

Central Region Spotlight: Webinars Successful Educational Delivery Method

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In the spring of 2020, University of Minnesota Extension Center for Family Development adapted in-person programming to meet the unique needs of individuals and families amid the COVID-19 pandemic through virtual programming. Sixty-three percent of our NEAFCS Minnesota Affiliate members presented webinars on financial capability, food safety, health and nutrition, and tenant education. Because of the success experienced in providing virtual education via webinars, they have continued to offer this type of programming while returning to in-person education.

The webinars have provided great opportunities for the Extension Center for Family Development to collaborate with specialists, graduate students, and extension educators across other UMN Extension Centers (Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources; Community Vitality; and Youth Development). In addition, they have collaborated with extension educators and faculty from numerous other states, including:

- South Dakota
- North Dakota
- Michigan
- Montana

They have also engaged with local, state, and national partners, such as the MN Department of Commerce, FEMA, MN Housing Partnership, National Low Income Housing Coalition, Itasca County Housing and Redevelopment Authority, and more. This virtual programming has resulted in multiple requests to partner with new agencies and organizations across the state to provide education to their participants.

The University of Minnesota has recognized the value of our UMN Extension Center for Family Development webinars. The Office of Human Resources began promoting the webinars to retirees. The UMN Wellbeing Program, through the Office of Human Resources, began offering 200 well-being points per webinar for employees and spouses covered by the University's medical insurance.

From May 2020 through August 2022, a total of 194 webinars were offered, with 13,350 registrations and 6,596 participants. Registrants were from all 87 counties of Minnesota, 44 other states, the District of Columbia, and at least 15 countries.

They are currently planning their 9th round of webinars, which will be held from September through December 2022. Webinars are offered in the thematic series of Charlas en Español (Talks in Spanish), Finding Balance; Later Life Decision Making; Making Cents of it All; No Place Like Home, Recovery & Health; and What's for Dinner? [Find out more about these series and webinars related to each topic.](#)