

June 21, 2017

Ampifying Life

Shandi Andres, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent
K-State Research and Extension, Flint Hills District

Meaning of Family and Consumer Science

I often get the question “What is Family and Consumer Sciences”? The term Family and Consumer Science (FCS) represents an umbrella over many topic areas including family life, human development, relationships, parenting, communication, personal and family finance, nutrition and wellness, food safety, health and safety, leadership, and consumer issues. Skills, research and knowledge in Family and Consumer Science topics help people to make informed decisions about their well-being, relationships, and resources to achieve an optimal quality of life.

My goal as an agent is to provide education and resources to not just survive, but thrive in life. If you look up the word amplify in the dictionary and thesaurus you would find the following descriptive words: develop, extend, to make larger, greater, stronger, increase, heighten, intensify, and widen to name a few. My role is to be an educator in the community. It is my greatest hope to help in amplifying life. The purpose of my column is to educate the public on ways to amplify life. Ways to amplify life include embracing healthier lifestyles, improve finances, building more positive relationships, broaden knowledge of child development, and increase awareness of consumer decisions.

One of my roles as an agent is to work with the 4-H Program. The 4-H motto is “to make the best better.” Why settle for status quo? No person, project, or situation is perfect. It is always possible to improve. Members involved in 4-H work to improve their projects, presentation skills, leadership skills, and work ethics. Each stem of the four leaf clover represents an H; those four H;s stand for Head, Heart, Hand, Health. The 4-H model encourages members to 1) Do, 2) Reflect, 3) Apply. Each time they are involved in a project, they learn. As they reflect, it allows them time to process what they did, what they learned, what went well, and what can be improved upon. The last step is to apply. Members take the knowledge they learned and their reflections to determine what can be done the next time “to make the best better.”

The 4-H model can be used as a guide in our daily lives to amplify life. To take what we do, learn and see, reflect, and make a decision on how or if we can apply it to “make the best better.” Little improvements in our lives can have a huge impact on our personal well-being and quality of life.

I also hear the question “What is K-State Research and Extension?” Our local extension office is the link between researched based information at the college and our communities. We rely on the research and not just an opinion to guide our answers and provide a foundation of knowledge and learning to educate our communities. Morris County and Chase County are part of the Flint Hills Extension District.

Future articles will be over topics in the umbrella of Family and Consumer Sciences. Some might be a topic fit for a season; others might address a concern in the community. If you have any specific topics you would like to see addressed, please give your suggestions. If you ever have questions, feel free to call or email them in. Shandi Andres, Flint Hills Extension District, 501 W Main, Council Grove, KS 66846. (620) 767-5136 or sdandres@ksu.edu