Illinois Leader

Helping Us Improve our Illinois 4-H Program

Each year, we select specific outcomes to evaluate. In 2014, we will be collecting data statewide to answer these critical questions:

1. Are we incorporating the essential elements of positive youth development programming into our 4-H club, program, and event experiences?
2. Have we guided youth towards making healthy lifestyle choices?
3. Have we positively influenced youth’s aspirations and interest in science?
4. How have we influenced our 4-H members’ career decisions?

We will collect this data by asking members in some of our clubs to complete a survey, or by asking youth attending programs and events for 4-H members and non-members.

- We do not think that there is any danger to children in completing this survey.
- Every young person will be given the option to not answer the questions.
- The surveys will be distributed and collected by a 4-H staff person.
- Surveys will be analyzed at a state level and a report shared with county offices and stakeholders at the end of the year.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Dr. Denise Oberle at 217-333-0912 or dlevgold@illinois.edu. If individuals have questions about their rights as a participant in this study or any concerns or complaints, they should contact the University of Illinois Institutional Review Board at 217-333-2670 (collect calls will be accepted if you identify yourself as a research participant) or via email at irb@illinois.edu.

Illinois 4-H Citizen Scientist Program Continues in 2014

Merging the 4-H aspects of community service and science will continue as teams of 4-H Citizen Scientists are properly trained to collect data on scientific issues related to water quality and environmental science. Through a partnership with Illinois RiverWatch, 4-H members and adult volunteers will be trained and fill an active role as 4-H Citizen Scientists by collecting scientific data pertaining to the environmental quality of Illinois streams. Interested junior/senior high 4-H members are encouraged to contact their local Extension office for training dates and locations in your area. Funding from ADM will cover training fees and each county participating will receive a 4-H Citizen Scientist Toolkit for use in their data collection.

4-H Continues to Respond to Food Security and Hunger

Following a very successful effort in 2013, Feeding and Growing Our Communities will continue to be a focus for 4-H clubs interested in responding to food security and hunger issues in their communities. Remaining funds from the Howard G. Buffett Foundation will provide Challenge Grants to 4-H clubs to aid their involvement as they become part of the solution by raising a vegetable garden or conduct other hunger awareness activities. Grant recipients will pledge a percentage of their production to local food pantries or other organizations serving individuals and families in need. Please contact Bill Million (wmillion@illinois.edu) for additional information and an application.
April is “Month of the Military Child”, honoring youth impacted by deployment.


Create [Wall of Heroes](http://bit.ly/WallOfHeroes) in your community where your 4-H club meets, at your library, school, or small business. The wall of heroes honors service members and their children when youth post photos of their Service member and themselves. Request a free Wall of Heroes banner when registering for “Purple Up! For Military Kids” and receive a photo mount template for the wall. *If you would like to post a Wall of Heroes at other times of the year, you may still request this resource at [http://bit.ly/WallOfHeroes](http://bit.ly/WallOfHeroes).*

Teens have the opportunity to explore the University of Illinois, potential degree programs and careers at the [2014 Illini Summer Academies](http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/events/summeracademies.cfm) program. University faculty and staff plan interactive learning sessions to provide an overview of actual college classes in various majors. The Illini Summer Academies is open to ANY Illinois youth who is currently in 8th to 12th grade. They also must fall within the 14-18 age range as of September 1, 2014.

ISA will be held June 22-25 in Champaign. Registration opens March 1, but in the meantime, you can learn more about the conference and sign up on an email list by checking this site: [http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/events/summeracademies.cfm](http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/events/summeracademies.cfm).

4-H House at the University of Illinois operates as a cooperative; its members share in the work needed to make the house function, including cooking, cleaning and general maintenance. The shared work reduces house expenses, making 4-H House an affordable option compared to dorms or other student housing. In fact, 4-H House currently saves members 64 percent compared to dorm living.

4-H House will be hosting two interviewing weekends, March 15-16 and April 11-12, for interested women. Due to a recent bylaw amendment, not only 4-H members, but young women with 3 years of leadership experience in a broad range of youth organizations are eligible to apply and live in the house. So, tell your 4-H members to invite their non-4-H friends going to the U of I to check out 4-H House as a housing option.

High-school seniors, current University of Illinois students and Parkland Pathway students are encouraged to apply to live at 4-H House. For more information, visit [www.4HHouse.com](http://www.4HHouse.com) or contact Carlie Toepper, Interviewing Chair, at 217-344-4784.

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