



OHCE History

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Rural American Women

- Family was most important
- Formal education was ended early
- Transportation was unreliable
- Women married young, sometimes moved far from their families—lacked a support group
- Living conditions were primitive when compared to today's standards

Late 1800s-early 1900s, the clubs were not unified, and called themselves by different names



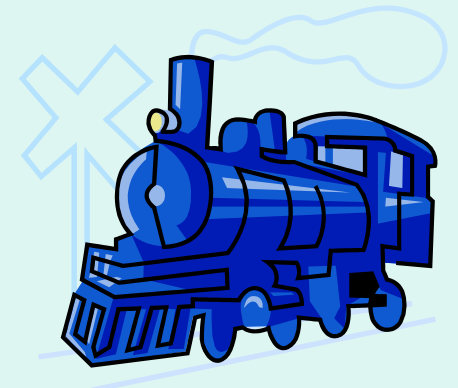
“Show and Tell Method”

- The “show and tell method” came about in 1903 when the nation’s cotton crop was threatened by the boll weevil.
- The USDA recognized the need of county agriculture agents to educate farmers, and the need of home demonstration agents to educate women in ways to make life better for their families



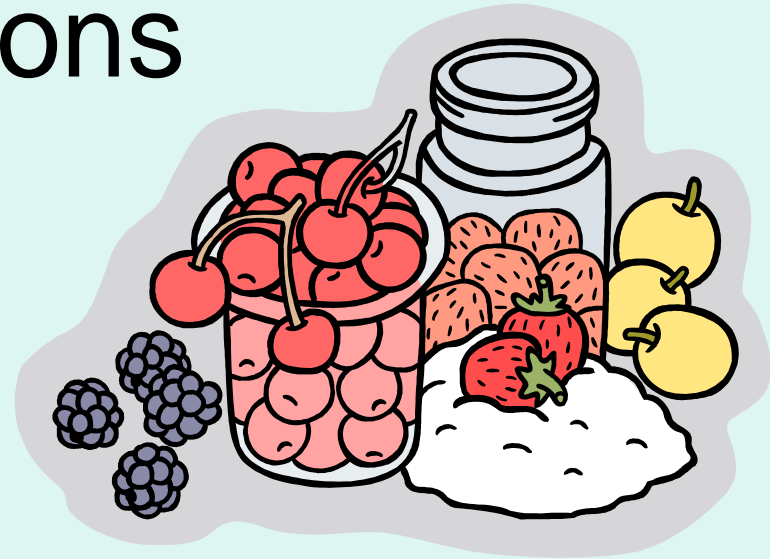
Early Extension

- In 1905, trains in Louisiana carried home economics teachers from Louisiana Polytechnic Institute to give lectures and demonstrations on better practices in homemaking. The first Louisiana home demonstration agent was employed in 1912.



Early Lessons

- Food preservation
- Mattress making
- Quilting
- Kitchen improvement contests
- Sewing clothing and household linens
- Getting involved in kid's education—
providing balanced lunches, and
supporting the 4-H clubs



Extension Partnership

- In 1862, the Morrill Act was passed by the US Legislature which granted federal land to each state to establish a college to teach agriculture and mechanical arts, including home economics. (OSU)
- In 1890, a second Morrill Act added black public colleges and institutions in 16 southern states to the land grant system (Langston University)

- In 1914, the Extension Service was formally established in each state to provide instruction and demonstrations in home economics and related subjects to those not affiliated with land-grant institutions.
- Also in 1914, the Smith-Lever Act created federal, state, and county funding for the advancement of agriculture and a division of home economics within the USDA

World War I Era (late teens and early 1920s)

- Members joined the war effort by increasing individual food production
- Making comfort kits for the Red Cross
- The Great Depression happened soon after, emphasis was placed on maintaining safe diets at a minimum cost
- In 1928, prevention of pelegra received special attention



Home Extension Reached all

- Extension Educators traveled all over the country, providing research based education to homemakers. Some traveled by car, but many traveled by train, horse and buggy. Many spent the night with a local family, then returned home the next day. In 1928, there were 18,956 clubs with 388,197 members across the US.

