



September 2025

# THE EXTENSION CONNECTION

Wyandotte County K-State Extension



## Director's Note

**Denise Dias**

Wyandotte County Director

Fall has arrived! School is back in session, and it won't be long until we start discussing the holidays. Until then, please take a moment to savor the fantastic weather and our Extension Offerings. Don't see what you are looking for? Call or email us, and we will help you find the program or information you need. We are your local connection to everything that is K-State!

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## 4-H Youth Development

# THE NEW 4-H YEAR STARTS ON OCTOBER 1ST!

In 4-H, we believe in the power of young people. We see that every child has valuable strengths and real influence to improve the world around us. We are America's largest youth development organization—empowering nearly six million young people across the U.S. and over 70,000 youth in Kansas with the skills to lead for a lifetime.

4-H is a youth program that provides a research-based experience that includes a mentor, a hands-on project, and a meaningful leadership opportunity. Youth develop their own pathway in 4-H based on their interests with the guiding mentorship of adult volunteers. 4-H youth select from a broad menu of local 4-H programs and projects. There are hands-on, learn by doing, opportunities for everyone.

Kansas 4-H is a vibrant youth development program for K-State Research and Extension. In 4-H, we are committed to providing positive dynamic learning experiences for as many young people as possible.

Wyandotte County has six active 4-H clubs and many project areas. Wyandotte 4-H members have the opportunity to participate in monthly club meetings, hands-on learning experiences, Club Days competition, the county fair, and many other 4-H events at the county, regional, and state levels. The new 4-H year starts on October 1st! Sign up on 4-H Online.com during the month of October to get started in 4-H!



Casey Ling,  
4-H Youth Development Agent  
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## BE AN ACTIVE FAMILY IN THE FALL- SEPTEMBER

Fall is finally here, and soon cooler weather and the holiday season are on the way. It is important to stay active during these fall months, even though it can be hard sometimes with the shorter days, and busy schedules. Here are some simple ways to stay active with your family during this fall season. Being active together is great for the whole family. It strengthens relationships and builds healthy habits for kids.

- Limit screen time. Set a rule that no one (adults included) can spend longer than two hours per day playing video games, watching TV, and using the computer (except for schoolwork).
- Get outside! It's easy to be sedentary when indoors. Go to the park to walk, play, bike, practice identifying plants and birds, or even plan a scavenger hunt.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Walk or bike instead of driving, if possible. Park far from the entrance of a building.
- Take a walk or play an active game together after dinner each night. Choose weekend activities that require movement, such as playing catch, miniature golf or biking.
- Instead of rewarding kids with extra screen time or candy, do something active to celebrate. Take the family bowling, camping or to the zoo.
- Give children toys that encourage physical activity such as balls, frisbees, jump ropes or skateboards. Consider a family pass to the pool or community center for a gift instead of toys.
- Limit inactivity.
- Sitting too much is linked to higher risk of heart disease, diabetes and early death. Spend less time sitting.
- Kids should be active for at least 60 minutes every day. Adults should aim for at least 150 minutes of activity per week, but more is better. This doesn't have to be done all at once. Start with just 10 minutes at a time.
- Be active inside and outside. Getting outside isn't always an option. The next time your family is stuck indoors, try some of these ideas for being active.
- Put on music and have a dance party.
- Move during commercials. Have a jumping jack or pushup challenge. Or simply stretch or walk in place.
- Try to keep a balloon in the air as long as possible while passing it back and forth.
  - Make your child a superhero, lifting and spinning them with your arms or legs.
  - Make housework fun. Put on music and dance while cooking, sweeping, vacuuming or doing the dishes.
  - Put on a fun, active YouTube video for everyone to follow along.



