What is Family and Consumer Sciences?
Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) is the comprehensive body of skills, research and knowledge that helps individuals make informed decisions about their well-being, relationships and resources to become successful life managers and achieve optimal quality of life. (Adapted from www.aafcs.org)

Family and Consumer Sciences--the first STEM field?
The field of Family and Consumer Sciences had its beginnings in 1899, under the name Domestic Sciences and later Home Economics. Ellen Swallow Richards, the first female graduate and female faculty member of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), lead the way to use scientific knowledge to address water quality, food safety and safety of home environments. This ever evolving field transitions to meet the needs of individuals, families and communities through the application of research in the areas of biology, psychology, chemistry and others on a continual basis.

Family and Consumer Sciences Education and the Career Clusters:
Family and Consumer Sciences Education introduces students to the essential 21st century skills needed to meet their individual needs and those of the family, be it their own or others as a human services professional.

Kansas FCS Ed builds the technical skills through nine career clusters and twelve pathways. The career clusters Kansas FCS Ed courses are found within are:

- Human Services
- Education and Training
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Arts, AV Technology and Communication
- Architecture and Construction
- Government and Public Administration
- STEM
- Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources
- Business Entrepreneurship and Management

Family and Consumer Sciences Education addresses issues of today:
Family and Consumer Sciences Education addresses many of the issues of concern in today’s society including obesity prevention, bullying prevention, personal and family financial education, the impact of technology on individuals and families and building healthy relationships. It also introduces students to careers that work in human service fields such as early child development, geriatrics, social work, family counseling, credit counseling, nutrition education and dietetics, restaurant and event management and the visual arts—interior and textile design.

Facts to Support Family and Consumer Sciences Education:
- Based upon the body mass index for children ages 10-17, 4.8 million children are classified as overweight and 5.1 as obese.
- Fifty-three of every 1000 births are to unmarried women ages 15-44, with 47% of those to women 15-17.
- Seventeen of every 100 children live in households where food is insecure.
- Eighty-five of every 100 workers in 2010 consisted of working parents who require quality child care.
- The early child care field needs to fill 400,000 to 500,000 positions by 2018.
- Half of the fastest growing CTE programs are related to Early Childhood and Culinary Arts, which are associated with higher than average employment growth.
- FCS uses prevention education as a strategy to address society’s issues.
- FCS pathways offer the only course directly addressing financial literacy through consumer, personal and family financial education.
- FCS is the only CTE department with a focus upon the Human Services pathways that address the essential needs of children and families.

(Refer to http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=4692 for reference sources and additional statistics and related information.)

The Role of Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) Career and Technical Student Organization:
Students can expand and/or demonstrate their 21st century and technical skills within FCCLA. Many of the opportunities are embedded within the FCS classroom however others take the FCCLA member into the community to address individual, family and/or community needs. (For more information contact Pam Lamb, Kansas FCCLA at plamb@ksde.org or 785-296-2164)

For more information contact:
- Gayla Randel, Ed. Program Consultant
  Family and Consumer Sciences
  grandel@ksde.org or 785-296-4912

Updated 7-2013