

Extension Connection



MAY 2012

Your county
extension office



**UW
Extension**
Cooperative Extension
Fond du Lac County

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All Year Long, 4-H Members Develop Skills for a Lifetime

Youth develop skills that will develop their capacity, enhance their employment, and help them contribute to our communities. These skills are developed by serving as a delegate to a leadership conference, taking responsibility to raise an animal, hosting an exchange youth for a month, developing a new community service initiative, serving on the planning committee for a fundraiser, leading a workshop to teach new officers their roles, participating on a state 4-H singing or art team, creating a poem for the writing contest, or giving a presentation in the speaking contest.

Here is what 4-H members are saying about 4-H ...

"The American Spirit Experience was a once in a lifetime opportunity.

I truly enjoyed seeing how our country came to be." *Jenny*

"Thanks for the 4-H scholarship. It will assist me in my education at UW Madison. 4-H changed my life. Thanks to all of you for making a difference." *Vicki*

"4-H has taught me to stick up for myself and to give 110% in all I do."

Elicia

"I really enjoyed attending the Wisconsin 4-H Youth Conference. I brought home many new ideas for community service ideas." *Zach*

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Annie Knowlton, Alto All-stars 4-H Club member, does a radio interview with Rae Nell Halbur after an award winning speech.

Strengthening Families

The Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14) is a parent, youth, and family skills-building curriculum designed to:

- * prevent teen substance abuse and other behavior problems
- * strengthen parenting skills
- * build family strengths

The program is delivered through seven sessions for families using realistic videos, role-playing, discussions, learning games, and family projects. The SFP program is a joint program between UW- Extension Fond du Lac County Family Living Program and the Fond du Lac County Dept. of Social Services. Spring and fall sessions are scheduled for families to attend. The Spring 2012 session had 18 individuals in attendance.

The SFP 10-14 is an evidence-based program and has been proven effective in:

- * delaying the onset of adolescent substance use
- * lowering levels of aggression
- * increasing the resistance to peer pressure in youth
- * increasing the ability of parents/caregivers to set appropriate limits and show affection to and support of their children

Teaching the Culture of 4-H

Upon joining 4-H, many new families soon realize that 4-H has a culture of its own. Family involvement is essential throughout the experience, 4-H members and adult volunteers work together to achieve goals, and 4-H members take initiative for their learning process. When joining 4-H, new families are usually overwhelmed with all of the opportunities and learning experiences, so one way that UW-Extension supports this transition is by offering guidance with monthly newsletter articles, providing activities and resources to club leaders, and leading an orientation for new families. At the new family orientation in April, 16 people were present and 5 families were mailed information directly. During the 2012 4-H enrollment period, there were 144 new 4-H members, many of which have older siblings that are already involved in 4-H. Upon attending the new family orientation, families have a better understanding of 4-H, its purpose, and how the annual cycle of 4-H is intentional in helping youth create goals, participate in learning experiences, and then reflect on how they've grown in the past year.

All Year Long, 4-H Members Develop Skills for a Lifetime - continued

“By participating in the Citizenship Washington Focus program I built my self-confidence to speak in front of a large group.” *Brian*

The mission of Fond du Lac County 4-H is enriching youth, families and communities through citizenship, leadership and life skills experiences. It is achieved one child at a time, all year long, in numerous ways, through a decade of the young person’s life, with the impact lasting a lifetime.