- One of the greatest first contributions of home demonstration agents was to teach canning. Pounds of fruit and vegetables were going to waste and families didn't know how to preserve them. The agent traveled to a community, conducted a demonstration, spent the night and then moved on. After a group lesson, each woman got to keep the pressure cooker for one day, then pass it on. During the Great Depression, there was a "cow killing" because of lack of feed. The art of pressure canning preserved the meat for meals ahead.
- July 24, 1935, the Oklahoma State Home Demonstration Council was organized



Club members become community leaders

- Clubs raised money for pressure cookers for all to share, to buy buildings to hold club meetings,
- To raise money to modernize the kitchens in their meeting places
- In 1935, the state clubs organized to form a national organization for extension homemakers clubs, but Oklahoma did not vote to join that organization until 1944



The 1930s



- Problems encountered in the 1930s and addressed by extension educators included:
- Health and safety *4-H
- Family relations *home and
- Education community
- Libraries beautification
- The official name was National Home Demonstration Council

Homemakers had influence

- County Health Departments were established due to pressure from homemakers groups
- The school lunch program was started by homemakers preparing hot soup which was served in the schools
- Rural reading programs, traveling libraries, and establishment of community libraries was started by homemakers groups



Homemakers raised money

- To finance family income or club treasuries, members raised money through sale of home products.
- Clothing, needlework, rugs, fruit cakes, jellies, jams, were sold
- “Curb Markets” and organized cooperatives helped members sell surplus farm products



Homemakers were resourceful

- Men's suits were remodeled into jackets and skirts for women
- Soap was made from surplus fats
- Mattress making helped use up surplus cotton
- The droughts, dust storms, and grasshopper plagues were addressed at club meetings



The 1940s

- The Second World War caused a recession felt by all. Reducing home labor was important as homemakers learned to “Eat it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.”
- Rationing of gas and tires reduced members attending state and national meetings. Clubs promoted the training of at least one member of each household in first aid and home nursing, as health care was in shortage.



- Women learned to reupholster furniture, preserve food, repair appliances, and save money at every chance.
- They supported the war effort by knitting sweaters and socks for service men, rolling bandages and sewing for the Red Cross. Victory gardens helped preserve the nation's food supply, collections of rubber, iron, and other resources was important.
- Homemakers made life more pleasant by planning weiner roasts, 4th of July ice cream socials, costume parties, amateur shows, and pie suppers to please both parents and children. Through the war years, this strengthened community friendships.



- Home Demonstration club members:
- Sponsored child immunization clinics
- Made United Nations flags for school
- Taught each other how to use labor-saving equipment and how to improve and remodel homes (electricity just coming to the county in the 1940s)
- Harmon County Council helped pay the salary for a RN for their county.

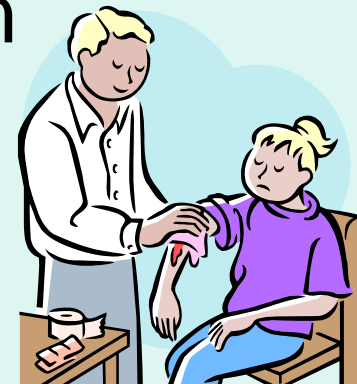


In the 1950s



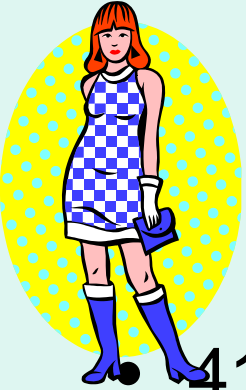
- NEHC was growing
- More concern about polio, flies and raw sewage, cleaning up home grounds and communities. Many roadside parks, road markers, and community signs were the result of club projects
- Major emphasis was placed on safety as more Americans took to the highways. A grant from the Allstate Insurance company provided for safety seminars annually until 1975. No measure of the lives saved, human suffering reduced or economic value, but NEHC was credited for the beginning action to get the drunk driver off the road, and seatbelt legislation.

- Civil defense was added to the citizenship program of work, with the “bomb” scare. Members built home shelters and stocked them with emergency food supplies.
- First Aid training and home nursing courses were popular, thousands of trees were planted by EH clubs, toys were made for the Salvation Army, women were encouraged to get annual physicals, some clubs made loans to 4-H members in college attending medical schools.



