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Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Jeffrey C. Silvertooth, Associate Dean & Director, Economic Development & Extension, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, The University of Arizona.

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Cooperative Extension, the outreach arm of the University of Arizona, brings the university to the people.

The faculty and staff in the Pinal County Extension office are part of a non-formal education network bringing research-based information into communities to help people improve their lives.

Cooperative Extension is committed to delivering high-quality, relevant educational programs and information to Pinal County citizens and communities.

Welcome to this, our latest issue of our Pinal County Cooperative Extension newsletter. Within the following pages, you will find highlighted several key programs that our team of professionals are now delivering to stakeholders throughout the area. We hope that you will enjoy reading about them.

Cooperative Extension is a multifaceted and locally-based source of tried and true information that can help people address important issues in their lives. Our programs in agriculture and natural resources; family, consumer, and health sciences; and 4-H youth development have long standing and excellent track records in helping people help themselves. We invite you to take a look at our programs and come see how you can become a part of our Extension family.

- Rick Gibson

Rick Gibson



THE UNIVERSITY
OF ARIZONA

AZ HEALTH ZONE



By Lori Lieder, Program Coordinator Sr.

The SNAP-Ed program in Arizona has gone by a variety of names over the last few years, including Arizona SNAP-Ed, the Arizona Nutrition Network (UANN), and Champions for Change. This made it difficult to communicate the program to partners and across implementing agencies and counties. Additionally, previous names emphasized only the nutrition aspects of the program, neglecting the physical activity efforts.

AZ Health Zone is the new name for the education component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed). **AZ Health Zone** streamlines programs across the state and makes it easier for everyone to recognize the program and the efforts taking place within communities.

SNAP-Ed is a nutrition and physical activity education grant-funded program designed to reach people who receive, or are eligible to receive, SNAP benefits (formerly known as Food Stamps benefits). The program is sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The goal of the program is to teach people about good nutrition and how to make their food dollars stretch further. SNAP-Ed participants also learn to be physically active.

AZ Health Zone is administered through the Arizona Department of Health, who then awards grants to local implementing agencies, such as health departments, university extension programs, and local non-profits.

In Pinal County, the program is run by the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, 820 E. Cottonwood Lane, Casa Grande.

AZ Health Zone has several programs that help families make healthy food choices. You can get tips and recipes online at azhealthzone.org.

SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM



By Lori Lieder, Program Coordinator Sr.

WHAT IS THE PROGRAM ABOUT?

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is provided for families with low-income. It is a huge help during the summer when children and teens are out of school, and the SFSP is able to provide free healthy meals during the summer months when school is not in session.

WHO DOES THE PROGRAM SERVE?

The program is for youth ages 18 and under.

WHERE IS THIS PROGRAM LOCATED?

This program can be located anywhere in your area where your child will receive meals in a safe supervised environment.

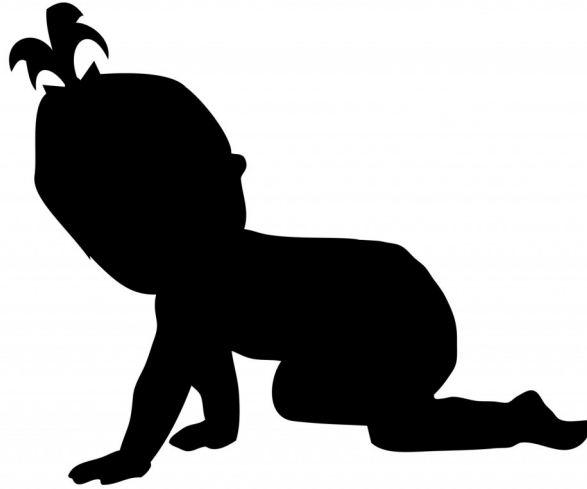
- Schools
- Parks
- Community Centers
- Health Clinics
- Hospitals
- Apartment Complexes
- Churches

Go to <https://eatwellbewell.org/summerfood/> for a location

Volunteering for the Summer Food Service Program!

