Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Extension is committed to improving the health and well-being of individuals and families throughout Kentucky. Our educational programs focus on making healthy lifestyle choices, nurturing families, embracing life as we age, securing financial stability, promoting healthy homes and communities, accessing nutritious food, and empowering community leaders.

By using effective parenting skills, parents help children become responsible, caring adults and productive members of society. However, limited resources can make it hard for parents to get formal parenting training. In Kentucky, Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Extension through the University of Kentucky provides parenting skills programs. As these programs strengthen families, they also empower our communities. Our goal is to provide educational opportunities to help every family succeed.
Families face many challenges, including poverty, readying children for their school careers, and supporting children who are being harassed or bullied. Some parents also are unable to raise their children and must turn to relatives for help. No matter the challenge, FCS helps families succeed.

**It takes a village**

A growing number of children are being raised by other relatives, especially grandparents. The American Community Survey (ACS) estimates that between 2012 and 2016 in Lewis County, 172 (+/- 74) grandparents lived with and were responsible for their grandchildren, and 160 (+/- 68) grandchildren were being raised by their grandparents. For 100 (+/- 54) of those grandchildren, there was no parent present. Of all children living in all households, 157 (+/- 85) were stepchildren, 49 (+/- 44) were adopted children, and 95 (+/- 97) children were living with other relatives.

**The safety of our children**

For families, child safety is a priority that can be jeopardized in many ways. In Lewis County in 2017, 36.4% (27.4% - 45.4%) of all families with school-aged children lived below poverty, and there were 105 child victims of substantiated abuse or neglect in 2016. In the schools, there were 36 reported incidences of harassment, which included bullying, in the 2016-2017 school year for all school districts in Lewis County.

**Kindergarten readiness**

The first five years of life are vital in a child’s development and success in life. In 2017, Lewis County had an estimated 784 children ages 5 and under. Of those children, 72 were enrolled as preschoolers.

In Lewis County, 30.1% of students entered kindergarten ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences in the 2016-2017 school year.

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**Sources:**
1. Kentucky Cooperative Extension Reporting, FY2018
2. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (factfinder.census.gov)
4. Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Kids Count Data Center (datacenter.kidscount.org)
7. 2017 Early Childhood Profile, Kentucky Center for Statistics (kystats.ky.gov/Reports/Reports)

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For more information and to download this and other county profiles, visit hes.uky.edu/StrongFamilies

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Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability.