Welcome to this, our August edition of the Pinal County Cooperative Extension newsletter. We hope that the articles here will give you a peek into the wide variety of educational programs available from our faculty and staff. With school starting and people coming back from summer vacations, our stakeholders are gearing up for a new program year. From 4-H registration, to garden and landscape seasons, to family and personal enrichment, there is much happening. If something looks interesting to you, why not come and let us share with you.

Sincerely,

Rick Gibson

County Extension Director
Finding the most nutritious foods at the supermarket can be a challenge for even the smartest shopper! Below are some tips and tools to guide you through the grocery store so you can find the most nutritious options of your favorite foods quickly and easily.

### Produce

- When it comes to snack time for your family, healthier is always better! Compare the price of a bag of apples to the price of a bag of cookies. The cost is about the same, but the nutritional value is very different.
- Buy fresh veggies and fruits in season. Your family will get all those important vitamins and fiber while getting the best value for your food dollar.
- For fast and easy healthy snacks, take advantage of the many vegetables and fruits that are cleaned, cut and packaged into individual serving bags. Just grab and go!
- Remember: Vegetables and fruits don’t have to be eaten alone. For an extra boost of calcium, try dipping them in low-fat vanilla or fruited yogurt.

### Dairy

- When buying milk, go for the low-fat varieties. All milk has the key nutrients calcium and Vitamin D, but nonfat and 1% contains the least amount of fat.
- To save on calories and fat, look for cheese and sour cream that is made with 1% or nonfat milk. Try low fat “sharp cheddar” cheese in your recipes for lots of flavor, and mozzarella cheese sticks for a healthy snack.
- If you choose to use margarine instead of butter, pick margarines that do not contain trans fats. A diet high in this type of fat can increase your risk for heart disease.

“Research suggests that eating fish rich in omega-3’s may reduce your risk for heart disease...”
Canned Foods & Juice

- Purchase canned fruits packed in their own juices rather than heavy syrup. Fruits are naturally sweet and we don’t need the extra sugar!
- Canned vegetables and soups are typically high in sodium. Choose the ones that are low in sodium or “salt-free”. You can spic it up the way you like it at home.
- Fruit juices are a healthy way to increase your fruit servings for the day. When purchasing fruit juice, make sure that it’s labeled “100 % FRUIT JUICE”, and not labeled “cocktail”, “punch”, “drink” or “ade”. That way

Fish, Meat & Poultry

- For leaner cuts of beef and pork, look for “round” or “loin” in the name such as tenderloin, sirloin, top round, or eye of round.
- Select fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids such as salmon, trout, and herring. Research suggests that eating fish rich in omega-3’s may reduce your risk for heart disease.
- Liver and other organ meats are high in cholesterol and thus should be used sparingly.

Frozen Food

- Frozen fruits and vegetables are packed with lots of vitamins and minerals. Make it a habit to purchase those that are packaged in their most natural form – without added cream sauce or sugar.
- Frozen yogurt, sherbet, sorbet, and 100% fruit bars are a healthy snack alternative to ice cream and high fat chocolate frozen bars.
- To keep your frozen meals healthy, look for those that are 3 grams or less of fat and less than 800 mg of sodium per serving.
Pasta, Rice & Grains

- “Refined grains” have been milled, a process that removes the bran, germ, and most of the fiber. Examples of refined grains include white bread, white pasta, white flour, and white rice.

- Choosing products that are made with “whole wheat” or “whole grains” is a much healthier way to go! To make sure you are getting a “whole grain”, read the ingredient label. (Don’t be fooled by breads that just say “wheat”. To darken the color, food manufacturers simply add molasses or caramel color to white flour).

- If you’re watching the amount of sugar your family consumes, individually packaged oatmeal may not be the smartest choice. Not to mention, the price of a box of individually packaged oatmeal can cost two times as much as a large container of oatmeal.

Snack Food

- Graham crackers, fig bars, gingersnaps, and vanilla wafers are typically lower in fat than regular cookies. Avoid sweets that contain trans fats and you’re heart will thank you!

- Individualized packages of raisins and nuts are a super healthy snack. They provide your body with energy and important anti-aging vitamins and minerals.