Not only does SFSP provide free meals for children with low-income, but they also provide activities to keep the children physically and mentally active and out of trouble! Summer Food Service Program also has volunteer opportunities. Volunteers help serve meals, along with organizing fun and learning activities for both the kids and teens. If teens do not want to participate in the activities that are provided, they may also be given responsibilities to help out with the program. There's a WIN, WIN!

Mental Health in Infants and Toddlers



By Tamara Mccarville, Program Assistant

"Infant- early childhood mental health is the developing capacity of the child from birth to three to: experience, regulate, and express emotions; form close and secure interpersonal relationships; and explore the environment and learn- all in the context of family, community, and cultural expectations for young children. Infant- early childhood mental health is synonymous with healthy social and emotional development." Zero to Three, 2001

Children, like adults, struggle with difficult experiences and feelings. How do we help them cope with losing a love one, divorce, moving to a new home, entering pre-school/childcare, gaining a new sibling and various situations that cause confusion and sorrow?

Preschool expulsion rates are more than three times the expulsion rates of students in k-12th grade. (<http://thehill.com/opinion/op-ed.228845-suspensions-and-expulsions-in-preschool>). It's time we start addressing the needs of our tiniest children.

What can parents do?

Starting in the earliest months, tune in to babies' cues—their sounds, facial expressions, and gestures—and respond sensitively, which lets babies know their feelings are recognized and important. This might mean stopping a tickling game with a 4-month-old when she arches her back and looks away, signaling she needs a break, or taking a 9-month-old to the window to wave good-bye to Mom when she is sad to see her leave for work.

Mental Health in Infants and Toddlers



Label and help toddlers cope with feelings.

Emotions like anger, sadness, frustration, and disappointment can be overwhelming for young children. Naming these feelings is the first step in helping children learn to identify them, and it communicates to children that these feelings are normal. This might mean acknowledging an 18-month-old's anger at having to leave the playground as you help him into the car seat; validating a 2-year-old's frustration at his block tower falling again and again; or empathizing with a 3-year-old's sadness that his grandparents are leaving after a long visit.

Don't fear the feelings.

Feelings are not the problem. It's what we do—or don't do—with them that can be problematic. So listen openly and calmly when your child shares difficult feelings. When you ask about and acknowledge feelings, you are sending the important message that feelings are valued and important. Recognizing and naming feelings is the first step toward learning to manage them in healthy, acceptable ways over time.

Avoid minimizing or talking children out of their feelings.

This is a natural reaction—we just want to make the bad feelings go away. *Don't be sad. You'll see Joey another day.* But feelings don't go away, they need to be expressed one way or another. Acknowledging a child's strong feelings opens the door to helping her learn how to cope with them. *You are sad Joey has to leave. You love playing with him. Let's go to the window to wave good-bye and make a plan to see him again soon.* When feelings are minimized or ignored, they often get expressed through aggressive words and actions, or by turning them inward, which can ultimately make children anxious or depressed.

Mental Health in Infants and Toddlers

Teach tools for coping.

If your 18-month-old is angry that iPad time is over, guide her to stamp her feet as hard as she can or to draw how angry she is with a red crayon. Help a 2-year-old who is frustrated at not being able to get the ball into the basket brainstorm other ways to solve the problem. Take a 3-year-old who is fearful about starting a new school to visit the classroom beforehand—meet the teachers and play on the playground—so that the unfamiliar can become familiar.

The fact is that our children's emotional reactions trigger our own emotional reactions, which can lead to a knee-jerk need to rescue or "fix" whatever is causing our child distress. But it's important that we manage our own feelings and avoid this temptation, as it creates a missed opportunity to help children learn strong coping skills. Instead, see these experiences as teachable moments to help your child learn to name and manage the emotions—positive and negative—that add depth and color to our lives. Show your child that a full, rich life means experiencing both the ups and the downs. Feelings are not "good" or "bad"—they just are. You are your child's guide in sharing the joys and coping with the challenges. And it starts on day one.

