



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Outcomes for Michigan's Future

Improving Quality of Life for Our Families

In Brief

Today's Successes

- The four-county EITC pilot program returned more than **\$4 million in federal tax refunds for Michigan families**.
- MSUE helped one Saginaw neighborhood **increase its number of child care providers from 2 to 54**; these new providers are collectively earning an estimated \$1 million annually.
- Project FRESH provided farmer's market coupons to **34,000 low-income women and children** — 63 percent reported eating more fruits and vegetables.*
- WIC-eligible women who participate in MSUE's Breast-feeding Initiative show double the rate of breast-feeding compared with non-participants, **saving \$2.3 million annually** in Medicaid and HMO costs.*

Tomorrow's Results

- At least **10,000 Michigan residents will receive tax preparation assistance** to generate millions in unclaimed federal tax refunds.
- Nearly **275,000 low-income families** will receive help preparing young children for school through MSUE literacy programs.
- More than 2,000 child care providers will receive training to **improve care for 12,000 Michigan children** and learn how to start their own businesses.
- At least 25 counties will educate working families on basic financial management. In addition, more than **14,000 people will receive financial literacy information** geared toward people with disabilities.
- More than 5,000 families will participate in the Building Strong Families parenting education program, resulting in estimated **savings to the state of nearly \$50 million** in costs associated with underdeveloped parenting skills.

Michigan's Priorities in Improving Family Quality of Life

- **Improving early childhood education and child care:** Eighty-five percent of a child's brain development occurs in the first three years of life; three of five of our preschool-aged children live in families where both parents work outside the home.
- **Using K-12 education to better prepare for and increase participation in post-secondary education:** Studies show that 75 percent of poor readers in third grade will still be poor readers in high school. The Cherry Commission reports that Michigan is ranked among the lowest states in citizens holding degrees beyond high school.
- **Improving family finances:** The average family carries nearly \$10,000 in credit debt; half of them have accumulated less than \$1,000 in net liquid financial assets.
- **Addressing the needs of our aging population:** Michigan has more than 1.2 million people over age 65 and will have an additional half million by the year 2020.

MSU Capacity:

- **Reach:** MSUE provides research-based, family-related educational programs in all 83 Michigan counties.
- **Experience:** MSUE conducts thousands of educational sessions every year on parenting, money management and human development, in every corner of the state.
- **Expertise:** MAES and MSUE employ experts at MSU and have global connections to additional expertise in areas related to families, children and seniors.
- **Track record:** MSUE and MAES use proven methods of quickly and cost-efficiently moving from peer-reviewed research to recommendations to program development and implementation with documented results.
- **"Feet on the street":** MSUE has staff members and thousands of volunteers prepared and active in every county, making it easy to position assets, tools, programs and ideas in every corner of the state.
- **Trust:** MSUE and MAES provide unbiased, scientifically sound research and education to the public to help ensure that Michigan citizens can make educated decisions at local, regional and state levels.
- **Content:** MAES conducts primary life sciences research and MSUE uses the results to build successful programs such as Better Kid Care, Building Strong Families, Financial Security and the Vital Aging Initiative.

Sampler of Success

MSUE and MAES cover topics such as family economics, education and literacy, family health and nutrition, parenting and child care skills, and vital aging. Here are a few examples of our successes and capacity to produce desirable outcomes:

