Dear Extension Families,

Summer, as usual, is off to a busy start at your Extension Center. Youth programs have kicked off with a trip to Balsam Mountain Preserve and Horse Day Camp at the Ensley’s Farm. As I write this letter three kids are here learning basic sewing skills. If 4-H’ers have not yet signed up for summer activities, they need to do so as soon as possible. Some events may have to be canceled unless three or more children register. Many activities are free.

The Open House went well on May 17. The anniversary of the fire was much nicer then remembering where we were two years before! So many people pitched in to make the event a success. The folks from Soil and Water, Four Square, Lisa Eller, Josh Beasley, and the Extension staff all pitched it to make the day a success. Sheila Styles and Haley Brooks helped with food and photographs. Thanks to everyone who came out to help us celebrate. It was a special day for us!

The barn quilt trail brochure and website are in development and should be ready very soon. The pictures of the county’s quilts are beautiful and we think you will be pleased with the results.

Food preservation, farm life, gardening, and careers in agriculture will be big topics for Extension educational programs in the coming weeks. We hope you can participate in one of these activities!

Have a great summer,

Teresa Garland
County Extension Director

Randy Collins
Extension Agent
Agriculture

Eve Rogers
Extension Agent
Family & Consumer Science

Points of Interest:
☺ Prepare your child for a new baby!
☺ Learn the ages and stages of parenting.
☺ Organize your life and get your family on board.

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Preheat oven to 350º. Stir dry ingredients together in a bowl. Add sugar and blend. Mix beaten eggs and oil together. Pour the egg mixture and strawberries into the flour mixture all at once. Pour the mixture into a greased 9 x 5-inch loaf pan. Bake 1 hour or until a toothpick comes out clean.

Taken from the North Carolina’s 4-H Centennial Cookbook
The arrival of a baby brother or sister is a stressful experience in the life of a young child. It is common for children to feel anger and jealousy towards a new baby.

Research indicates that the gap in age between siblings can have an effect on the intensity of jealousy between children. Sibling rivalry tends to be greatest when the age difference is 18 months to 2 years. It tends to be lowest when there are more than 2 years between children or less than 18 months.

Regardless of the age of an older brother or sister, a parent can play an important role in helping a child cope with the arrival of a new baby in the family. Use the time before the baby arrives to help your child gain an understanding of “babies” and begin to feel the importance of being a “big brother” or “big sister.”

Here are some activities you can do to help prepare your child:

- Share with your child memories of her infancy. Show her pictures of when she was a baby. Talk about how little she was, and how she couldn’t sit or walk or feed herself.
- Sort through baby clothes with your child. Together, choose the clothes that will fit the new baby soon after he or she arrives. This activity will help your child develop an idea of how little the baby will be.
- Talk to your child and show her all the items the baby will be using: a crib, a carriage, a baby bath, a car seat. Don’t be surprised if your child crawls into the carriage or crib. She is trying to figure out this new event!
- Help your child take care of a doll. Slowly introduce the idea that babies need lots of time and care. Let him give the doll a bath in the new baby’s tub. This will be a good time to talk about how gentle you have to be when caring for a baby.
- Read stories with your child about being a big sister or big brother. Choose books that help your child cope with the normal feelings of jealousy.
- Visit a friend with a new baby to see the size of the infant.
- Make something together for the new baby. Choose something simple and easy to complete, like a “Quiet!” sign for the door or a picture to go over the crib.
- Teach your child a simple lullaby to sing to her new brother or sister.
- Plan the baby’s room together and take him on a shopping trip to buy some items for the new baby. Remember to buy something for him as well.
- If you plan to breastfeed, try to arrange for your child to see a woman breastfeeding her baby. Your child will adjust more easily if she knows what to expect.
- If the baby will be born in a nearby hospital, visit the hospital with your child.
- Tell your child who will be caring for him while mother is in the hospital or while mother and/or dad is receiving a baby to be adopted. Let him know the activities he will do with his caregiver while you are gone.
- If your child is staying with a relative or friend, involve him in packing the suitcase for the trip. Also, let your child help you pack your suitcase or the suitcase of your spouse or partner. Help him understand that you will come back and won’t be away for long.
- Answer all questions about new babies and the birth process or adoption as simply as possible, but truthfully. Read a book to your child about pregnancy, birth and/or adoption that is appropriate to your child’s age and development.
- Be careful not to make any unrealistic promises, for example, “You’re going to have someone to play with.”