There are ways to identify mental health problems in young children, and to effectively treat them. At the University of Arizona, Cooperative Extension, we offer free developmental screenings that can help you learn more about your child's development along with identifying his social-emotional challenges.

Call the University of Arizona, Cooperative Extension, Pinal Developmental Screening Program at (520)-836-4651 for a FREE appointment or complete the screening online at:

English- <https://asqonline.com/familyc426b>

Spanish- <https://asqonline.com/family/32a8f3>

Books for babies/toddlers on dealing with feelings:

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/7-books-about-feelings-for-babies-and-toddlers>

Resources for article:

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/294-first-feelings-the-foundation-of-healthy-development-starting-from-birth>

What's going on in the ASPIRE Program!



By Sally Peoples, Program Coordinator Sr.

“Achieving Success by Promoting Readiness for Education and Employment” is what ASPIRE stands for, and what our portion of the program is all about! This program is based out of the Governor’s Office of Youth, Faith, and Family and encompasses multiple interventions to help youth with disabilities achieve greater success in life. The university’s role of delivering Self

There are six individual trainings, conducted in a series, that involve topics such as decision making, communication skills, and goal setting. At this point, we are happy to say that a series has been completed in virtually every area of the state that has youth enrolled in the ASPIRE Program.

After reaching the most active, involved families in the program, it was decided to create a ‘stand-alone’ training that encompassed new material for those participants that wanted to attend more trainings... while also being able to reach less active participants by enticing them to a one evening event.

For this individual training, the topics of “Maturity and Relationship Building” was chosen based on common themes that developed and were discussed in past lessons. It is with great enthusiasm that we look forward to rolling out this new ‘stand-alone’ training in the near future!

AmeriCorps NCCC

By Esther Turner, Program Coordinator Sr.

AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps) is committed to strengthen communities and develop leaders through team based national and community service, by assisting community and faith-based based organizations, national nonprofits, schools, local municipalities, national and state parks, and Indian tribes. Teams, comprised of 8-10 members, complete multiple projects that address essential community needs throughout the United States.



From left: Team Leader Walter, Angellyna, Kate, Julie, Quentarius, John, Carter

Pinal County had the honor of hosting Team Sun 7 for the past 7 weeks. Among the significant impacts they made are: the foundation for an outdoor kitchen area for the Eloy Veterans Center was established; a storage shed was disassembled, moved, and re-assembled for the Veterans Community Garden; an estimated 200 feet of trail was built up the side of a mountain, over 300 plants and trees were planted, and the foundation for a waterfall was installed at the Central Arizona College Arboretum; deep cleaning of public facilities in City of Coolidge was completed; over 700 feet of trails were maintained at the Boyce Thompson Arboretum, with at least 150 wheelbarrows of debris hauled off the mountain; installed six 20-foot garden beds at Cholla Elementary School, for garden education programming; helped with maintenance (clearing weeds and debris) at the Eloy Veterans Community Garden; they sanded and varnished the entrance gazebo at the Methodist Church (their lodging site) ; assembled 40 fence panels, to create an education maze for the Ag-Ventures Agricultural-Literacy program; completed solar panel maintenance project; assisted in judging and displaying over 1,400 building exhibits at the Pinal County Fair, helped set up and clean up for various youth contests (such as the rocketry contest, shooting sports, dog show, rabbit show, etc.), helped during the clean-up and release of exhibits at the end of the fair, and helped set up various fair event venues; and they prepared for painting, painted, removed debris, and completed external landscape projects at the Eloy Lions Club.

We greatly appreciate the work that this amazing team completed in their time here. They are now off to Taos, New Mexico, to help with building new homes for the homeless community. For more information about AmeriCorps, visit www.nationalservice.gov.