- Remember: Potato chips should not be counted as a vegetable serving! When chips are made, they fry the potatoes in lots of oil and most of the healthy vitamins are lost.
The 2015 agricultural production year is in full swing and things are growing countywide. With the spring grain crop now harvested and in the storage bins, the alfalfa and field corn seasons in full swing, and an expected good cotton harvest later this fall, agriculture field crop producers are adding value to the overall economic well being of the area.

Currently, cotton producers are working hard to prevent cotton "cut out," a serious problem when it occurs too early in the season. Cut out in a cotton plant occurs when the plant begins to slow its growth towards the end of the growing season. It is a normal condition when it is time to harvest. However, when this happens before there is room to set enough fruit to provide a full crop, the farmer ends up with a short cotton harvest. Average yields can normally fall between 2.5 and 3.5 bales of cotton per acre. A field of cotton plants that do not have room to set a full crop may average less. A smaller yield may mean a smaller profit, or no profit at all. Thus, farmers try to postpone cut out until the end of the season which normally falls somewhere in September or October depending upon the weather.

Cut out can be recognized when the colorful cotton flowers begin to show up on the top of the plant. An actively growing field will most usually be a uniform green across the top canopy of the plant with flowers showing only down among the leaves. When flowers begin to show up on the top of the plant, it is a sure sign that cut out is occurring.

Cut out can be delayed by carefully managing water and fertilization. Too much of a good thing will mean that the plant will spend its time and energy growing without producing the cotton-producing fruit. Too little and cut out can occur. It takes a lot of skill to be a good farmer. When a good crop comes in, we should give them a well deserved round of applause because of the effort it takes, and the dollars that they bring into local coffers. So, next time you are driving by a cotton field, take a look at the top of the canopy and see if cut out has occurred.
Outdoor play equipment provides children with a wealth of “play” opportunities. *Active play* offers a child a chance to participate in large muscle activities such as climbing, swinging, running, crawling, skipping and lifting. This type of physical activity helps with building strong muscles and reducing childhood obesity. *Dramatic play* offers a child a chance to be creative and to play in cooperation with others. This type of activity helps children explore their imaginations and builds friendships. *Quiet play* offers a child an opportunity to listen and reflect on their surroundings. This type of activity provides the child with a chance to observe nature and the many mysteries it has to explore. Playing outdoors in a safe, well maintained play area will help our children develop physically, mentally and socially.
Teen Outreach Program

What is the Teen Outreach Program?

The Teen Outreach Program (TOP) is an evidence-based youth development program that is designed for youth ages 12–17 and focuses on reducing rates of school failure, school suspension, and teen pregnancy.

Evidence shows that teens that complete the TOP experience are:

- 52% lower risk of school suspension
- 60% lower risk of course failure
- 53% lower risk of pregnancy
- 60% lower risk of school dropout

TOP uses educational peer group meetings, community service learning, and positive adult guidance and support to produce:

- Life skills
- Healthy Behaviors
- Sense of Purpose

Get involved today!

My name is Ashley Tapia, I am new to University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Program, Pinal County. I am the Program Coordinator for the Teen Outreach Program. My background is in Education, and my passion is helping to serve our community. I am so excited to be joining this team and helping to educate and give guidance in any way possible.

To contact me for more information, I can be reached at:

ashleytapia@email.arizona.edu
Desk: 520-836-5221 Ext 217
Pinal County has got things growing on!

By Jim Jepsen

Wow! Can you say garden. We are making gardens grow all over Pinal County. In a little over a year, I along with my trusty sidekick Everett Rhodes now retired, have enhanced and created flourishing school and community gardens. These gardens are the Seeds of Hope Community Garden, Oracle Mt. Vista Elementary School Garden, Florence Community Garden, Stanfield Elementary School Garden, and the Eloy Community Garden. I along with Shanna Murphree, one of our county nutritionists, have coined the term Learning gardens. It has amazed me how many know about gardens, but so little about gardening. That’s where I come in. No matter what we are doing in the garden all of the participants are learning from instructional demonstrations and real hands-on involvement. For the sake of space in the newsletter, I am only going to hi-lite one or two gardens at a time. And, with all of the interest and potential new gardens to come, there will be plenty to write about in the future.

The first garden to focus on is the Seeds of Hope Community Learning Garden which was already in process prior to my arrival. All though we have limited space, it has gone from fledgling to full bore producing garden. Active gardeners consist of the Kohl’s Cares for Kids Associates in Action group, a community nurse and his wife, a few retirees, and others along with a demonstration garden installed by the University of Arizona Pinal County Cooperative Extension Service. We are nearing the end of our second growing season and vegetables and fruits have been flying out of there.