Continued on page 4
Here are some additional helpful hints:

- Have a special present ready to give to your older child when you arrive home with the baby.
- Let someone else carry the new baby into the house so your arms will be free to hug the new “big” sister or brother. Together, you can go to meet the new baby.
- Once in awhile, hold your child in the new baby’s rocking chair. Talk about how sometimes it’s fun to be a big brother or sister, and sometimes it’s fun to pretend to be a baby.
- Be sure to spend special times with each of your children before the baby arrives. Continue to do this after the baby comes.

Let your child know there will be times when he or she is unhappy or angry with the new baby. Jealousy is a normal feeling. Talking about feelings sometimes helps children accept and deal with their negative feelings.

Remember, older brothers and sisters must be told over and over that they must handle babies gently.

It is normal for older children to revert to “infant” ways when a new baby arrives home. For example, they may begin to talk like a baby or want to drink from a bottle. They may revert to bedwetting, whining, and crying instead of talking. This behavior will go away faster if you don’t pay much attention to it.

Some young children will show feelings of jealousy when the baby begins to move around and compete with siblings. Watch for behaviors that show that older siblings are feeling angry or threatened. Accept and recognize your older children’s feelings. Spend time with each of them on an individual basis. The arrival of a new baby is stressful. With your help, however, siblings will be able to adjust successfully to this important family event.

Sources:

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**PAM’S PERSPECTIVE**

Another school year has come and gone; we’ve had a very good year in 4-H. Our Cloverbud Club has really grown, and we have gained new volunteers for our Shooting Club. It’s wonderful to see young people interested in 4-H. Our lesson was about bubbles and surface tension. The Shooting Club met and practiced. We have some very good marksmen that will compete this summer in Polk County. The Stitch & Stir Club had their last meeting on the 22nd where they did project books on their club activities for the year.

Graham County 4-H had their Activity Day on May 20th and we had five presentations. These youth now have an opportunity to go to District Activity Day in Cullowhee, NC to compete on June 19th. Great job, Josh, Amanda, Chastelle, Lindsey and Joey. There were several awards for outstanding work done this year by our 4-H’ers.

Our first summer event was on May 24th. We traveled to the Balsam Mountain Preserve. This was a wonderful lesson about birds of prey and reptiles; youth were able to interact with the animals, take a hike to the waterfall and have a picnic lunch. It was very interesting!

Next was our Horse Day Camp. Thanks to Annette and Carroll Ensley for doing the program. This makes the 3rd year they have done the program for us. It is always one of the kids favorite programs.

I hope everyone has a great summer. Be safe and we’ll be seeing you soon.
### IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

**4-H**
- June 2: Robotics Training
- June 4 & 18: Presentation Practice
- June 5-7: Sewing Camp
- June 11-13: 3-day Horse Clinic
- June 11-13: Citizenship Focus
- June 12-25: Costa Rica Eco-Study Tour
- June 15: Science Day Camp
- June 15: Robotics Class
- June 19: District Activity Day
- June 20: Deep Creek Eco Day
- June 21: Cloverbud Cooking
- June 26: Cupcake Class
- June 27: West District Fashion Day
- June 29: Cherokee Farm and Mingus Mill
- July 6: Movie Night
- July 9-11: Electric Congress

**AGRICULTURE**
- June 6: Strawberry Producers Meeting
- June 7: Gardening in Raised Beds
- June 28: Bee Keepers Club

**FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES**
- June 14: Basic Sewing Class
- June 26: Drying and Freezing Foods
- July 24: Pressure Canning Green Beans
- July 26: Canning Tomatoes

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**
- July 3 and 4: Graham County Heritage Festival
- June 30: Appalachian Evenings at SVC Begin

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**Summer Fun Registration forms need to be turned in!**

**SEWING—LEARN TO READ A PATTERN**
- June 14th, 5:00 pm, $5.00
  Call 479-7979 to pre-register

**Pressure Canning Green Beans**
- July 24, 5:00 p.m.
  Extension Center
Learn to assemble equipment and follow guidelines for canning methods and processing while learning to pressure can safely.