International Women's Day



Faith Schwartz, Information Specialist with the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Administration, invited our office to take part in International Women's Day on March 8th. All the women present at both our offices gathered to take a picture and represent Pinal County Extension.

[International Women's Day \(March 8\) is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women.](#)

Pictured: The women of Pinal County Cooperative Extension.



4-H Youth Development

Pinal County 4-H Website

By Maria Melendez, Administrative Assistant

4-H gives youth that extra edge for life success by offering numerous opportunities to develop leadership, responsibility, citizenship, and other life skills. 4-H helps develop competent, caring, and actively engaged citizens who strengthen Arizona communities. Through our research-based curriculum and university ties, 4-H opens a world of possibilities to youth and their parents who want to explore their interests — making the best better!

How do I get started?

Decide what hobbies/activities your child is interested in and wants to learn more about.

Narrow your decision to realistic activities for their age, household setting (it may not be feasible to raise a dog if you live in an apartment), and interests of your child.

Now that you have some realistic activities (projects as they are called in 4-H), check out our website for a description of those projects.

Like us on Facebook!

Communication is important when it comes to 4-H. Please like Pinal County 4-H on Facebook to keep up to date on what is going on in our program.

We do updates (including weather cancellations), photo sharing, and much more will happen on our Facebook site.

Don't miss out on attending the

Pinal County 4-H Camp

Located near Williams, Arizona, 4-H Camp is a residential camp facility in an outdoor educational environment. It is located in the cool pines surrounded by a wooded setting in the Kaibab National Forest, approximately 224 miles away from the Pinal County 4-H office in Casa Grande, Arizona.

Quality adult and teen leadership is included during five fun-filled days of outdoor discovery activities, water adventures, camp fires, songs, recreation, arts & crafts, hiking, exploring, archery, and hunter education.

Pinal County 4-H encourages all 4-H members to attend our residential summer camp. Usually, there are approximately 50 – 75 youth in attendance during the week-long camp for 9 – 13 year old members. Counselors range between 14 to 18 years of age.



Stanfield Elementary School's Great Achievement



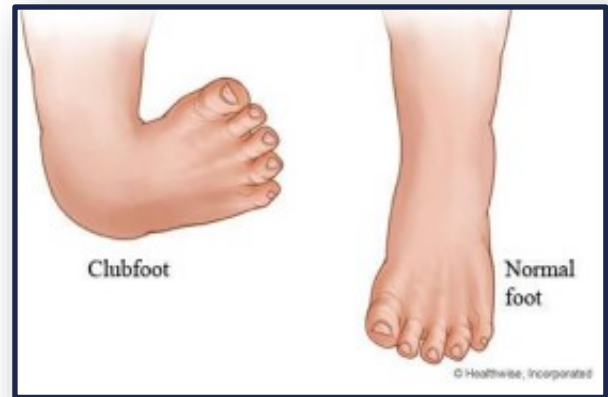
By Ana Benitez, Instructional Specialist

Stanfield Elementary School has worked hard towards keeping their students healthy, by implementing their Local Wellness Policy (LWP) every day. They believe in giving their students the opportunity to succeed, and it all begins one step at a time. Stanfield Elementary School has earned the highest points ever awarded in the state of Arizona by the AZ Health Zone Evaluation Team, due to their strong Local Wellness Policy. Because of their great effort and success, towards creating a healthy environment for their students and staff, Alliance for a Healthier Generation has awarded Stanfield Elementary School a \$1,000 gift card sponsored by Target. Congratulations Stanfield Elementary School, in your great achievement!