- With the decreasing number of small family farms, families were moving to town, and EH clubs followed. Urban clubs grew, but not fast enough to turn around the decline in total membership.
- The “city” women came to the organization with interests in tailoring, hat making, upholstering, and interior decorating.
- In 1959, McCurtain County, OK homemakers began work on a homemakers building at the fairgrounds and completed it in two years.





The 1960s

- 41 state councils belonged to NEHC, with an individual membership of 867,805.
- Television was in most homes, society became more mobile and more women went to work.
- EH clubs still a major force behind county fairs, providing food service, but instead of in tents, in modern kitchens.
- In 1965, the name of the organization was changed from State Home Demonstration Council to Oklahoma Extension Homemakers Council



- EH clubs continued safety programs, and was designated in the top ten of the 152 organizations in the US working toward the removal of hazards to safety.
- Interest in clean-up campaigns continued. Clubs in 25 states entered Lady Bird Johnson's beautification contest.
- New knowledge about good nutrition showed that children did not learn as readily without it. This opened up a new opportunity to train aids, who later became nutrition educators under the EFNEP program.



- In 1969, the Rubella vaccine was developed and EH clubs undertook a campaign to convince parents to immunize their children.
- At the national meeting, members were introduced to “freeze drying” process for food, Teflon, miniaturized electronic devices used in pacemakers, fireproof yarn used in suits for firemen as well as household textiles.



The 1970s

- EH clubs began to lose more membership numbers as more women work during the day
- Families had more of everything, including problems influenced by the outside culture. More awareness of drug and alcohol use as they affected highway safety influenced programming.
- The national board began using the member's given names, rather than their husband's names in their directory.
- The NEHC bylaws were reviewed and an anti-discrimination clause was added to meet Affirmative Action regulations
- Slowly, a few men joined EH clubs, and learning sessions geared toward them were included

- As always, EH clubs continued to work extensively with 4-H clubs, county fairs, learning more about management skills, achieving financial stability, improving leadership skills, and made an effort to increase recruitment efforts to boost membership and to include minority groups.



The 1980s



Program emphasis included:

Playground safety, the farmer's role in feeding the world, the work of UNICEF, children's fairs, preservation of the American art of quilting, nutrition, and finances

EH clubs collected eyeglasses which were repaired and used by college students who tested eyes and fitted glasses for the needy in developing countries

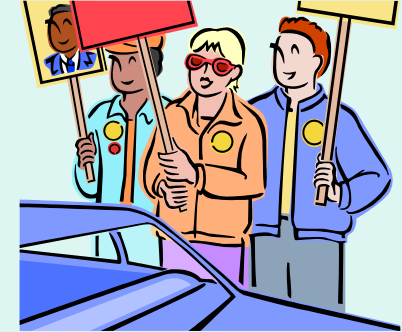
- A National program, “Healthy Mother, Healthy Babies” was introduced with attention to maternal and newborn health care
- Members learned about forgotten heritage skills, day-care centers and playground equipment repair, summer youth programs, wills and estate planning, nutrition, ovarian cancer research, home hazards, power tool and traffic safety, and seatbelt use

- 1986 was the 50th anniversary of the NEHC. It was a year to look back over its history, build on the past, and look to the future . Charter members were honored, the oldest clubs were honored also. Clubs were encouraged to plant marigolds throughout the country to commemorate the golden future on the golden anniversary.
- Recognition was awarded to 2,867 fifty year clubs





The 1990s



- NEHC was one of the largest adult volunteer educational organizations in the USA with membership of 355,396 volunteers in 22,228 organized groups in 43 states. NEHC volunteers had taken the leadership in family education across America by reaching not only their own membership, but by extending knowledge face to face with millions of non members.

- In 1992, the state association changed the name from Oklahoma Extension Homemakers Council to Oklahoma Association for Family and Community Education, and joined the National FCE organization.
- In 1996, Oklahoma was # 1 in the nation in membership.
- In 2000, Oklahoma members voted to disaffiliate with NFCE and change the name to Oklahoma Home and Community Education, and not be nationally affiliated.

- Now, in the 2000s, HCE is still a viable and active part of each of the 77 counties in Oklahoma, doing important community improvement and leadership work in our towns, cities, and communities. HCE clubs still work extensively with 4-H, young parents, county fairs, volunteering at schools, hospitals, fire departments, health departments, and doing all they can to improve the family lives of others. HCE continues to be sponsored by and in a partnership with Oklahoma State University.

