

Make Food Choices That Support Growth and Development



As a parent or caregiver, many decisions must be made regarding children, including what to feed them. It's critical to ensure children eat enough food to support optimal growth and development but also to help them develop eating behaviors that can inhibit the development of obesity and related chronic illnesses in childhood and adulthood.

Research has begun to explore the influence of children's consumption of ultra-processed foods, or UPFs, said Ashlea Braun, Oklahoma State University Extension nutrition specialist.

"The Nova Food Classification System defines these foods as 'industrial formulations typically with five or more and usually many ingredients not commonly used in culinary preparation,'" Braun said. "Research shows that children consume about 70% of their daily calories from UPF, while adults consume nearly 60% of their daily calories from UPF. Although there aren't any recommendations for the amount of UPF that can be consumed in a day, excessive consumptions have been linked to an increased risk of chronic illness."

For example, research in 2021 found that each additional serving of UPF per day is associated with a 5% increased risk of overall cardiovascular disease. Not only are there long-term risks associated with excessive consumption of UPF, but introducing these foods too early and/or in excess in childhood may have unique impacts on health risks.

Braun said research has shown children have worse locomotor development and cardiovascular fitness when they have a higher intake of UPF.

"When introduced too early, these highly processed foods may influence a preference for them," she said. "For many children, fast-food meals are the norm, and these foods are hyper-palatable, which may make children more likely to eat them over time."

Foods that are recommended for consumption among children, including fresh fruits, vegetables, lean meats, whole grains, and dairy may not be as appealing in comparison to UPF. And, some families plagued by food insecurity or residing in underserved communities, UPF may be the only foods to which they have constant access.

"These foods can be beneficial in these scenarios as they are shelf-stable, carry low risk of foodborne pathogens, and are easy to prepare for consumption," Braun said. "Some of these foods are fortified and/or enriched with nutrients to minimize the risk of nutrient deficiencies. Therefore, for families with low access to fresh foods, UPF can fill gaps in nutrition."

Parents and caregivers need to know the answer to this problem is not to consume zero UPF. Instead, prioritize consuming and improving access to minimally processed foods.

"Even if food to which families have access consists primarily of UPF, making choices that are relatively low in added sugars and salt, and higher in vitamins, minerals, protein, fiber and unsaturated fat, can help maximize choices," Braun said.

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Blaine County OSU Extension

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Holiday Bazaar

and Santa's Village

*Vendor booths with Christmas Crafts, Holiday Decorations and Foods
Door Prizes*

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2023

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**BLAINE COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS - FOLEY BUILDING
807 N. Newer in WATONGA, OKLAHOMA**



FREE ADMISSION- OPEN TO PUBLIC

Concession Stand Available



Bring the kids for special activities (at no cost):

12:30 p.m.- *Christmas Story Time*

1:00 p.m.- *Christmas Craft Workshop* (repeated at 1:30 p.m.)

2:00 p.m.- *Christmas Craft Workshop* (repeated at 2:30 p.m.)

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.- *Pictures and Visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus*
(bring your own camera)

Sponsored by: Blaine County Oklahoma Home & Community Education (OHCE)



EXTENSION

For information, call Blaine County OSU Extension at 580-623-5195

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Blaine County OHCE *News and Notes*



Holiday Bazaar & Santa's Village

Remember the annual Holiday Bazaar & Santa's Village is Saturday, December 2. We have a nice variety of vendor booths this year and we look forward to members helping out with the OHCE Country Store and the Christmas Craft Workshops for kids. A full flyer is included in this letter.

Leader Lessons

The lesson materials for your January meetings– "*The Power of Positive Attitudes*"– will be available for pick up at the OSU Extension Center on Thursday, December 14.

The Lesson Leader Training in January (for your February meetings) will be Thursday, January 25 at 10 a.m. at the Watonga Library. The lesson is "*Food Product Dating*".

Awards

OHCE awards that are due January 19 include: Member of the Year, Young Member of the Year, Heart of OHCE, Rookie of the Year, Life Story Essays, and County and Local Report Books. Contact Dana for forms and assistance.

Check out our Facebook page and website!

For updates and announcements, check out and "Like" our page on Facebook: *Blaine County OSU Extension*. Also, visit our website and add it to your favorites: <http://extension.okstate.edu/county/blaine>

5th and 8th Grade Wellness Days

Thank you for the donation of muffins and bananas for the Blaine County 8th Grade Wellness Day and for the financial donation towards lunches for both the Blaine County 5th and 8th Grade Wellness Days. Leftover muffins from the 8th grade day will be used for the 5th grade day. The 8th Grade event was held November 14 and the 5th Grade event will be December 5.

County Officers Meeting

County officers will have their quarterly planning meeting on Monday, January 22 at noon at the Watonga Library.

2024 Yearbooks

We are working on getting 2024 yearbooks prepared for all members– and hope to have those ready for pick up along with lesson materials by December 14.

Spring Association Meeting

Looking ahead...our county Spring Association Meeting will be on Thursday, March 7. If anyone has an idea for a speaker or program please let Dana know.

West District (North Region) Meeting

Be looking for more information on the district meeting that will be held on Saturday, March 23 in Laverne. Mark your calendars!

OKLAHOMA HOME & COMMUNITY EDUCATION, INC. (OHCE)

Objectives of Oklahoma Home & Community Education:

- To improve Family & Consumer Sciences practices and skills
- To develop leadership potential
- To provide community service opportunities

Members are involved in programs including:

- Arts and crafts and volunteering for county fairs
- Helping raise reading skills of youth in Oklahoma
- Preserving our history and celebrating the roles that families have played in our communities
- Providing both youth and adult scholarship programs
- Nutrition and health programs for both youth and adults
- Family well-being programs
- And many more.

A member belongs to:

- their local OHCE group
- their county OHCE association
- the state OHCE association
- Country Women's Council of USA (CWC)
- Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW).

Learn more at: <https://education.okstate.edu/outreach/fcs/ohce/index.html>

OHCE Groups in Blaine County:

- Domestic Engineers- President– Mary Larson, 580-791-1126 (meets 2nd Tuesdays at 6:00 pm)
- Pleasant Valley- President– Terri Crawford, 580-623-9469 (meets 3rd Thursdays at 6:00 pm)





**OKLAHOMA COOPERATIVE
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Newsletter Editor:

Family & Consumer Sciences assists communities, families, youth and individuals address issues of health, wealth and well-being through research-based Extension education and programs that are proven to work.



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