My position as Program Coordinator Senior which is fully funded through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education, (SNAP-Ed), is a relatively new one. My purpose is to help bring knowledge of gardening to those folks in approved sites who want to learn and have a good time doing it. The Seeds of Hope Community Garden is a perfect spot to show potential gardeners, and perhaps a few seasoned ones, that there are many ways to produce healthy vegetables and fruits in a community setting or in a home garden. Part of the demonstration garden consists of ten traditional in-ground beds. These beds were installed using a double dig method. This is where you designate where the new bed(s) are going to be and then excavate. A shovel can be used, but thank goodness for our tiller. The soil is first moistened and then tilled, and then the shovel comes in handy. After the first layer of soil has been loosened by the tiller and removed, the tiller is again put into action. Upon completion of the second pass, the loose soil is physically removed from the trench. At this point the seedbed looks like a cavernous trench, although not for long. Now comes the “lasagna.” Depending on soil conditions, gypsum or sulfur is our first ingredient. Composted manure, an L3 soil (which is a secret recipe concocted by one of our local nurseries, The Avocado) is then added, excavated soil, compost, blood and bone meal, grass clippings, and whatever else we deem necessary are added. After everything is in, the tiller is put back to work to combine the mixture. Once complete, we layer again and mix, layer again and mix until we have a nice fluffy seed bed that is, as Everett would say, “just screaming to be planted.”

Other projects within the garden are various types of raised gardens. I like to scrounge around and find things to repurpose. Four of our raised beds consist of old reclaimed mobile home bathtubs that were donated to us by a salvage yard. These tubs are approximately four feet by four feet. Even though they had the initial drain as a start for overall drainage, we had to drill a number of other holes in the preformed plastic tubs for added drainage. The tubs were then filled with a combination of those ingredients used in our double dig lasagna method. The one product that we did use was vermiculite to help hold in the water since we are not sure how hot the tubs may get due to the fact that the bottom is only buried about one foot in the ground. Corn, okra, and melons are currently being grown in the tubs.
Many years back, the Maricopa Ag Center, Big MAC, was conducting aquaponics research with Tilapia. Since that research ceased, I was able to obtain six of the fiberglass fish holding containers that have been in storage at the farm. The farm manager was generous enough to give them to me as long as he was assured that they were being put to good use. These containers are around two feet by two feet and four feet deep. Holes were drilled into the bottoms and each container was buried about two feet in the ground. Once again the same soil formula was used and various varieties of squash were planted.

In the middle of the Seeds of Hope Community Garden is a structure that is known as a keyhole garden. This concept comes from the arid regions of Africa where every drop of water is precious and is used. Google it, it is quite interesting. Once the structure and access to the center of the garden is complete, it gives the appearance of a keyhole. Our structure is constructed of uniform building blocks, but any type of material will do when you are imaginative and resourceful. The perimeter is rounded and stacked three feet or so, depending on the situation, into the shape of a cone. The center of the garden consists of an active compost pit. To do this, we used galvanized hardware cloth, approximately four feet tall, curled together to have an opening top to bottom around one and a half feet and a foot or so higher than the top of the garden. We then created a water source using a pvc line that comes up through the center of the pit. The pit was then filled with shredded cardboard, grass clippings, composted manure, and other types of organic materials. The idea is that when the compost pit becomes active, it generates heat for optimum decomposition. With an available water supply it creates a nutrient rich tea that ultimately seeps into the soil that is placed around the pit itself and provides nutrients and water to the crops that are being grown in the keyhole garden. The soil concoction used is about the same as what was used in the previous two methods and for the next few examples. We are currently growing artichokes, tomatoes, various varieties of peppers, cucumbers, and squash in the keyhole garden.

Next to the keyhole garden is a raised garden made of used cinder blocks. The garden site was prepared by making a couple of passes with the tiller to loosen the soil. The blocks were then set and leveled with sand to form the base. We then stacked additional blocks on top to form a raised garden bed fifteen feet long by two feet wide. Once the soil was placed inside, we immediately planted asparagus crowns that were provided to the garden by some of the Pinal County Master Gardeners. Since asparagus is a perennial, we are letting it grow like crazy to provide nutrients to the crowns so hopefully there will be a bumper crop next year.