<https://extension.missouri.edu/publications/n1055>



# Nutrition and Food Safety

## SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL FOOD SAFETY EDUCATION MONTH

Question...Should you wash raw meat and poultry before cooking them? Yes or No  
If you answered “No” you are correct! While we can go many directions in the area of food safety, let’s focus on the issue of “to wash or not to wash”. Poultry that is. Consider the following:

### **Washing or rinsing poultry (and meat) increases risks.**

Salmonella, Campylobacter, and other harmful pathogens live on raw chicken. Washing or rinsing doesn’t remove this. What’s worse, doing so may help the bacteria spread. When you add water through washing or rinsing, you give these bacteria a way to travel throughout your kitchen.

### **Chicken has already been washed.**

Today’s poultry is already pretty clean. Our grandparents may have been cooking chicken that had some unsavory things on it, like waste or feathers. Today’s manufacturing cleans the chicken, so there is no filth, feathers, or anything else on it that needs to be washed off. Poultry may have a coating of water and protein: this gets cooked off, or you can remove it with a clean paper towel. Anything that is on the chicken will get cooked off.

### **Cook it better and safely.**

- Use a clean paper towel. If you see anything on the chicken you want to get rid of, wipe it off with a clean paper towel. Never rinse or wash chicken.
- Raw chicken and juices should touch as few things as possible. Separate raw chicken from fresh and ready-to-eat foods. Keep surfaces clean by washing them with hot, soapy water.
- Cook it to 165 °F. Cooking the chicken to 165 °F using a digital food thermometer will kill dangerous bacteria, and make it safe to eat if it was previously handled properly.

### **In need of more information?**

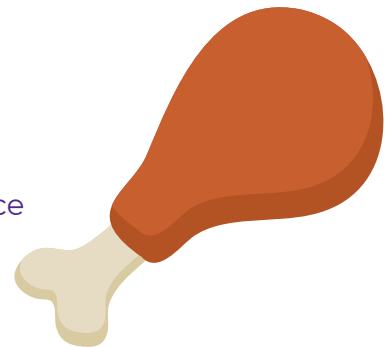
- Check your food safety knowledge, <https://food.unl.edu/free-resource/can-you-pass-food-safety-quiz/>

### **Other helpful links-**

- <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/food-safety>
- <https://www.foodsafety.gov/>
- <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/program-areas/food-preparation-processing-and-safety/food-safety.html>

So, save yourself some time and reduce the risk of making yourself and others sick by leaving the bird alone. The assurance of a well-behaved bird is in the safe handling, preparation, cleaning, and cooking.

(Source: <https://fightbac.org/poultry/#resources>)





# SEPTEMBER IS FAMILY MEAL MONTH

It is amazing how sitting down and eating together brings more than nourishment for the body. Having at least three meals per week can make a big difference. I am not talking about big, perfect meals like the ones on holidays or the old-fashioned Sunday dinner. Think simple, like making your own sandwich or potato bar. They can be at any time of day. Maybe breakfast is more realistic for your family. Be creative too!

### Why are mealtimes important?

#### 1. Emotional and Mental Health

- Helps build resilience to deal with problems and to keep moving forward
- Family time together to build relationships and connections. Also, planning and discussing family activities. Maybe a story or game time after the meal.
- Helps to establish routines. Are chores and homework to be completed before the meal? Then play time, bedtime ritual, and sleep after the meal.

#### 2. Better Physical Health

- Introduction of healthy foods with key nutrients (especially those found in fruits and vegetables) that improve brain and body development. (The human brain does not reach maturity until mid-20s) Creating healthy habits now that will last a lifetime.
- Improve individuals digestion
- Less ultra-processed foods, which contain added sugar, sodium, and unhealthy fats. Excessive consumption of ultra-processed foods leads to obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and certain cancers.

Adults, you are the role model for your children.

