



Improving relationships and reducing stress and anger



How Michigan Benefits

The National Institute of Mental Health estimates that the total financial cost of mental disorders was \$467 billion in the U.S. in 2012. Your support of Michigan State University (MSU) Extension social-emotional programs benefits community members by decreasing the mental, emotional, social and economic costs associated with violence in communities.

In 2017, the state's \$61.9 million investment in MSU AgBioResearch and MSU Extension generated more than \$1 billion for Michigan residents. Every dollar the state invested in MSU AgBioResearch and MSU Extension resulted in an additional \$2.50 leveraged in federal funds and external contracts, grants and other revenues, as well as \$6.22 in additional community benefits. As a result, MSU Extension and MSU AgBioResearch are able to serve Michigan residents with a benefit/cost ratio of 18:1.

THE ISSUE

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, in 2016, an estimated 44.7 million adults had some form of mental illness. In Michigan, 25 percent of children live below the federal poverty level and 34 percent live in families where no parent has full-time, year-round employment. Poverty and chronic economic stress compound the issues of ongoing and toxic stress, harmful coping behaviors and relationship violence.

More than 32,400 Michigan children were documented victims of child abuse and neglect in 2010. Neurological research has shown that abuse and neglect can alter early brain development and result in childhood developmental delays, poor physical health, lower academic achievement, social difficulties and aggression, as well as longer term health problems such as alcoholism, chronic disease, depression and substance abuse.

MSU EXTENSION ACTION

MSU Extension addresses the issues of violence and stress through its focus on social and emotional health. The overarching goal of this programming is helping young people and adults learn to foster healthier relationships and settings that are free from violence, abuse, bullying and harassment. In 2017 alone, MSU Extension social-emotional health programming reached more than 2,000 people. These community-based sessions provided participants with proven strategies to promote safe and healthy relationships.

THE IMPACT (2017)

Stress Less With Mindfulness introduces participants to the experience and practice of mindfulness to reduce stress. Mindfulness can be defined as paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment and nonjudgmentally. As a result of the training, participants showed improvement on these key outcomes:

- **96%** use mindful breathing to calm themselves in the face of stress.
- **98%** know three mindfulness tools to help them manage stress.
- **96%** can describe how a mindfulness perspective changes reactions to daily stressors.
- **96%** can identify their personal stress barometers.

MSU Extension's **RELAX: Alternatives to Anger** program offers techniques for calming down and de-stressing, problem solving, communicating and letting go of the past. Participants report that as a result of the program:

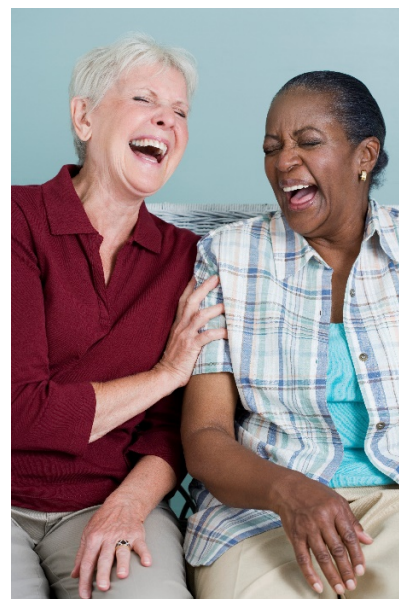
- **64%** work hard to be calm and talk things through.
- **64%** reduced their frequency in yelling and screaming, which indicates they have improved strategies to address aggression and violence.
- **63%** talk things through until they reach a solution.

In an effort to promote prevention of child abuse and neglect and to promote protective factors in families, MSU Extension delivers three programs across Michigan: **Nurturing Parenting**, **Building Strong Adolescents** and **Together We Can**. Participants report that as a result of these programs:

- **51%** improved their adaptive skills and strategies to use in times of crisis.
- **38%** improved their perceived concrete support that helps provide for emotional needs.

MSU Extension developed a **Communicating with Farmers Under Stress** workshop for people who work with agricultural producers and farm families. The program is designed to help them learn more about managing farm-related stress and how to approach and communicate with producers and families in need. Participants report that as a result of these workshops:

- **96%** learned where to send people for help in the community, and of those, over 60 percent said their awareness of community resources greatly increased.
- **92%** recognize warning signs of depression, suicide and mental illness.



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