



MSU Extension's Impact On

PREPARING YOUNG CHILDREN FOR SUCCESS

In 2016, the state's \$60.2 million investment in MSU AgBioResearch and MSU Extension generated more than \$1 billion for Michigan residents. Every dollar the state invested in AgBioResearch and MSU Extension leveraged an additional \$2.68 in federal funds and external contracts, grants and other revenues, including nearly \$1.1 million leveraged by MSU Extension children and youth programs alone. As a result, MSU Extension and MSU AgBioResearch are able to serve Michigan residents with a benefit/cost ratio of 19:1 when adding in other social and economic benefits too.

These cost benefits are huge, but they are not the only benefits that MSU Extension brings to the state. Through MSU Extension 4-H Youth Development, more than 209,000 youth learn compassion, respect, leadership skills, responsibility, the value of hard work and other critical abilities. In addition, MSU Extension early childhood education programs prepare thousands of Michigan's youngest children for school success.

"I'll now think about stresses from my child's perspective and set realistic expectations."

- Early childhood education program participant



THE ISSUE

The future of the Great Lakes State depends on the success of its children; the knowledge and skills they are equipped with today will directly affect their ability to lead the state to a healthy and prosperous future. Despite this, the U.S. Department of Education's National Assessment of Educational Progress indicates that only 30 percent of Michigan fourth graders met reading proficiency standards in 2013. Studies show that children who fail to meet these standards are four times more likely to drop out of school in the future. Michigan's young children must develop these early educational skills and other competencies in order to prepare for future success.

MSU EXTENSION ACTION

To help address this critical area of need, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension provides early childhood programs that help families with children from birth to age 8 prepare for school. By teaching adults how to increase childhood science, math and reading literacy, as well as social and emotional competencies that have been proven to boost academic performance, the programming also assists childcare providers and early childhood professionals in improving school readiness. In 2016, these programs were delivered to nearly 2,600 parents and caregivers who influence nearly 50,000 children and youth on a daily basis. This important community-based work meets a crucial need by supporting families that may not qualify for formal education systems such as Head Start or those who may be unable to access them in their area.

THE IMPACT

As a result of MSU Extension early childhood development programs, adults **increased their knowledge of basic concepts that promote school readiness and academic success** during early childhood stages of life, helping to ensure their children have a solid foundation for future success. Of those surveyed:

88% increased their knowledge of techniques that help young children learn and promote school readiness.

74% increased their knowledge of how to keep children safe physically, emotionally and socially.

In addition, specific targeted trainings showed further positive results:

- Adults who completed the Positive Discipline workshop reported **statistically significant increases in their understanding of and ability to implement positive discipline with young kids.**
- Adults who completed the Resilience Toolbox workshop reported **statistically significant increases in their understanding of stress and resilience.**
- Adults who completed the Inquiring Minds Want to Know workshop reported **statistically significant increases in knowledge and skills that support science exploration in young children.**

A Deeper Understanding Between Parent and Child

MSU Extension’s Building Early Emotional Skills class is an eight-week series that helps parents with newborns to 3-year-olds develop the skills necessary to support the social and emotional development of their children. In-class learning is reinforced by educational enhancements that help parents apply what they learned to real-life situations at home with their children. While learning how to enrich their child’s development, attendees also learn tips for reducing parenting stress and ways to enhance their own parenting skills.

For many participants, the class is a pivotal experience that influences both their immediate interactions with their child, as well as their long-term abilities as parents. Testimonials from class attendees tell the story of the program’s impact:

“I learned how to recognize my own behavior and reactions and how to react to my toddler’s emotions and behavior. How I relate to him really shows him how to behave.”

“I learned so much: understanding how young children express their emotions, how to comfort them and redirect their attention, the idea that children are constantly exploring and testing their surrounds rather than being intentionally destructive, and understanding the degree to which children cannot control their emotions or ability to share.”



“I hope to talk to my infant son more now, narrating what we are doing and increasing the number of words he hears.”

- Early childhood education program participant



“I learned how valuable it is to acknowledge a child’s emotion and to help them work through it.”

- Early childhood education program participant