One of my favorite demonstration areas within the overall garden is yet another type of container garden. We used empty kitty litter containers to form individual growing spaces. These containers are 8”x 12”x 12.5.” A four inch deep trench was dug and, after holes were drilled into the bottom of each container, they were placed in a row four inches apart. This was done so that each container had one emitter in the center from our in-line drip tubing. The containers were then filled with our soil and have all been planted with different types of summer squash.
Satellite dishes make fun and interesting raised garden beds. We recently acquired two obsolete satellite dishes from the county complex that are being put to good use. The smaller one of the two is being used as an above ground garden, while the second larger dish is going to be raised above the other to provide filtered shade from the summer's scorching sun. One of the local fitness clubs donated an old tractor tire used as an exercise tool has been put to use as the above ground stand or base for the garden. Pinal County had a group of Americorps NCCC participants who helped paint the tire and dish U of A colors, fit them together and filled the dish full of soil in preparation for planting. The dish is currently growing a crop of okra in the center with various types of melons on the outer edges cascading down the side.

When it comes to water at the garden, some of the gardeners are using flood irrigation or sprinklers to water their plots. The U of A demonstration beds are using an above ground in-line drip irrigation tubing. The tubing is 17mm thick with .4 gallons an hour irrigation emitters every twelve inches being controlled by a battery operated timer at the water source. We have had two successful growing seasons for the Seeds of Hope Community Garden and are looking forward to the upcoming fall plantings where many various vegetables and fruits will be planted from both transplants and seeds.

As a recap. The various 2014 fall crops grown were corn, radishes, carrots, lettuce (green red and leaf), cabbage (both green and red), Brussels sprouts, kale, broccoli, & cauliflower. The approximate weights of those crops harvested were 153, 13, 31, 24, 40, 14, 8, 20, and 40lbs respectively for a total of 343lbs. The various 2015 spring crops grown were okra, eggplant, peppers, tomatoes, squash, and cucumbers. The approximate weights of those crops harvested were 23, 45, 27, 91, 11, and 35lbs respectively for a total of 232lbs and counting. I went out to one of the local grocers in the area and came up with gross total of approximately $424 for the fall harvest and $447 for the summer harvest so far, for a growing total of $871. We are happy to be working and helping our community, and as a result the majority of the produce has been handed out to those in need and to the Seeds of Hope Mondo Anaya Community Center in Casa Grande, AZ for use and distribution.
When you get out of high school, one of two things happen. You either have a plan for life and you go do it, or you have a plan but end up laying on the couch dreaming about going. I was the kind of person who dreamed big and 99% of the time I made it happen. After high school I found my 1% that didn’t make it happen. I messed up my plans and instead of getting back on my feet and trying again or something new I was withering away on the couch watching The Family Feud and working at a fast food joint. I knew what I wanted to do, where I wanted to go, and who I wanted to be. I was so upset and instead of doing something about it, I gave up.

At the end of September my 4-H club leader, who happened to work for Cooperative Extension, text me asking if I would be interested in this program called AmeriCorps. She told me I would get paid and at the end I’d get money for school too. I’d get to work in the office working on projects with people and helping out all around. To me I thought “why not, it’s just going to be a little office job and it’ll give me something to do before I go to work at my fast food job.” Boy was I wrong. It was far from a little office job. I didn’t just work in the office, I went all over Pinal County! I got certified to do developmental, hearing, and vision screenings in Arizona. I was able to go to community events for youth and the elderly. At one event I even got to work with America’s bravest, our very own veterans. They told me stories about the war and gave me amazing advice about life! I helped out in community gardens, not just harvesting but planting and learning about the growing season in Arizona. Some of my time was spent learning about nutrition and then I got to teach it myself! Then during the summer I was able to go to two different sites to work with and teach youth about nutrition and physical activity, and even work with a group of teens teaching them that there is plenty of time to be a know it all adult but we only have so long to be a kid.