**CANNING TOMATOES**
- July 26, 5:00
  Demonstration on water bath method.
  Cost: $5.00
  Call to pre-register!

**DRYING AND FREEZING FOODS**
- June 26, 5:00
  Call to pre-register!
Learn basic drying and freezing techniques of preserving food.
Cost: $5.00

If you are interested in any of these programs call 479-7979 for more information!
In the past several newsletters, we have discussed the role of nitrogen in the environment and how it helps plants mature and develop. Let's shift gears and take a brief look at the role and importance of phosphorus, which is an extremely important (and often overlooked) nutrient for plant development.

Phosphorus (P) is an essential element classified as a macronutrient because of the relatively large amounts of P required by plants. Phosphorus is one of the three nutrients generally added to soils in fertilizers. One of the main roles of P in living organisms is in the transfer of energy. Organic compounds that contain P are used to transfer energy from one reaction to drive another reaction within cells. Adequate P availability for plants stimulates early plant growth and hastens maturity. Although P is essential for plant growth, mismanagement of soil P can pose a threat to water quality. The concentration of P is usually sufficiently low in fresh water so that algae growth is limited. When lakes and rivers are polluted with P, excessive growth of algae often results. High levels of algae reduce water clarity and can lead to decreases in available dissolved oxygen as the algae decays, conditions that can be very detrimental to game fish populations.

**The Phosphorus Cycle**

The P cycle is similar to several other mineral nutrient cycles in that P exists in soils and minerals, living organisms, and water. Although P is widely distributed in nature, P is not found by itself in elemental form. Elemental P is extremely reactive and will combine with oxygen when exposed to the air. In natural systems like soil and water, P will exist as phosphate, a chemical form in which each P atom is surrounded by 4 oxygen (O) atoms. Orthophosphate, the simplest phosphate, has the chemical formula PO$_4^{3-}$. In water, orthophosphate mostly exists as H$_2$PO$_4^-$ in acidic conditions or as HPO$_4^{2-}$ in alkaline conditions. Phosphate is taken up by plants from soils, utilized by animals that consume plants, and returned to soils as organic residues decay in soils (Figure 1). Much of the phosphate used by living organisms becomes incorporated into organic compounds. When plant materials are returned to the soil, this organic phosphate will slowly be released as inorganic phosphate or be incorporated into more stable organic materials and become part of the soil organic matter. The release of inorganic phosphate from organic phosphates is called mineralization and is caused by microorganisms breaking down organic compounds. The activity of microorganisms is highly influenced by soil temperature and soil moisture. The process is most rapid when soils are warm and moist but well drained. Phosphate can potentially be lost through soil erosion and to a lesser extent to water running over or through the soil.

Many phosphate compounds are not very soluble in water; therefore, most of the phosphate in natural systems exists in solid form. However, soil water and surface water (rivers and lakes) usually contain relatively low concentrations of dissolved (or soluble) phosphorus. Depending on the types of minerals in the area, bodies of water usually contain about 10 ppb or more of dissolved P as orthophosphate. Water bodies may also contain organic P and phosphate attached to small particles of sediment. Total phosphorus in water is all of the phosphorus in solution regardless of its form and is often the form reported in water quality studies.

**Rivers and lakes usually contain relatively low concentrations of dissolved phosphorus**

**Figure 1. The phosphorus cycle.**
phosphorus is P that is estimated to be available to organisms like algae that are present in a lake or river. This is usually estimated by a chemical test which is designed to measure the dissolved P and the particulate P that are easily available. This is a measure of the P that is of immediate concern to water quality.

The word phosphorus or P refers to the element and is also used as a general term when a particular chemical form of P is not being designated. For example, the total P content of a soil or plant material is usually expressed as percent P. However, fertilizer analyses are usually reported as percent P2O5. The phosphate form (P2O5) is a chemical produced during fertilizer analysis, but does not exist in either fertilizers or soils.