- A 2003 pilot to increase earned income tax credit (EITC) applications in low-wage households resulted in an increase in applications and more than **\$4 million in federal tax refunds for working households**.
- The MAES program Head Start on Science has **trained 85 teachers to effectively teach science to preschool children**.
- Low-income **families save \$2.48 at the grocery store for every \$1 spent** to provide the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP); in addition, Michigan **saves about \$158 million** annually in health care costs.*
- A joint effort between MSUE and the Saginaw Family Child Care Network (SFCCN) increased the number of licensed child care providers in one low-income neighborhood from just 2 to 54. The neighborhood now boasts 560 licensed child care slots, and the new **providers are collectively grossing more than \$1 million per year**.
- Building Strong Families reaches 5,000 families with young children in 43 Michigan counties and is estimated to **save our state nearly \$50 million** annually in costs associated with low-birthweight babies, infant mortality, special education, protective services, foster care, criminology and psychological services.*
- In 2004, 97 percent of the WIC-eligible women who participated in the Breast-feeding Initiative (BFI) started breast-feeding and continued to breast-feed beyond 12 weeks. This is double the rate of non-participants and **saved an estimated \$2.3 million** in Medicaid and HMO costs that year.*
- Project FRESH (Farmers' Market Nutrition Program), an educational program that provides participants with coupons to purchase locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables at farmers' markets, **served more than 34,000 low-income families** in 2004. The more than 600 farmers who participated in the program sold nearly \$500,000 in produce. Sixty-three percent of the families reported increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables as a result of the program.*
- Partnering with Work First and using the On the Path financial management curriculum, MSUE educators **doubled the rate of FNP and EFNEP participants** who have improved their nutrition and financial management skills in one pilot county.

Outcomes for Michigan's Future:

Our MAES research initiatives over the next year will focus on:

- Identifying the relationships between human diet and cancer.
- Evaluating group intervention programs for women and children experiencing domestic violence.
- Identifying internal and external assets important in the healthy development of children, adolescents, families and communities.
- Assessing the impact of public policy, such as welfare reform, on the well-being of low-income families.
- Reducing obesity among young children.
- Improving calcium intake among preadolescents by understanding the influence of parents.
- Improving the success of young people moving out of foster care to independent living.

Improving Quality of Life for Our Families

MSUE educational priorities and outcomes of our family programs for 2005-06 will focus on:

- Using our existing nutrition education network, MSUE will increase from 12 to at least 25 counties participating in financial management education, which will **provide nearly 1,000 working families with basic financial management skills**. MSUE will help individuals organize their finances, track income and expenses, and learn how to pay their bills. Participants will rely less on public benefits and become self-sufficient.
- More than **5,000 families** will participate in Building Strong Families. Improved outcomes in low-birth-weight babies, infant mortality, special education, protective services, foster care, criminal costs and psychological services are **estimated to save Michigan \$48 million**.*
- At least **275,000 low-income families** will receive assistance in helping their children grow and be prepared for school through literacy and education programs such as Family Bookbag, Pyramids Between the Pages, ABC's at Home with Me and Watch Me Grow calendars.
- Nearly **30,000 youth will gain science and technology skills** through 4-H programs in aerospace, computer technology, electronics and more. Fifty counties will organize local benchmark-setting efforts to increase youth involvement in **pursuing postsecondary education**.
- MSUE's Better Kid Care will reach at least 2,000 child care providers in at least 65 counties and affect **more than 12,000 young learners**. Three quarters of participants will demonstrate increased knowledge and skills and make positive changes in their practices. The state will also **gain 120 new licensed child care providers** as a result of MSUE programming.
- MSUE will continue working with 19 partner organizations to **help 10,000 Michigan residents file tax returns**, which will generate more than \$3 million in federal EITC refunds.
- MSUE will work with the Office of Services to the Aging and other senior service providers to develop a process for **creating "Certified Elder Friendly Communities."** Community leaders will receive training in needs and opportunities related to their senior residents.
- MSUE and the Detroit branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago will teach financial management skills in **37 sessions in 21 counties**. Approximately 700 youth, "unbanked" and elderly citizens will participate in this governor-endorsed program.
- MSUE, as part of a coalition for the Financial Health Credit Union, will prepare 1,260 trainers in financial literacy for people with disabilities. The trainers will in turn **reach more than 14,000 people**.

Spotlight on Success

Building Strong Families "...works with low-income parents of children under three, using a strength-based, multicultural parenting education curriculum. Recent studies of programs in Michigan cities found that, compared to non-program parents, parents in the program were more likely to report more positive interaction with their children in developmentally appropriate ways, to provide safer home environments and to make positive personal changes in their lives."

From the Supporting Michigan Families handbook published by the Michigan's Children organization

* Also addresses health concerns.

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity institution.

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