



Ohio 4-H Teen Connections

Camping is often mentioned as a 4-H member's most memorable experience. The opportunity to stay in cabins away from home, dive into new adventures, and connect with friends may bring out the excitement and laughter, but who needs to be there to help create the successful experience? The camp counselors!

This Teen Connections issue is dedicated to all Ohio 4-H camp counselors. Thank you for your commitment, enthusiasm and willingness to create safe adventures for campers.

For more info about Ohio 4-H camps, visit <http://www.ohio4h.org/4-h-camps>.



Thank you to the Ohio 4-H Foundation for its support of the Ohio 4-H Teen Connections.

4-H: Teaching Skills to Last a Lifetime



Jim Cain teaches team-building to teens at the 2012 MXC Statewide Training.

By TORI WILT
4-H Teen, Fayette County

Have you ever wondered what skills can be taken from 4-H and put into real life situations in the work place? Thinking back on all of my experiences as a 4-H member and the experiences still left, there are many skills that I will use in my future. The skill that will be the most beneficial to me is **responsibility**. Throughout 4-H there are many times I have learned things, such as being responsible for not only myself but also for ten girls.

Not only were the adults at the camp expecting me to be responsible for them, but most importantly, their parents of the campers were expecting me to be responsible for their child's safety. Responsibility will apply to every job. Every day bosses expect their employees to take responsibility for their work at all times.

Another skill that 4-H has taught me is **time management**. Being on the Fayette

Fayette County Junior Fair Board, fair week is always very stressful. There are numerous times during the day that there are activities going on that each Junior Fair Board member needs to attend. Fair week especially has taught me how to take what time I have and use it wisely. Time management is a very useful skill to have when it comes to working, because you aren't always given a ton of time to get tasks done.

The 4-H experience also helps young people **decide what kind of work they want to do in the future**. 4-H camp counseling made me realize how important children are to me and that I want to spend my life teaching. So, I will be attending college in the fall to study education, while putting the work force skills I learned in 4-H to work to make my goal of being a teacher happen! 4-H teaches work force skills for life.

Making eXtreme Counselors in Ohio 4-H

By NADINE FOGT

Extension Educator, Fayette County

MXC, Making eXtreme Counselor program, brings together veteran and inexperienced 4-H camp counselors to provide a weekend training conducted and taught by Extension professionals and camping specialists. The national award winning program MXC, Making eXtreme Counselors, provides opportunities to share ideas between 4-H counselors from across Ohio. The MXC program continues to lead to improved and consistent counselor training around the state, thus making the Ohio 4-H camping program stronger by improving the counseling skills of hundreds of 4-H camp counselors. By attending five sessions at MXC 2013, teens will develop and strengthen their skills needed to have a successful counseling experience. Secondly, they will gain skills needed to teach at their county camping program, including a STEM workshop. Third, attendees will acquire workforce development skills needed for their future. MXC strives to Make eXtreme Counselors.

MXC 2013 will be held the weekend of February 23-24, with the program beginning in the early afternoon and dismissing on Sunday at 4 p.m. The cost is \$50 for camp counselors for the weekend which includes Saturday dinner, Sunday breakfast and lunch at the Nationwide & Ohio Farm Bureau 4-H Center.

All participating teens will be able to take back innovative ideas to refresh traditional activities and improve strategies for teaching other youth. They will be able to share ideas with other teens and adults who have a passion for camping and 4-H. Hands-on learning activities will build on their skills for teaching and leading



Teens practice leading Raccoon Circle activities at the 2012 MXC.

younger youth. By understanding camp counseling interaction, improving critical thinking skills, along with new program methods, MXC will focus on assisting teens to become better counselors. Some of the sessions MXC participants can attend are:

- Dances— Line, circle, mixer, etc.
- Songs—New songs, how to lead singing
- Crafts—Tie-dying, new ideas
- Counseling Skills—Cabin management, bullying, making the shift from camper to counselor
- Science — Fun STEM activities to teach at camp
- And much, much more!!

It is important to point out that it is up to the county camp program director or Extension Educator to decide how many MXC hours can be counted towards their counseling training. This program is not meant to replace a county's counselor training, but to supplement and enhance their camp counseling training and experiences.

For teen resources, subscription for online issues and viewing past issues, visit us at www.ohio4h.org/teenconnections/.

Share your questions, thoughts and ideas with other Ohio 4-H teens at www.facebook.com/Ohio4HTeenConnections.



Ideas for photos, stories, and columns are welcome! Please contact yost.30@osu.edu or any Teen Connections Editor with story ideas, past highlights, upcoming events of statewide interest, or any suggestions you'd like to share.

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Responsibility: Key to Counsel

By LESLIE RISCH
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Being a camp counselor is probably the most responsible role teens have the opportunity to undertake as a 4-H member. Because camps involve a lot of risk, a high quality camping program depends on having responsible young people as counselors.

From previous research, we know that teens recognize that they are becoming more responsible by serving as a camp counselor. But we wanted to find out more about what's involved in this process. We collected data from Ohio 4-H camp counselors and 4-H professionals through questionnaires, interviews, and observations.

