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.

In 2017-2018, Family and Consumer Sciences Extension made 3,297 contacts with individuals and families in Rowan County.

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 Rowan County, 320 (+/- 160) grandparents lived with and were responsible for their grandchildren, and 247 (+/-153) grandchildren were being raised by their grandparents. For 174 (+/- 120) of those grandchildren, there was no parent present. Of all children living in all households, 372 (+/- 215) were stepchildren, 158 (+/- 132) were adopted children, and 91 (+/- 83) 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 Rowan County in 2017, 27.2% (20.7%-33.7%) of all families with school-aged children lived below poverty, and there were 206 child victims of substantiated abuse or neglect in 2016. In the schools, there were 9 reported incidences of harassment, which included bullying, in the 2016-2017 school year for all school districts in Rowan County.5

> Kindergarten readiness
The first five years of life are vital in a child’s development and success in life. In 2017, Rowan County had an estimated 1,332 children ages 5 and under. Of those children, 176 were enrolled as preschoolers. In Rowan County, 37.9% of students entered kindergarten ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences in the 2016-2017 school year.