

SMART Couples Florida

IMPACTS AND OUTCOMES

2017-2018



WHAT IS THE SMART COUPLES PROJECT?



SMART Couples is a healthy marriage and relationship education program to help individuals and couples learn simple and effective skills to build happy, successful, life-long relationships.

SMART Couples is a 5 year, \$5 million grant

awarded in 2015 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration of Children and Families. The program is administered by county UF/IFAS Extension agents and grant-funded staff under the direction of Dr. Victor Harris with the UF/IFAS Extension Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences.



In 2017-2018, SMART Couples offered free relationship skills classes for teens, individuals, and couples in five targeted Florida counties.

The focus areas were:

- Youth relationship education
- Premarital relationship education
- Marriage enhancement and couple relationship education/skills

By 2020, we estimate that more than 7,500 Floridians will have taken our free in-person classes. In addition, thousands more will have benefited from the great information and resources available through our smartcouples.org website and social media outlets.

SMART COUPLES BY THE NUMBERS, 2017-2018

SMART Couples classes **significantly increased** participants' positive **interaction**, positive **bonding**, and relationship **satisfaction**.

2,223

class **participants**
(**3,541** total to date)

\$48,427

worth of incentives
distributed to participants
(meals, gift cards, other items)

163

workshops taught
(**18** ten-week youth workshops;
145 five-week adult workshops)

88%

of class **participants**
say their **relationship**
satisfaction has **increased**
due to the class

130

research-backed articles
published on our website
to date

90%

of class **participants** feel
“**extremely satisfied, very**
satisfied, or satisfied”
with their relationship
after class completion

19

full- and part-time **staff**
and **4** UF/IFAS
Extension Agents

53,000

website visitors

2,150

Facebook followers





WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT SMART COUPLES

The SMART Couples project has created a high-impact Extension program helping couples, old and new, in multiple counties across Florida. It speaks to the core objective for UF/IFAS Extension Family and Consumer Sciences of improving the well-being of Floridians. Families and couples need all the support they can get in today's world, especially from their significant others. Strong couples can help each other through tough economic times and health-related incidents and even make life's successes that much sweeter. I hope the program continues to grow and reach more couples in Florida.

Dr. Michael Gutter, Associate Dean for Extension and State Program Leader for 4-H Youth Development, Families & Communities, UF/IFAS Extension



The SMART Couples project is a good example of partnership between UF/IFAS Extension and communities, showing strong positive impacts on the couples who take the classes. The SMART Couples project puts research into action...and the evidence shows that it is making a real-life change in people's lives.

Dr. Tracy Irani, Professor and Department Chair, UF/IFAS Family, Youth, and Community Sciences Department

“A diverse group of participants made the conversations and insights very unique and personal.”

~ Before You Tie the Knot Workshop Participant

“I have learned how to control my anger and now [don’t] let a lot get to me. I learned how to talk out my problems instead of arguing.”

~ Relationship Smarts Plus 3.0 Workshop Participant (Youth)

“Loved the program. It has opened my eyes to becoming a better spouse and father.”

~ ELEVATE Workshop Participant

“[I’ve gained] more self-respect, and relationship values. I was able to leave a horrible relationship.”

~ Relationship Smarts Plus 3.0 Workshop Participant (Youth)

“I will take these skills with me for life!”

~ ELEVATE Workshop Participant

“[This] should be a required course before marriage. I would highly recommend this course to anyone.”

~ Before You Tie the Knot Workshop Participant

“This program is awesome, great instructors, fantastic environment, and just great people all around, including the other couples.”

~ ELEVATE Workshop Participant



OUR CLASSES

The three in-person classes offered by SMART Couples are taught by our professionally trained, dynamic staff. They're fun, engaging, personal, and effective. In our classes, participants laugh, learn, and have lots of fun! To find out more, read on.



ELEVATE

ELEVATE is a research-based program that helps couples understand the connection between emotions and physical reactions in our bodies. Participants learn how to increase positive communication, manage stress, set financial goals, deal with differences, and maintain a happy and healthy friendship.



Before You Tie the Knot

Marriage is a big and exciting step. With the help of this fun, research-based class, individuals and couples can be better prepared for the years ahead. Couples learn about healthy communication, money management, effective parenting, how to handle conflict, and more.



Relationship Smarts Plus 3.0

The romantic relationships that teens experience can affect them for life. Relationship Smarts Plus 3.0 is a fun and unique program designed to help teens learn how to set goals and make wise choices about relationships, partners, dating, and more.





TAKE A CLASS

Classes are available all year round. Visit our website, smartcouples.org and click on Classes. Or check out UF/IFAS Extension SMART Couples on Facebook (@UFIFASSmartCouples)—you'll see all our current classes featured as Facebook Events.

HOST A WORKSHOP

Would your organization or facility like to host one of our fun, free workshops? We're always looking for community partners who can help us get our message out into the community—and your group can benefit too! Go to the Classes page on smartcouples.org to get information today.

Visit our website,
SMARTCOUPLES.ORG
and click on Classes to find out more.



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