Club Foot

By Janet Jepson, Health Educator

Club foot is a birth deformity in which a child's foot points downward and twists inward and it can affect one foot or two. Clubfoot is one of the most common birth defects, occurring in an estimated 4,000 births per year. It affects more boys than girls. The condition isn't painful at first. But left untreated, the child will suffer from chronic pain and will probably have trouble walking. Doctors think that clubfoot is caused by a mix of genetics and environmental factors (such as drug use or cigarette smoking). The good news is that treatment for clubfoot is highly successful, especially when therapy starts right after birth. There are two highly successful nonsurgical treatments; one involving positioning and casting on a weekly basis and the other involving daily manipulation and taping. Once the foot has been correctly positioned the child will need to wear braces at night for two to three years. When nonsurgical treatments are not effective, surgical lengthening of the tendons and adjusting the joints in the foot and ankle can be done to correct the deformity. After surgery, special shoes or a brace will need to be worn for about a year. Children who are treated for clubfoot usually have a nearly normal foot. They are able to wear ordinary shoes, run and play sports-----just like any other child.



Strengthening Families Program



By Esther Turner, Program Coordinator Sr.

The Strengthening Families Program (SFP) is a 7-week evidence based parent education program for high-risk and general population families with children ages 3-5. SFP is found to significantly improve parenting skills and family relationships, reduce problem behaviors, delinquency and alcohol and drug abuse in children and to improve social competencies and school performance. Child maltreatment also decreases as parents strengthen bonds with their children and learn more effective parenting skills.

After a family style meal, parents attend a class while the 3-5 year olds have their own lesson covering the same topic as the parent class. At the end of the evening, parents and children come together to practice the new skills they have learned.

Our next session will be held in Coolidge on Tuesday and Thursday nights from 5:30-7:30pm. Classes begin Tuesday, May 15th and continue through June 28.

MAC Farm Ag-Ventures



By Victor Jimenez, 4-H Youth Development Agent

Spring is upon us and the Maricopa Agricultural Center is gearing up for its Garden Ag-Venture programs where students of all ages can come to the farm for educational field trips related to Ag-Literacy. Please let your teachers know that they are encouraged to help their students learn from where their food and fiber comes.

For reservations contact: Victor Jimenez at (520) 374-6216 or e-mail at vicjimenez@yahoo.com

Upcoming Events

Farming with Beneficial Insects for Pest Control

April 17, 2018 9:00am

This is a full-day Conservation Biological Control short course. Topics include supporting beneficial insects that provide pest control, conservation biological control, integrating beneficial insects back into cropping systems. Participants will learn how common farm practices can impact beneficial insects and how to assess and create farm habitat for beneficial insects

When: Tuesday April 17, 2018, 9AM - 4PM

Where: Tucson Plant Materials Center 3241 N Romero Rd Tucson, AZ 85705

Who: Growers, PCAs, Ag industry and government representatives, and anyone interested in beneficial insects & biocontrol in Arizona

Family Style Meals

Saturday, April 24th from 9 – 11 am.

Family Style Meals are served from one large bowl or pitcher located in the middle of the table. Serving "Family Style Meals" encourages and supports social, emotional, gross & fine motor skill development.

Strengthening Families Courses begin Tuesday, May 15th and run through June 28th.

The Strengthening Families Program (SFP) is a 7-week evidence based parent education program for high-risk and general population families with children ages 3-5. The next session will run in Coolidge.

FIND US. LIKE US. FOLLOW US.

Facebook Pages:

- [Pinal County Garden and Landscape Program](#)
- [Maricopa Master Gardeners](#)
- [Pinal County 4-H](#)
- [Child Care Health Consultation for Pinal County, AZ](#)
- [Sensory & Developmental Screening](#)

Webpage: [CALS, Pinal County](#)

Twitter: [@RickGibson4](#)

Blog: [ricksgardenspot.blogspot.com](#)



Richard D. Gibson, County Extension Director

Cathy L. Martinez, Family Consumer Health Science Agent

Blase Evancho, Field Crops Systems Assistant in Extension

Misti Todd, 4-H Youth Development Program Coordinator

Victor Jimenez, 4-H Youth Development Agent

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vicjimenez@yahoo.com

4-H provides educational opportunities for youth to become capable and contributing members of a global community. Children, ages 5-19, learn about healthy lifestyles, animals, plant sciences, and leadership.

