

Attach a 500-word “news story” covering a consumer food safety education activity happening in your community. Include the contact information for the sources you worked with (name and email address), and at least one high quality photograph. Suggestion: Read up on basic tips for preparing a short local news story before working on your story. (Some good sources to work with include your area cooperative extension food safety specialists, public health agencies, or local science teachers).

Contact Name: Kimberly Mitchell

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Students in Ms. Kimberly Mitchell’s Family and Consumer Sciences classroom at Talladega High School were working Friday morning as they began learning about basic food safety practices and techniques. The group completed a food safety experiment in class as a part of their ServSafe Manager training. This training will prepare them to take an exam and be credentialed in ServSafe Manager, a nationally recognized food safety credential that is in high demand amongst employers in a variety of food and human service related industries. Using two pieces of bread and two colored plastic bags, the students got a



firsthand glance at the importance of handwashing and took a big first step into their roles as the food safety leaders of the future. Before starting their experiment, the students were asked to wash their hands by ServSafe guidelines. This involves using warm water, soap, and thoroughly washing all the skin from your forearms down to your fingertips for a minimum of twenty seconds. While simple, this process is a crucial first step in preventing the spread of foodborne illnesses such as E Coli and Norovirus. After completing their hand washing, the students were given their first piece of bread and were instructed to only touch the bread with their clean hands. After handling the slice of bread for several seconds, the students put the slices in their blue plastic bags. Afterwards, the students were instructed to take their second piece of bread and wipe it on any surface that they would meet regularly in a food service environment. These surfaces could include trashcan lids, door handles, cell phones, chairs, and table tops. The students then placed the second piece of bread in their red plastic bags and labeled them with what surface they touched with their slice of bread. Finished for the day, the students left the bags in the classroom for the weekend. When they returned to class on Monday, they got a gross surprise! Mold had grown all over their “dirty surface” bread pieces, while their “clean hand” pieces remained the same, showing them firsthand

what kind of things could linger on dirty, unwashed hands. When asked, “Why is ServSafe so important”, Ms. Mitchell responded with, “ServSafe takes a complex topic and breaks it down into simpler, every day concepts. The training that I am providing these students is crucial to the safety of food consumers across the country, and when you think about it, that’s everyone. Where there is food, there will be people. Where there are people eating food, there will be the potential for unsafe food handling practices. Where there is a potential for a lack of food safety, I hope that you will find one of my students using the skills that they have learned in my room.” The students will be taking the ServSafe Manager Exam after the completion of their food safety training in early April. Moldy bread and all, the students cannot wait to dive into the world of food safety!