**Forms of Phosphorus in Soils**

In soils P may exist in many different forms. In practical terms, however, P in soils can be thought of existing in 3 "pools":

- **solution P**
  - **active P**
  - **fixed P**

The solution P pool is very small and will usually contain only a fraction of a pound of P per acre. The solution P will usually be in the orthophosphate form, but small amounts of organic P may exist as well. Plants will only take up P in the orthophosphate form. The solution P pool is important because it is the pool from which plants take up P and is the only pool that has any measurable mobility. Most of the P taken up by a crop during a growing season will probably have moved only an inch or less through the soil to the roots. A growing crop would quickly deplete the P in the soluble P pool if the pool was not being continuously replenished.

The active P pool is P in the solid phase which is relatively easily released to the soil solution, the water surrounding soil particles. As plants take up phosphate, the concentration of phosphate in solution is decreased and some phosphate from the active P pool is released. Because the solution P pool is very small, the active P pool is the main source of available P for crops. The ability of the active P pool to replenish the soil solution P pool in a soil is what makes a soil fertile with respect to phosphate. An acre of land may contain several pounds to a few hundred pounds of P in the active P pool. The active P pool will contain inorganic phosphate that is attached (or adsorbed) to small particles in the soil, phosphate that reacted with elements such as calcium or aluminum to form somewhat soluble solids, and organic P that is easily mineralized.

Adsorbed phosphate ions are held on active sites on the surfaces of soil particles. The amount of phosphate adsorbed by soil increases as the amount of phosphate in solution increases and vice versa (Figure 2). Soil particles can act either as a source or a sink of phosphate to the surrounding water depending on conditions. Soil particles with low levels of adsorbed P that are eroded into a body of water with relatively high levels of dissolved phosphate may adsorb phosphate from the water, and vice versa.

The fixed P pool of phosphate will contain inorganic phosphate compounds that are very insoluble and organic compounds that are resistant to mineralization by microorganisms in the soil. Phosphate in this pool may remain in soils for years without being made available to plants and may have very little impact on the fertility of a soil. The inorganic phosphate compounds in this fixed P pool are more crystalline in their structure and less soluble than those compounds considered to be in the active P pool. Some slow conversion between the fixed P pool and the active P pool does occur in soils.

![Figure 2. Relationship between P adsorbed by soil and P in solution](image-url)
Every child is unique. Every family deals with different issues. There are some things, however, that many parents deal with when their children are around a certain age. The way parents choose to deal with these issues has an important impact on how healthy and competent their children become. Knowing about the different stages a child goes through as they age can help parents make better parenting decisions. If you’re wondering when it is appropriate for young children to start watching television, when your preteen can be a safe babysitter, or at what age your teen is ready to start learning to drive, then learning about ages and stages can help you make informed decisions. This series of articles will begin at the beginning – birth to age two.

**Intellectual Development**
- Children at this age learn by exploring with their hands and mouth. They bang, throw, drop, shake, and put items in their mouths.
- Hiding things will get more difficult when your child starts to look for hidden objects. By 24 months, he can find things hidden under two or three other items.
- Learning how to use everyday objects is an important development at this age. Kids learn how to use a spoon. They learn to drink from a cup. They learn to comb their hair.
- By age 2, a child typically will have a vocabulary of 50 words. As she learns to speak, she’ll use two- and three-word sentences, like "More juice," "Me want cookie," and "Up, up."

**Physical Development**
- Children will first learn to hold their head up. Little by little, they begin to roll and to sit (usually by six months).
- Kids learn to creep, then crawl, pull themselves up, walk while holding onto furniture, stand, and then walk two or three steps without assistance (usually by 12 months).
- At 24 months, children can begin to run, kick a ball, and walk up and down stairs (while holding onto someone’s hand).

**Social Development**
- You can expect your child to imitate facial expressions, and even develop a social smile by three months.
- Talking begins with babbling, which leads to gradually learning to say and respond to simple words and phrases.
- Toddlers will play in parallel—near another child, but not with that child.

**Emotional Development**
- Crying is the primary means of communication when infants’ and toddlers’ needs are not being met.
- Similarly, they smile and giggle when they want more of something, and turn their head, shut their eyes, or cry when they want less of something.

**Spiritual Development**
- Even very young children discover a spiritual perspective of the world. If parents and caregivers are warm and caring, they’ll find a wonderful world.
- A sense of spirit is developed through the five senses: seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, and tasting. Spiritual practices that engage the senses (such as having certain foods on a holiday or lighting a candle) are helpful.
- Making spiritual practices (e.g., music, worship, service, meditation, prayer) a part of family life encourages your children to embrace spirituality.