I was able to experience a variety of things that not only bettered the community but made a better me. This community which I grew up in and love, it was only a dream to make it a better place. But now, with my help and the help of others, I know that it isn’t just a dream. It can happen. I made connections with people that will benefit me in the future or are just great friends to have. All of the people I met were extraordinary. I went from a couch potato to an active member of society, and I don’t mean an office drone. I know how to start my own garden, then use what I grow to make a healthy meal, what physical activities I can do that’ll keep me healthy, parenting techniques, and much more just from being an AmeriCorps member.
Local CHAT participant wins Grand Canyon essay contest

Recently 40 Healthy Living Teen Ambassadors (who were pictured in our last newsletter) had the opportunity to hike the Grand Canyon for their youth summit. When they returned home they were given the opportunity to enter a contest by writing about their experience at the Grand Canyon and how it impacted them, their life, and how they were influenced or impacted by people they met.

Diana Barboza, who is a CHAT Healthy Living Teen Ambassador and student at Santa Cruz Valley Union High School in Eloy, entered the contest and won 1st place. Below is her essay and the link for her Flipagram.

I am immensely grateful for this experience. I’ve learned some great life skills that I will take with me anywhere I go. I learned how to set up a tent, I don’t think I would ever need it but it can come in handy anytime. This experience changed my life and I know if it wasn’t for CHAT I would have never been able to say that I hiked the Grand Canyon. I met so many new people. It was great to sit around a fire talking to people and learning about them and their interests, and where they came from. All the pain and blisters were all worth it. Just experiencing nature and the new weather that I wasn’t used to was great. To go to the Grand Canyon I had to train, and it was not easy. I had to push myself to go that extra mile so I would be prepared for the hike. It has shaped me to see how fortunate I am to have a bed to sleep in. It also helped me to make changes to my eating habits, like adding nuts and granola bars as snacks. One thing I learned about myself is that I enjoyed the time I spent outdoors hiking instead of watching TV or spending all my time on social media.

This was an amazing experience and if I ever had another opportunity to go again, I would take it in a heartbeat. At the end of all this I really enjoyed everything, but before I end this I just want to take a little time to thank Esmeralda and her husband Mario Castillo. Without them and everything they provided for us I don’t think I would of made it. They prepared us and gave us an opportunity to experience this amazing adventure. Without them I wouldn’t have had the blast that I did. Even when I couldn’t even think I could take another step, Mario’s famous line “who does this man,” made me laugh and pushed me to keep going.

At the beginning we all said we were going to finish together and along the line we all kind of separated but we all hit a point and stopped and waited for everyone else because we were going to make it out of the Grand Canyon together. When we made it out I felt a sense of accomplishment and no one will take that away from me. I thank everyone that put this trip together.

Diana Barboza

http://flipagram.com/f/VJesTG60sX
It’s the beginning of a new 2015 school semester and school water festivals are planned all over Pinal County. The Florence festival is scheduled for November and we expect in excess of 600 Florence District fourth graders from 22 classrooms will participate. Last year, Pinal County Water Programs coordinated 50 volunteers to offer science and water education activities at the event held at the Parkside Community Center at Merrill Ranch facility. Volunteers came from all over the local community including the Eyman Prison Complex, Johnson Utilities, a Casa Grande-based AmeriCorps team, and 25 students from Florence High School. We’ll need that much support again this year!

As in prior years, the Casa Grande Water Festival in February 2016 will be held at Mesquite Elementary, the Apache Junction Water Festival scheduled for April 2016, and the third annual “bigger and better” Maricopa Water Festival will finish up in May 2016.

With hundreds of students taking part in each event, we need volunteers to get ready NOW! Extension personnel will provide all the training necessary to make you a top-notch water programs presenter. And if you volunteer at any of the events, lunch is always included...what a deal! If you prefer to work “behind the scenes”, we have a number of jobs for you, too. There’s a Water Festival Volunteer job for everyone. Here’s how YOU can take part – let’s get started early this year:

Contact Chuck Dugan, the Pinal County Water Programs Coordinator by email at cld1@email.arizona.edu, or give him a call at:
520-836-5221 x210 (office), or 520-419-6343 (cell).

Don’t miss your chance to take part in these community events helping 4th graders!
Many families found that during our hot Arizona summer, a perfect place to cool down with their children was at the library. Pinal County Libraries offered tons of fun and educational opportunities for families. Many activities were centered on their summer reading program. The summer reading theme this year was “Every Hero Has a Story” and, as you can guess, the libraries were bustling with superhero activities.

