

Douglas County 4-H

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

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Youth Development Program

2012 Impact Report

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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 2012:

- “My leadership roles have definitely given me more patience....and they have shown me the value of perseverance.”
- “My 4-H experiences have impacted my life by teaching me how different it is to be a leader rather than a follower. A leader role is more challenging but the benefit is greater. These have helped me understand both points and I have learned to be patient with other leaders.”
- “The most important thing I have learned from community service is giving up your own time to help and care about others before yourself. Putting others needs before your own has to be one of the most important things you will ever learn in your lifetime.”
- “4-H has given me the courage to be myself, speak in front of other people, voice my opinion, share my ideas and be creative.”
- “Helping younger kids are sometimes hard work but when it is done they always appreciate the time that we worked together!”
- “The most important thing I have learned is life can change so if you have the ability to help others, do it because someday you may need the favor in return.”

Successful Year for 4-H Afterschool Clubs

4-H Afterschool Clubs experienced a very successful year in 2012. 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 264 members who participated, up 29% over 2011. 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, animal sciences and financial literacy.



- 89% of youth felt like they better understood the importance of and types of habitat to wildlife and domestic animals
- 92% of youth identified the difference between needs and wants (financial literacy)

4-H Inspires Future Scientists & Engineers

Over the last decade the United States has been 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 the fully grant-funded “4-H Gateway Academy” in July to introduce 13 middle school students to engineering concepts and careers. Now in its 5th year, students built rockets, solar cars, catapults, wind turbines and designed a boat which they then built out of cardboard and duct tape. They also programmed robots and raced their boats in the pool at the High School.



When asked for feedback, students said:

- “Gateway made me know that architecture and engineering are the things for me.”
- “The academy helped tie what we learn in school to real life.”
- “It got me more interested in technology.”

Parents indicated that the 4-H Gateway Academy increased or reinforced their child’s interest in science and engineering. One parent commented, “He went off every morning with a positive attitude after struggling with similar classes at school.”

Youth in Governance



4-H Youth Development continues to coordinate the Youth in Governance programs, including Superior Days. Wimme coordinated activities for 53 Superior Days Youth Delegates during the February 21-22, 2012 event. We talk a lot about the impact Superior Days has on our Youth Delegates. Our evaluations focus on whether or not their Superior Days experience improves their skills and knowledge. What we don’t evaluate or spend time talking about is the impact Youth Delegates have on Superior Days. Changes in our evaluation plan will address that issue before the 2013 program. In the meantime, here are some initial impact results from this year’s 53 Youth Delegates:

- “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”.
- “Be confident and speak your mind.”
- “Public speaking – I hope to use this skill at my school to teach others.”
- “I see myself paying more attention to government decisions and exercising my right to vote.”

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 “Project Leaders that make a Difference!”

Joan Wimme taught the workshop in May utilizing hands-on activities, games, and questions to increase knowledge and skills of:

- Identify the three primary learning styles and their personal preference.
- Describe the importance of using a variety of teaching methods to help members discover, learn and develop a skill.
- Incorporate experiential education into project meetings.
- Identify the parts of a good project goal and ways to help members set goals.
- Describe the importance for members to develop a plan for their project year.

All 15 participants said they plan to use information from the workshop in their clubs and with project leaders. Comments about what participants learned included:

- “I now see the importance of having the kids set project goals.”
- “It was interesting to find out how people learn differently and how young and old learn in different ways.”
- “Asking the “so what” and “what now” questions about projects I am a leader for.”

Other 2012 Program Highlights

- 13 4-H Clubs and 3 associated groups successfully completed the state mandated chartering process.
- Douglas County 4-H has 394 members and 92 certified volunteers.
- 4-H Youth Development reached 2,254 youth in various programs and events.
- Over 3,000 entries were received for the 2012 Junior Fair.
- 9 high school aged youth completed the Member Evaluation process and were honored at Achievement Night on October 14th.
- Nearly 1000 youth and family members participated in the Douglas County Youth Fair in September—sponsored by 4-H Youth Development, the Superior School District and the Superior Council of PTA.
- 25 youth and 5 youth counselors participated in 4-H Junior Camp in June.
- 8 high school youth are serving as Youth Representatives on the County Board and the Superior City Council.

“Through my involvement with 4-H, I have developed into a well - rounded person. 4-H has given me the courage to be myself, speak in front of other people, voice my opinion, share my ideas and be creative. I learned organizational skills through my officer roles. 4-H has made me a better citizen by encouraging me to care about my community and become involved. 4-H has also helped me to determine a career choice for the future.”