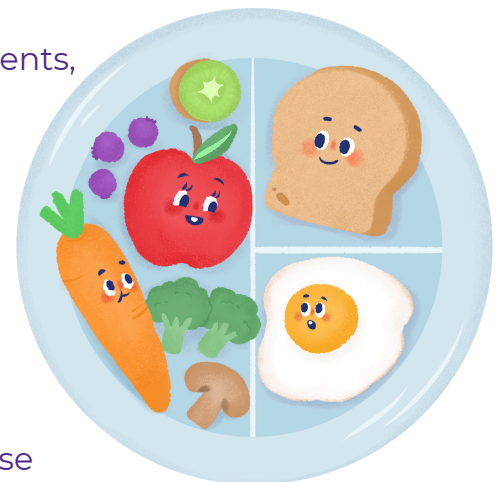
- 3. Increase Social Development
- Younger children will learn manners and etiquette. Parents, your kids are watching you and learning how to behave.
- Kids learn about family traditions and their culture
- They learn about boundaries and expectations of the family and community

#### 4. Improved Academic Performance

- Our children will get better grades, increase their vocabulary, and have better problem-solving skills.
- Children are more likely to graduate from high school

#### 5. Less risky behavior

- Youth who eat meals with their family or less likely to use marijuana, tobacco, or alcohol. And less likely to try it in the future



# Community Development

# ALL THINGS KANSAS

Members of a Kansas State University team that has built a one-stop source for data related to Kansas communities say the free, interactive tool will help boost economic development across the state.

The online tool, called [All Things Kansas](#), pulls from more than 30,000 layers of data and 120 state and federal sources to answer questions related to child care, workforce, health care, broadband access, housing, and many more topics that involve community and economic development.

“One thing we know is that informed communities make stronger decisions, which is why we created All Things Kansas,” said Jessica Gnad, K-State director of economic development. “We want to give local leaders across all 105 counties in Kansas access to clear, actionable data that supports real economic development.”

Team members said All Things Kansas allows users to easily compare data across 105 Kansas counties, making it easier to understand local strengths, challenges, and opportunities. The data can be used for grant applications, strategic planning, business development, and more.

“We consider All Things Kansas a one-stop shop for Kansas data,” said Jennifer Tidball, K-State communications director for economic development. “We hope that people in Kansas – business leaders, community leaders, extension agents, and many more – will use this to access multiple data sources in one place.”

The information is open to anyone interested in topics that concern their community, business, lifestyles, and more. “The site allows you to search for topics that interest you,” Tidball said.

Having reliable access to information, she added, “is helpful for grant applications, and it can be a good research tool when trying to understand your community, or how it compares to other communities.”

“We’re also hoping this can help understand market demand or define business opportunities across the state,” Tidball said. “If you’re a business leader wanting to relocate your business or open another location, you can use this tool to understand workforce strength, industry gaps, analyze trends, etc.”

Erickson said the team has developed a gallery of pre-made maps to view statewide data on broadband access, net migration of young adults, business churn, housing costs, employment and health insurance, and many more.

There are nearly 50 pre-made maps on topics relating to Kansas communities. The site also allows users to build custom maps of issues and geographic regions.

Accessing the data online is free, and a subscription is not required. The site is maintained by Kansas State University, with support from the [Center for Applied Research and Engagements Systems](#) (CARES) at the University of Missouri.

For more information about All Things Kansas or to schedule a group demonstration, contact Gnad at [jgnad@k-state.edu](mailto:jgnad@k-state.edu) or Tidball at [jtidball@k-state.edu](mailto:jtidball@k-state.edu).

The full June 6 talk and other First Friday presentations are [available online](#) from K-State Research and Extension.

# Upcoming Events



**September 3:** Creating Quick Suppers

**September 3:** K-State Garden Hour

**September 4:** Kitchen Restore Sidewalk Sale

**September 5:** Kitchen Restore Sidewalk Sale

**September 5:** First Friday E-Call

**September 10:** Remote Work Wednesday

**September 17:** Know Your Health Numbers

Connect with us!



K-State Extension is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Program information may be available in languages other than English. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, including alternative means for communication (e.g., Braille, large print, audio tape, and American Sign Language) may be requested by contacting the event contact Jo McLeland two weeks prior to the start of the event (insert deadline date) at (913-299-9300 or [jo1@ksu.edu](mailto:jo1@ksu.edu)). Requests received after this date will be honored when it is feasible to do so. Language access services, such as interpretation or translation of vital information will be provided free of charge to limited English proficient individuals upon request.

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