Fun and learning can and should go hand-in-hand for young (and older) children. The libraries have this concept “down.” While the children were engaged and having fun, there was also an excellent opportunity for early literacy learning. Early literacy is extremely important to a child’s development. What is early literacy?

“Research shows that early reading experiences, opportunities to build vocabularies, and literacy rich environments are the most effective ways to support the development of pre-reading and cognitive skills that ensure that children are prepared for success in school, including grade-level reading, and throughout life.” [MakeWayforBooks.org]

Children who have not developed some basic literacy skills by the time they enter school are 3-4 times more likely to drop out in later years.” [US Department of Education] The Cooperative Extension team understands this concept well. They make all of their screenings a fun experience and aim to include a piece of education in each interaction. The more fun a child has, the larger the opportunity for learning.

The University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Sensory and Developmental teams collaborated with several of the libraries in Pinal County to offer education to parents along with hearing, vision, and developmental screenings for their children. Parents had an opportunity to see firsthand some of the skills their child had already mastered by using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire. Fun, easy activities were then suggested, based on the child’s age, to enhance what parents were already doing at home to boost their child’s development. For more information about this free service call the Sensory and Developmental team at (520) 836-4651.
MAC Farm Ag-Ventures

As we look ahead to the next school year, please be aware that the Maricopa Agricultural Center located in Maricopa is a great resource for educational opportunities in the area of agriculture literacy. Our team with the MAC Farm Ag-Venture program provides educational talks to schools throughout Pinal County, as well as provides great educational field trips that focus on how our food comes from the farm. Contact Victor Jimenez at the MAC Farm at 520-374-6216 (cell phone: 480-883-8639) or e-mail at vicjimenez@yahoo.com. It's All Happening at the Farm!

AmeriCorps NCCC

Do you work with or volunteer for a community organization that has the supplies and materials available for a big project, but need some labor? We may be able to help. We are in the process of applying for an AmeriCorps NCCC team and are looking for projects they could do during their 6-10 weeks of service to support nonprofit and other community organizations across Pinal County. If you have a project that you would like us to consider including in our application, please email Cathy Martinez at clmartin@cals.arizona.edu
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. 4-H Contact: Kimberly Gressley at (520) 836-5221, x.213 or gressley@u.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

Brain Builders is a 16 hour training for child care providers and parents focusing on early brain and child development for children, ages 0-3. Brain Builders Contact: Sally Peoples at (520) 836-5221, x.224 or speoples@cals.arizona.edu

Child Care Health Consultations (CCHC) develops partnerships with childcare facilities to provide training to staff that will improve their knowledge and practice in the childcare setting. CCHC 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. CHAT 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. Developmental 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. EFNEP Contact: Esmeralda Castillo at (520) 836-5221 or ecastill@cals.arizona.edu

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

Ms Hijos, My Kids Childcare Recruitment is designed to assist applicants in becoming DES certified to provide childcare in their home. Mis Hijos Contact: Sally Peoples at (520) 836-5221, x.224 or speoples@cals.arizona.edu

Project CENTRL prepares highly motivated leaders to be more effective in meeting the growing challenges facing agriculture in rural Arizona. Project CENTRL Contact: Karen Vanderheyden at (520) 316-0909 or kvander@ag.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. Project WET Contact: Chuck Dugan at (520) 836-5221, x.210 or cid1@email.arizona.edu

Sensory Program provides free screenings of children, ages 0-5, for vision and hearing impairments that could affect their developmental growth. Sensory 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. SFP Contact: Esther Turner at (520) 836-5221, x.211 or eturner@cals.arizona.edu

Teen Outreach Program (TOP) is an evidence-based youth development program that is designed for youth ages 12–17 and focuses on reducing rates of school failure, school suspension, and teen pregnancy. TOP Contact: Ashley Tapia at (520) 836-5221 x217 or ashleytapia@email.arizona.edu

University of Arizona Nutrition Network (UANN) 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. UANN Contact: Jennifer Staples at (520) 836-5221, x.207 or jstaples@cals.arizona.edu

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. SilvEstreeto牙齿, Associate Dean & Director, Economic Development & Extension, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, The University of Arizona.

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Persons with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation, such as a sign language interpreter, by contacting (Cooperative Extension, Pinal County, 820 East Cottonwood Lane, #C, Casa Grande, AZ 85122, 520.836.5221). Requests should be made as early as possible to allow time to arrange the accommodation.

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