Contact: Misti Todd at (520) 836-5221, x.213 or mltodd@email.arizona.edu

Agronomic Field Crops uses research and education efforts to work to improve field crop productivity and global food and fiber supply, farm economic viability, and protecting the environment.

Contact: Rick Gibson at (520) 836-5221, x.227 or gibsonrd@cals.arizona.edu

ASPIRE (Achieving Success by Promoting Readiness for Education and Employment) is a program designed to help foster independence in youths with disabilities between the ages of 14-16, and ultimately improve their educational and employment opportunities.

Contact: Sally Peoples at (520) 836-5221, x.224 or speoples@cals.arizona.edu

Child Care Health Consultations (CCHC) develops relationships with childcare facilities to provide training to staff that will improve their knowledge and practice in the childcare setting.

Contact: Janet Jepsen at (520) 836-4651 or janetj@cals.arizona.edu

Choose Health Action Teen (CHAT) is designed to recruit teens to teach younger children the benefits of healthy eating and active living. Teens also participate in community service events.

Contact: Esmeralda Castillo at (520) 836-5221 or ecastill@cals.arizona.edu

Developmental Program reaches out to families with children, ages 0-5, to screen for early developmental milestones such as gross and fine motor skills, communication, personal-social skills, and problem-solving capacities.

Contact: Esther Turner at (520) 836-5221, x.211 or eturner@cals.arizona.edu

Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) is a nutrition education class designed to assist limited resource families in eating smart and being active and in acquiring the knowledge, skills, and behavioral changes necessary to contribute to their personal development and the improvement of the total family diet, nutritional and physical well-being.

Contact: Esmeralda Castillo at (520) 836-5221 or ecastill@cals.arizona.edu

First Smiles is an oral health program that provides preventative oral health education, oral screening, referral to dentists for children birth to age five and pregnant women; and fluoride varnishing for children with emergent teeth up to age five.

Contact: Greeta Mills at (520) 836-4651 or gmills@email.arizona.edu

MAC (Maricopa Agricultural Center) Farm Ag-Ventures educational programs include a combination of videos, educational presenters, hands-on learning experiences and tractor-trailer rides around their 2,200 acre farm for a close-up view of what makes a working farm operate.

Contact: Victor Jimenez at (520) 374-6216 or vicjimenez@yahoo.com

Master Gardener Program trains volunteers to provide up-to-date, locally tested practical information to those desiring to improve the quality and effectiveness of desert gardens and landscapes.

Contact: Rick Gibson at (520) 836-5221, x.227 or gibsonrd@cals.arizona.edu

Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) is a program designed to teach educators how to better integrate water education, water conservation, and best management practices for water use into their curriculums.

Contact: Chuck Dugan at (520) 836-5221, x.210 or cltd1@email.arizona.edu

Sensory Program provides free screenings of children, ages 0-5, for vision and hearing impairments that could affect developmental growth.

Contact: Esther Turner at (520) 836-5221, x.211 or eturner@cals.arizona.edu

Soil Fertility Research and Education is a program that focuses on the development of research and education on soil testing, nutrient management, and fertilizer and animal waste best management practices.

Contact: Rick Gibson at (520) 836-5221, x.227 or gibsonrd@cals.arizona.edu

Strengthening Families Program is a parenting and family strengthening program for families with children ages 3-5, that focuses on strengthening parental bonds with their children and learning more effective parenting skills.

Contact: Esther Turner at (520) 836-5221, x.211 or eturner@cals.arizona.edu

AZ Health Zone Cooperative Extension Pinal County is a program designed to influence healthy eating and active living in a positive way that promotes health and reduces disease among all people living in Arizona.

Contact: Lori Lieder at (520) 836-5221, x.216 or llieder@cals.arizona.edu