



Human Development & Relationships Programming: 2025 Community Forum Update



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On February 28, 2025, Dodge County hosted a Community Needs Forum to identify local priorities related to family well-being, workforce support, and community connection. Since then, UW Extension has worked collaboratively to address these priorities through targeted programming and partnerships.

Progress Toward Identified Priorities

1. Building Trust and Connection Within Families and Communities

Efforts to build trust and connection include:

- **Monthly Drop-In Parenting Support: "Let's Talk Parenting"**
In partnership with Beaver Dam Unified School District, a monthly drop-in session is held on the first Friday of each month. Topics include:
 - **October: Positive Discipline & Boundaries** – Role-playing, Q&A, and strategy handouts.
 - **November: Routines & Rituals** – Worksheets, shared experiences, and visual schedule templates.
 - **December: Media, Screens & Connection** – Planning tools, media literacy discussions, and tech agreements.

2. Supporting Parenting Skills and Early Childhood Education

Programming includes both universal and targeted support:

- **Issue Brief on Childcare Needs**
Authored a brief based on literature review and internal survey results from Dodge County Community Development. This document supports future planning and dialogue around childcare solutions.

3. Addressing Social Isolation and Community Connection

Efforts to reduce isolation and foster connections include:

- **Thrive @ Work: Financial Wellness Series**
In partnership with Dodge County Human Resources, monthly lunch-and-learns are offered to employees. Attendance averages 17 participants per session, with additional engagement through recorded content.
- **Planning for COMET Mental Health Program**
In collaboration with Dodge County Human Services, the Sheriff's Office, and Extension 4-H Youth Development, plans are underway to bring COMET: Changing Our Mental and Emotional Trajectory to Dodge County in 2026.

This update reflects the ongoing commitment to responsive, community-driven programming that strengthens families and promotes well-being across Dodge County.