."

Led by volunteers, each 4-H club chooses the focus of its activities and funds them through bake sales, game booths, or whatever the kids decide. For example, the Evergreens have made the Dryden Head Start reading room the object of their volunteerism, raising funds to purchase books. "These are youth 9-10-11-12 years old who raise funds and then come together to select the books, defend their choices, and ultimately agree on what books they will buy for the younger children to read," Carpenter said. "To see them reach consensus, watching some youngsters change their minds and say, 'I see why your book is better' demonstrates that the process is more important than the books they select. Involving young people in the selection process affords them the chance to make decisions, see their decisions carried out, and make a positive contribution to the community, building skills that many adults are just discovering." That, she says, is what 4-H has always been about.



**"I feel compelled, especially with the smaller Cloverbuds, to offer two or three community service projects during our 4-H year. If we are going to be active participants in our community then children must learn that, even if they are only five to eight years old, opportunities are available for them to serve, help and make a difference in the lives of other people. Our group has done projects involving the Senior Citizen Center, we have helped at Loaves and Fishes, and we made 'care cloths' to send to the rescue workers in New York after the September 11<sup>th</sup> attack. These service projects supply children with motivation to take action when it is needed, not because they are told but because doing so has become part of their nature."**

— Allison Pritts, 4-H Leader, Trumansburg

## Helping Families with Healthy Meals... and More

For some of us, a family visit may conjure up thoughts of gathering at the dinner table for a feast. For others, it can be a struggle to put food on the table, whether due to limited resources, lack of skills, or inexperience.

Cooperative Extension's Food & Nutrition Education program works to improve food safety, diet quality, and wise food shopping skills for limited resource families. And, when Nutrition Teaching Assistant (NTA) Tina Foster began a six-week program with the Cornerstone Recovery Services, a substance and alcohol addiction in-patient treatment facility, she suspected that participants might have more to gain than just learning how to cook easy and low-cost meals.

This series of classes for people in recovery was conducted once per week for 2 hours each. All of the participants were self-referrals, received food stamps, and were motivated to learn about more healthy lifestyles, including diet. Foster and the participants spent time during the first session getting to know one another and planning the next five sessions.

"It's very important for them to feel that we care about what they want to know," says Foster. "By doing this, it means that we don't teach the same things to every group, we meet them where they are. Most in this group eat few fruits and vegetables, so we talk and share information about the importance of fruits and vegetables to persons in recovery."

NTAs reinforce this by preparing foods at each session that are low in fat and always offer fruits and vegetables, while teaching cooking skills needed to prepare nutritious meals for themselves and their families when they return home.

Foster noticed the changes. "The group has become more aware of the importance of nutrition during recovery. They're also learning skills to help them plan their food budgets more realistically, so that they can feed their families better. Part of their therapy requires them to make detailed financial plans for their future."

Food & Nutrition Education workshops reach a diverse audience through partnerships with the Community Justice Center, Foodnet, Challenge Industries, Head Start, Day Care and Child Development Council, Tompkins County Advocacy Center, and others. NTAs also make one-on-one contacts with seniors and youth, pregnant women and seasoned parents, families and individuals who gain skills in food preparation, food safety, food budgeting and shopping, and learn about their nutritional needs.

Foster continues, "Participants in this group have also shared with us favorite family recipes that they have enjoyed at a happier time in their lives. This has helped them to think more about connecting with some family members. Many of the participants are parents. They talk about the foods that we prepare in class and mention planning to share those with their children when they leave the program."

They, too, may have another chance to collect some happy family memories from the supper table.

For more information visit [www.cce.cornell.edu/tompkins](http://www.cce.cornell.edu/tompkins) • phone 607-272-2292 • e-mail [tompkins@cornell.edu](mailto:tompkins@cornell.edu)

### 4-H Youth Development

JoAnne Baldini, 4-H Youth Development Program Leader  
[jb61@cornell.edu](mailto:jb61@cornell.edu)

- 4-H Agriculture & Natural Resources Programs
- 4-H Club Program
- 4-H Exchange Program
- 4-H Family & Consumer Science Programs
- 4-H Public Speaking/Presentation
- 4-H Summer Day Camp
- 4-H Science & Technology Program
- 4-H Teen Ambassadors
- 4-H Urban Program
- Community Fly Fisher
- Ithaca Children's Garden
- Hidden Valley 4-H Residential Summer Camp
- Rural Youth Services
- Reality Check Anti-Tobacco Program

### Family & Community Well-Being

#### Family & Community Development Programs

Nancy B. Potter, Family and Community Development Program Leader, [np20@cornell.edu](mailto:np20@cornell.edu)

- Culturally Sensitive Parenting
- Employment & Education Planning, Ithaca Drug Treatment Court
- Leadership Development for Building Community
- Multicultural Resource Center
- Parent Education Network
- Parenting Skills Workshop Series
- Parents Count
- TC Coalition for Families
- TST Even Start Family Literacy Partnership

#### Consumer & Financial Education Programs

Ann Gifford, Consumer, Financial & Food Safety Program Coordinator, [amg29@cornell.edu](mailto:amg29@cornell.edu)

- Consumer HelpLine
- Healthy Homes
- Lead Poisoning Prevention
- MONEY 2000+
- Monthly Consumer Issues Programs
- One-on-One Financial Education
- Power Partners
- Radon Education

### Nutrition Education Programs

Helen Howard, Regional Nutrition Program Coordinator  
[ehh2@cornell.edu](mailto:ehh2@cornell.edu)

- Community Food Security
- Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)
- Field to Table
- Food Line - for food safety & food preservation issues
- Food Safety Education
- Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program (FSNEP)
- Nutrition Education - for low income families or groups of adults or children

### Agriculture, Horticulture, and the Environment

Monika Roth, Regional Agriculture Program Leader, [mr55@cornell.edu](mailto:mr55@cornell.edu)

#### Area Agriculture Programs

- Finger Lakes Culinary Bounty
- Growing new farms
- Increasing marketing opportunities for farmers
- Landscape Horticulture production, sales & service
- Livestock production & marketing
- Small Fruit & Tree Fruit Crop production & marketing
- Vegetable Crops production & marketing
- Rural Land-Use and Natural Resources Management
- Ag Awareness Education

#### Horticulture Programs

- City of Ithaca/CCE-Tompkins Citizen Pruner Volunteers
- Gardening classes, workshops, tours, publications
- GrowLine gardening information line
- Master Gardener volunteers
- Soil testing and plant/pest diagnostic services
- Community Beautification Program

#### Environmental Education Programs

- Compost Education
- Environmental Appreciation Days
- Environmental workshops, forums, publications
- Environmental Issues Programming

#### Dairy & Field Crops Programs

- Dairy Herd Management
- Farm Business Management
- Farm Estate Planning
- Farmer Discussion Groups
- Graze NY
- Integrated Pest Management
- Nutrient Management for Water Quality Protection

### 2002 Board & Program Committee Members

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For more information...

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or visit the Community Education Center  
 at 615 Willow Avenue, Ithaca