IN MERCER COUNTY

BUILDING STRONG FAMILIES
IN MERCER COUNTY

OUR FOCUS
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.

OUR SUCCESS
In 2017-2018, Family and Consumer Sciences Extension made 6,254 contacts with individuals and families in Mercer County.¹

Luci Hockersmith
County Extension Agent,
Family and Consumer Sciences Education

A HEALTHIER KENTUCKY
Parenting skills for family success

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.

2017 estimated population under 18 years old²

- 453 to 2,326
- 2,330 to 5,112
- 3,556 to 5,422
- 5,668 to 10,320
- 10,347 to 171,882

¹ Of counties in Kentucky reported that parents and/or caregivers used community resources.¹
² Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
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 Mercer County, 220 (±108) grandparents lived with and were responsible for their grandchildren, and 329 (±170) grandchildren were being raised by their grandparents. For 144 (±134) of those grandchildren, there was no parent present.2 Of all children living in all households, 471 (±145) were stepchildren, 52 (±51) were adopted children, and 17 (±19) children were living with other relatives.2

The safety of our children
For families, child safety is a priority that can be jeopardized in many ways. In Mercer County in 2017, 19.3% (14.6%-24.0%) of all families with school-aged children lived below poverty3, and there were 107 child victims of substantiated abuse or neglect in 2016.4 In the schools, there were 64 reported incidences of harassment, which included bullying, in the 2016-2017 school year for all school districts in Mercer County.5

Kindergarten readiness
The first five years of life are vital in a child’s development and success in life. In 2017, Mercer County had an estimated 1,194 children ages 5 and under6. Of those children, 127 were enrolled as preschoolers.7 In Mercer County, 39.7% of students entered kindergarten ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences in the 2016-2017 school year.7

In Kentucky, as a result of FCS Extension…

8,270 parents and/or caregivers reported improved personal strengths, communication and life skills that strengthen families.1

5,690 individuals reported behaviors that fostered the optimal development of children and youth.1

5,623 parents and/or caregivers reported practicing parental leadership skills.1

Sources:
1 Kentucky Cooperative Extension Reporting, FY2018
2 American Community Survey
5-Year Estimates (factfinder.census.gov)
3 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau (census.gov/programs-surveys/saipe.html)
4 Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Kids Count Data Center (datacenter.kidscount.org)
6 2017 Early Childhood Profile, Kentucky Center for Statistics (kystats.ky.gov/Reports/Reports)
7 2016-2017 Kentucky School Report Card, Kentucky Dept. of Education. (Data from school districts were combined to make county total.) (applications.education.ky.gov/src)