



HUMAN ECOSYSTEM



**LINKING PEOPLE AND ENVIRONMENTS TO STRENGTHEN
FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES, AND WELL-BEING**

The human ecosystem explores the interconnectedness of individuals, families, and communities. Family and Consumer Sciences is a comprehensive body of knowledge, research methods, skills, applications, and practices to improve the quality of life for individuals, families, and communities. The interactions between individuals and families with their physical and social environments facilitate making informed personal decisions and creating public policy to enhance family well-being. The Human Ecosystems model acknowledges that different elements interact to shape the environments where families operate.

The Human Ecosystems approach employs an integrative conceptual framework to encompass its constituent elements. The “microenvironment” consists of complex interrelationships within the near environment, comprised of family members, personal skills, conceptual/mental resources, and physical structures. The “macroenvironment” is comprised of systems in the broader physical environment (nature) and social institutions. As an integrative framework, the Human Ecosystems model lends itself to interdisciplinary research by studying individuals in the context of the family or studying the family in the context of the community or society. Other human systems research examines the interactions between individuals, families, and their environment, including places of work, communities, and national and international influences.

The study of families as a human system is conducive to a multidisciplinary approach, with a focus on the social, emotional, and developmental factors that influence human behavior and well-being across the lifespan. Within society, the human system’s approach explores the interconnected structures and processes that involve people socially, economically, and politically. The Human Ecosystems approach optimizes how humans and technical systems can work together effectively to achieve positive outcomes. This research aims to enhance quality of life.