

Douglas County 4-H

*is the youth development program of
Douglas County & the University of
Wisconsin Cooperative Extension*

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Douglas County 4-H

Youth Development Program

2011 Impact Report

4-H is a **community**
of **young**
people
across **America**
who are learning
leadership,
citizenship and
life skills.



4-H Members Report Gaining Life Skills

Each fall 4-H members are encouraged to summarize their accomplishments via a report and interview process with the 4-H Board of Directors. Here are a few comments from 4-H members who did so in 2011:

"The most important thing I learned from 4-H community service activities were that helping other people makes me feel good about myself. I feel this way because I know I just helped someone in need. I also learned that every little donation is donated to a big cause, and that every little donation helps. These donations make big differences in other people's lives, and I feel happy and proud that I get to help with it."

"I know that 4-H has given me the courage and the knowledge to be a better leader and do the right things, like communication and being responsible."

"Being our club president has helped me get more experience with younger kids. This has helped me determine a career choice; I'm planning to go to college for early childhood education."

"I learned that if there's only one person working on something when it's supposed to be a team effort, it will never be accomplished on time. Team work is key to success."

"My 4-H experiences have made me more respectful and see other people's views on different things."

Successful Year for 4-H Afterschool Clubs

4-H Afterschool Clubs experienced a successful year in 2011. Afterschool clubs met at Bryant, Northern Lights, Great Lakes, Four Corners and Lake Superior Elementary Schools. The clubs are open to any youth in grades K-5 and we had 193 members who participated. Clubs at Lake Superior and Northern Lights meet twice a month and the other clubs meet once a month.

Club meetings include educational activities, recreation and snack. Joan Wimme, 4-H Youth Development Educator, focused and taught educational activities in the following project areas: team building, science & technology, water studies, and rocketry.



- 87% of youth feel like they better understand the importance of clean water
- 90% of youth could identify the steps of how an argument escalates
- A parent called to ask me about a water experiment. She said "My son and daughter came home from 4-H Afterschool so "psyched" about what they had learned and now want to show me how to do it."

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4-H Inspires Future Scientists & Engineers

The United States is falling behind other nations in developing its future workforce of scientists, engineers, and technology experts. The Douglas County 4-H Youth Development Program and Superior School District coordinated a fully grant-funded “4-H Gateway Academy” this summer to introduce middle school students to engineering concepts and careers. Students built rockets, solar cars, and catapults and used computer programs to design airplanes and houses. They also programmed robots, toured energy efficient buildings at UWS, and took a field trip to Genesis Attachments. When asked for feedback, all of the students said they would recommend the 4-H Gateway Academy to their friends. Comments included: “The academy helped tie what we learn in school to real life” and “It got me more interested in technology.” Many parents indicated that the 4-H Gateway Academy increased or reinforced their child’s interest in science and engineering. A teacher said, “I think the students leave the camp with a feeling of accomplishment and excitement that they do have the ability to be a future engineer.”



Youth in Governance

4-H Youth Development continues to coordinate the Youth in Governance programs, including Superior Days. Wimme coordinated activities for 51 Superior Days Youth Delegates during the February 22-23, 2011 event. Here’s a sampling of responses from Youth Delegates when asked to “*identify skills or lessons learned that they would use when they returned home*”:

“Be respectful and never doubt the ability of people in numbers”

“Public speaking skills and confidence in dealing with adults and important people”

“I learned how to be more involved in my community and how to lobby for change”

“How democracy works and what we can do to participate in democracy as a teenager”

“Superior Days improved my public speaking skills and that helped calm my nerves”

“That “politician” doesn’t need to be an ugly word”

“Be confident and speak your mind”

“Public speaking – I hope to use this skill at my school to teach others”

“I learned what real democracy looks like. I learned how important it is to engage in lobbying and learning about state government as a whole”

When asked “*As a result of your Superior Days participation, how do you see yourself getting involved in your local community?*” youth responded:

“I see myself paying more attention to government decisions and exercising my right to vote”

“Going to more school board meetings”

4-H Leaders Learn to Improve Clubs

UW-Extension 4-H Youth Development staff provides 4-H club leaders with training, advice, and support to assist them in their roles. In turn, leaders mentor youth in their leadership and educational experiences at club meetings. 4-H members are more likely to value club meetings if they are welcoming, effective, and enjoyable. This year’s topic for the annual Douglas County 4-H leader workshop was “Amazing Club Leadership!”

Sarah Wilcox co-taught the workshop with a 4-H youth leader in May. They used hands-on activities, games, and questions to increase knowledge and skills of:

- Effective youth and adult partnerships
- Effective officer teams
- Effective club organizational leadership teams

All 14 participants said they plan to use information from the workshop in the future. Comments about what participants learned included:

- “Expand the leadership team to include more youth and adults”
- “Thinking of how differently everyone sees an issue and the dynamics that creates in a group – and how to deal with that”
- “The effectiveness of a club is dependent on the structure of our officer team”
- “Learning new ways to get future club officers involved now”
- “To realize that everyone has an idea and that not every idea is going to work”

Other 2011 Program Highlights

- 13 4-H Clubs and 3 associated groups successfully completed the state mandated chartering process
- Douglas County 4-H has 455 members and 82 certified volunteers
- 4-H Youth Development reached 1,740 youth in various programs and events
- Katie Stenroos was selected as one of six delegates from Wisconsin to participate in the 4-H National Conference
- Over 3,000 entries were received for the 2011 Junior Fair
- 11 high school aged youth completed the Member Evaluation process and were honored at Achievement Night in October
- Nearly 1000 youth and family members participated in the Douglas County Youth Fair in September– sponsored by 4-H Youth Development and the Superior School District
- 24 youth and 7 youth counselors participated in Junior Camp in June at Leisure Lake Youth Camp

“My 4-H leadership experiences have had a major impact on my life. They have given me the confidence in myself to help run community wide events and provided me with a lot learning opportunities that require specific skills to be is required accomplished. To be successful in life, I think leadership is a quality that is required. Everyone looks up to you to make the correct decisions.”