For more information about child development visit: http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/Child.html
For more tips on parenting, visit this Extension website: http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/parenting.html

Source: http://www.parentfurther.com/ages-stages
Usually, there is one person more organized than everyone else in a family. If that person is you, it can get pretty frustrating when other family members do not embrace organization the way you do. Here are some ways to encourage your family to “get on board”.

1. Do it yourself.
This might go without saying, but if you expect your family to put their dirty dishes in the dishwasher, hang their clothes in the closet, put their papers away, and clean up after themselves; you will first have to do these things yourself. Why would you expect them to be neat and organized if you are messy? Before you start, make sure you are willing to do everything you are asking your family members to do.

2. Make it simple.
Keep the organizational tasks logical, easy, and simple. If the children are to get their things ready for school the next day, then make it simple. Put clothes out on a hanger on the closet door. Place backpacks and coats in a designated location near the door so they can be picked up on the way out. Think things through or even let your children help come up with ideas!

3. Ask them to do it.
Unless you ask for something to get done, it probably won’t. Even if the clothes are folded and sitting at the end of the bed, your kids might not realize that the clothes should be put away — unless you ask them to do it. If your family members aren’t naturally clean and organized, their brains don’t constantly think “what can I do next” — so we need to ask them (and make sure to ask nicely)! Some families make up chore charts that are posted so kids can check off items as they complete them.

4. Show them how to do it.
If your family members have never had to fold their clothes, clean the bathroom, or load the dishwasher, there’s a pretty good chance they won’t intuitively know how to do it. So after you ask them to do it, show them how to do it — especially if you have a specific way of doing it. If you like the socks folded a certain way — show them. If you want the dishwasher loaded in a specific way — show them. If you want them to unload their backpacks into a specified location — show them. And yes, you might have to show them more than once, but just keep at it! Over time, and with persistence on your part, these things will become second nature.

5. Let them do it.
One of the main reasons to get your family on board is to alleviate some of your responsibilities, right? So once you’ve asked them to do something and showed them how to do it, then back off and let them do it! Your children or your spouse might not fold the laundry as nicely as you would or clean the bathroom as thoroughly as you would, but at least they’re doing it.

Once they are capable of doing what you ask, don’t stand over them to make sure they do it perfectly. If they do mess up a little, it’s okay to correct them after the fact, or “remind” them of how they should be doing it: however, they won’t learn unless you actually let them do it on their own. Avoid being overly critical about how tasks are completed. Sometimes it even may seem that it would be easier to just do it yourself — and that may be true initially. But, they will learn and it will make your life easier in the long run. Besides, your kids need to learn how to take care of things so they have the skills they need when it is time for them to be out on their own. Everyone needs to know how to wash clothes, sweep a floor, and dust!

6. Make it fun to do it.
Not every chore has to be fun, but, if some of these organizing chores are a little more fun, your family will be much more likely to participate.

If you want your children to put their dirty laundry in the clothes basket instead of on the floor, try putting the clothes basket under a basketball hoop so they can “shoot” their clothes into the hamper! Or encourage family members to keep the bathroom neat and organized by letting each person pick out a brightly colored bin to store their items in. Along this same line, having colored bathroom accessories for each person might help organization too. All red items belong to Sally and all pink ones to Sue!

Giving rewards for a job well done might be helpful too. Encourage your children to get rid of 25 toys by allowing them to pick one new toy. Let them have a special treat or do something fun once they’ve accomplished their chores. Children do not need to be rewarded for every task they complete, but all of us like to be praised and have an occasional treat!

7. Thank them for doing it.
We don’t always get thanked or praised every time we clean and organize something around our house, but a simple “thank-you” goes a long way when you’re trying to get your family on board.

By implementing these simple tips, there’s a good chance that (over time) your family members will “get on board” with your organizing efforts and thus alleviate some of your responsibilities. Don’t give up! Success takes time and consistency, but is worth the effort. At the very least, you’ll give your family a taste of what you do every day, and hopefully teach them a few new skills in the process!

Source: http://moneysavingmom.com/2012/03/ask-the-organizer-tips-to-get-your-family-on-board.html