

# Impacting YOU **I**

"Impacting You" is a monthly report used to communicate University of Illinois Extension programming impacts to stakeholders.

Dear Valued Stakeholder:

Extension plays a vital role in building a strong community by providing services that help solve problems, develop skills, and create a better future for local residents and youth. From reliable information to help businesses weather the economic effect of COVID-19 to activities to help families stay healthy in body and spirit, Illinois Extension remains a trusted source to address the most pressing issues in the state of Illinois relating to food, health, environment, community, and economy.

It is my pleasure to present this brief impact report of the programs and events offered to the residents of Franklin, Jackson, Perry, Randolph and Williamson Counties during this past month.

*Lynn Heins, Extension Director  
Serving Franklin, Jackson, Perry, Randolph & Williamson Counties*

2,837

Total  
Contacts

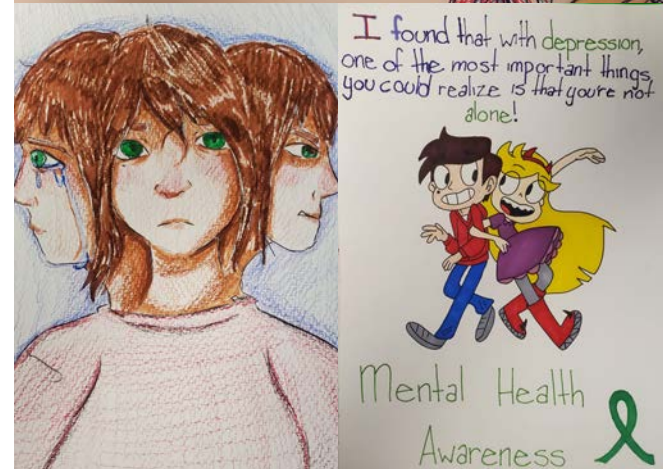
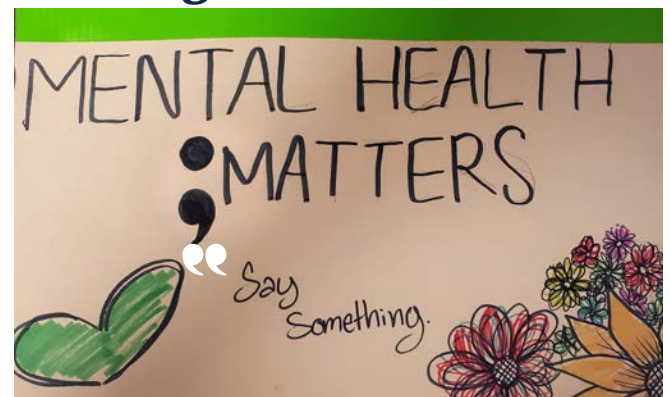
106

Total Number  
of Programs &  
Events

## Local youth learn about mental health through 4-H curriculum

Health is an essential part of 4-H. Just like exercise and nutrition are a part of good health, mental health plays an important role in our daily lives. 4-H Extension Educator Carrie Eldridge and Williamson County 4-H Program Coordinator Ramona Girtman raised awareness about mental health with students at Project ECHO Alternative School & STAR Quest Academy Regional Safe School.

In the 'Your Thoughts Matter' mental health curriculum, youth understand more about mental health, why it is important to overall well-being, and steps that promote understanding and action. It is also used to learn about mental health disorders and how to identify strategies for self-help and to help others. The final lesson was to create a visual to help raise awareness. Check out the beautiful artwork created by local students that participated in the program throughout the past semester.



## Local 4-H and FFA members place at livestock judging contest

Cold weather didn't keep over 100 local FFA and 4-H members from gathering at the DuQuoin State Fairgrounds for the return of the in-person livestock judging contest on Saturday, March 12. Livestock judging is the evaluation of an animal's characteristics and making a comparison to other animals and the ideal standard of that particular class. Extension Program Coordinator Rhonda Shubert has been hosting this local event for many years and was excited to see such a large turnout. The event teaches youth how to evaluate livestock that will enter the food system. Many of the participating youth will go on to showcase their own livestock at local fairs this summer. For a full list of winners for the 2022 contest, visit [extension.illinois.edu/news-releases/southern-illinois-youth-place-livestock-and-dairy-judging-contest](https://extension.illinois.edu/news-releases/southern-illinois-youth-place-livestock-and-dairy-judging-contest).



## Repotting workshop gets houseplants ready for the spring



Local plant owners got their indoor houseplants ready for spring during a recent plant repotting workshop. Even though plants can be repotted any time of the year, early spring is optimal because it is the beginning of the plants' natural growing season. Extension Educator Katie Bell demonstrated how to repot houseplants and discussed propagation during the program. She noted that it is important to repot plants during spring because it allows the plant to grow larger, prevents the roots from becoming pot bound, and provides an opportunity to refresh the soil. To learn more about upcoming events in the area, visit [extension.illinois.edu/fjprw/events](https://extension.illinois.edu/fjprw/events).

## Educators share news of Extension on Capitol Hill

Important conversations tackle topics to improve the lives of all Illinois residents. University of Illinois Extension educators recently met with Congressional staff on Capitol Hill to discuss agriculture, nutrition security, water quality, 4-H youth development, and more. Local representatives included Commercial Agriculture Educator Talon Becker and Family Life Educator Robin Ridgley.

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