Our findings will come as no surprise to those who interact with camp counselors. Camp counselors are motivated to give others the same kind of positive camp experience they had. They clearly know what it means to be responsible, and they recognize both positive and negative consequences that may result from how they perform their role.

It's a very complex and multifaceted role involving many challenging tasks. Not only are teens responsible *for themselves*, they are responsible *to others* (both adult leaders and their peers), *with others* (as team members with other counselors), and *for others* (the campers under their care). Often, counselors must "think on their feet" to resolve situations that arise.



Thumbs-up from MXC participants who are learning life skills.

“Planning the whole thing helps you become responsible and if you’ve done anything wrong you need to be responsible for the things you’ve done.”

Educators play an integral role in facilitating the process of developing responsibility because they intentionally structure the camp training and planning that precedes the camp session to incorporate real-life scenarios. They work to balance having program control with giving youth ownership of the process.

Camp counseling epitomizes 4-H's learn by doing motto, because the way that counselors learn about responsibility – to paraphrase the Nike ad – is to just do it. Ultimately, the real test of responsible behavior is when the teens must perform their role in the camp setting.

For more info, go to rave.ohiolink.edu/etdc/view?acc_num=osu1343757858

Connected, or Not? Cell Phones at Camp

By REBEKAH SALYERS
4-H Teen, Fairfield County

Cell phones at summer 4-H camps have become an ever increasing problem with not only the camp counselors, but also with the campers. A lot of the 4-H camp sites do get service for cell phones, which leads to the devices taking away from the camp experience.

Every county camp program has their own policies for cell phones, so I interviewed counselors from different counties around the state to compare their policies.

Eva Kopis from Perry County, who camps at Camp Ohio, said they cannot have cell phones at all and if they catch anyone with a cell phone they could be sent home. Hallie Sue Hiser from Greene County, who camps at Camp Clifton, said they are not allowed to have cell phones period! Mikayla Bodey from Champaign County, who camps at Camp Clifton, said there is a "Zero Tolerance Policy" for campers, but for their counselors the policies have changed over time. This past year the counselors could keep their phone, but they left the phones in the cabins where they were barely used.

I know parents are sometimes worried about sending their kids to 4-H Camp without a cell phone for emergencies, but having the temptation to use the phone really can affect the overall camp experience.

Editor's note: Use of any electronic devices, including but not limited to cell phones, iPods, mp3 players and cameras, can impact campers' active participation, cause miscommunications, and create risk management concerns. At this time, each Ohio 4-H camp director has the right to monitor the use of electronic devices, including prohibiting their use, requiring all devices be turned in at the start of camp, or limiting use only for emergencies.

Team Building 101: Fun Activities for Any Group

Compiled by: Erin Dailey, Extension Educator, Jackson County

As a 4-H camp counselor or teen leader in your club, you may often find yourself needing a quick and easy activity to do with a group. Team building activities can be fun and will help your group to work better together. As a team leader, try to let the group come to conclusions on their own, don't give them all the answers. In fact, with team building, there is no one right answer. Try one of these team building activities in your next group activity. Following the activity, you should ask some of the discussion questions with your group.

Group Juggling (a cooperative way to learn names)

Scenario: The group should form a circle. This is especially helpful in learning the names of the group. The leader asks everyone to hold up their hands, as if ready to receive an object thrown to them. The leader will begin by passing a ball or object to another person in the group (not the person beside him/her) and saying the person's name they are throwing it to out loud. The person they have thrown the ball to will then throw the ball to a different person in the circle and say the person's name. As each participant catches and throws the first object, they may relax their arms and put their hands down, remembering who they tossed the item to. The last person to receive the object tosses it to the leader to complete the cycle. In this way everyone touches the object one time in a definite pattern. Each person should only have the ball once. Once this pattern is formed the leader can continue to add more objects into the circle until multiple objects are being "juggled."

Object: To work together to juggle as many objects as possible within the circle.

Rules: Throw the balls/objects under-handed. Use soft objects (example: sock balls, tennis balls, soft dog toys, stuffed toy animals, newspaper balls).

Variations: You may have to stop the group in order to "re-group" and come up with a plan for improvement. See how many objects are being "juggled" and try to juggle more objects than you have already accomplished.

Discussion/Questions: What made this task difficult? How did you accomplish the task successfully? What made it easier to catch the ball? (Communication and Eye Contact) Why are communication and eye contact important? How is communication important in other life situations? How is eye contact important in other life situations?

Source: Games passed on through Ohio 4-H camps.

People Machine

Scenario: Divide group into even numbered teams (4-8 participants are ideal). Instruct the teams to make themselves into a machine, with as many parts (gears, levers, etc.) as they can devise.

Object: Give the teams five minutes to prepare their machine. Once the time is up, the teams take turns presenting and guessing each other's machine.

Rules: The machine should have motion and sound, and must include all team members.

Variations: Choose a theme or category in which the machines must be part of (computer technology, large equipment, small appliances, etc.)

Discussion/Questions: Who took the lead in your group? How easy was it to come to a consensus in choosing a machine? How difficult was it to communicate to the other groups what machine you were trying to portray?

Source: Adapted from www.ultimatecampresource.com/site/camp-activity/people-machine.html