



UW-MADISON EXTENSION



Iowa County 4-H Clover Connection

December 2025

December 2025

1-12 Gingerbread Decorating Contest

7 - Iowa County 4-H Awards Day

10- Holiday Craft Night

15-18 Gingerbread Decorating Contest Judging

February 2026

2- Club Exploration Day Topic due to Dan

March 2026

21- County Exploration Day, Mineral Point HS

28- Iowa/Lafayette Day in the Arts, Mineral Point HS

April 2026

23-27 Space Camp

27- 4-H Leaders Meeting, HHS Building 6PM



MANDATORY:
4-H All County Leaders
Upcoming Meeting:
Mon. April 27th
6PM HHS Building
Dodgeville

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Contact Us

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Dodgeville, WI 53533
608-930-9850
dan.brandt@wisc.edu
Open 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Monday-Friday
iowa.extension.wisc.edu

The University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming in compliance with state and federal law.

Please make requests for reasonable accommodations to ensure equal access to educational programs as early as possible preceding the scheduled program, service, or activity. For communicative accommodations in languages other than English, please contact oaic@extension.wisc.edu. For communicative accommodations based on a disability, please contact Heather Lipinski Stelljes at: heather.stelljes@wisc.edu for the public.

4-H Holiday Craft Night



IOWA COUNTY 4-H HOLIDAY CRAFT NIGHT

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10TH 5-7PM

4-HS Building,
Dodgeville, WI

We'll have 3-4 different crafts available, ranging in skill levels. Some crafts may require fine motor skills.

- 4-H members under 5th grade should bring an older youth or adult to assist.

- Materials are provided.
- Wear clothes you don't mind getting a little messy.
- Fun, holiday spirit, and creativity encouraged!

SIGN UP VIA GOOGLE FORM
SCAN THE QR CODE
OR CLICK ON THE LINK

[HTTPS://FORMS.GLE/PXFHQXNC7TOJKSBU9](https://forms.gle/PXFHQXNC7TOJKSBU9)



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Iowa County Attendance Policy

Iowa County 4-H Attendance Policy

Effective Date: October 1, 2025

Being part of 4-H is an opportunity to explore new interests, develop life skills, and grow as a person. This attendance policy is designed to encourage youth to stay engaged and explore new sparks—areas of interest and passion they may not have discovered before. 4-H is about learning by doing, building connections, and growing into capable, caring members of the community.

All Iowa County 4-H members must participate in at least four (4) 4-H events or meetings by their club's June meeting date in order to be considered a member in good standing with 4-H.

A member in good standing has the opportunity to show at the Iowa County Fair that year.

Attendance may include:

- Monthly club meetings (in-person or virtual)
- County-wide 4-H events or workshops
- 4-H community service activities
- 4-H fundraisers or educational opportunities
- Club or county-level leadership activities
- Other determined at the club leader's discretion

New Members

If a new member joins 4-H during the program year, they must meet the four-event requirement or follow an adjusted attendance plan as determined by their club leader.

Returning Members

Returning members' attendance counts start in September. Members who transfer from one club to another during the year will not have their attendance requirement reset to the month of transfer.

Digital Participation

Members may participate in club meetings digitally (e.g., Skype, FaceTime, Google Meet, phone, etc.) if the club allows it. Arrangements for digital participation must be made with the club leader. Clubs are encouraged to develop a digital participation plan for the year.

Parent Attendance

Parents may not attend meetings or events on behalf of their child to fulfill the member's attendance requirement.

Make-Up Opportunities

If a member cannot participate in four 4-H events or meetings, they may coordinate with their club leader to attend another approved educational opportunity. All make-up activities must be completed by the club's June meeting date.

Special Circumstances

Members with special circumstances may submit a written request for review by the County 4-H Educator and the Attendance Committee. Following review, all decisions made by the 4-H Educator and Attendance Committee are final.

Attendance Committee

The Attendance Committee will consist of:

- The County 4-H Educator
- 4-H Adult Leaders Board
- Two (2) youth representatives from the 4-H Junior Leaders

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4-H Gingerbread Contest



Iowa County 4-H GINGERBREAD DECORATING CONTEST

•All Iowa County 4-H youth are invited to participate in a Gingerbread Decorating Contest! Participants will have the opportunity to create and decorate a gingerbread house or scene and showcase their creativity. The decorated entries will be displayed at the Iowa County Extension Office for public viewing and voting.

Eligibility:

- Open to all youth currently enrolled in 4-H in Iowa County.
- Participants may enter individually or as a team

Judging:

- Judging will take place Monday, December 15th through Thursday, December 18th.
- Entries will be evaluated based on:
 - Creativity & Originality
 - Use of Edible Materials
 - Overall Presentation & Neatness
 - Seasonal Theme
- Judges will evaluate both in-person entries and photographs uploaded online.
- The display will be open to the community at the Extension Office during regular office hours, community members are encouraged to vote for their favorite gingerbread house or scene.
- Awards will be given for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places.

Submission:

- Participants must bring their fully constructed and decorated gingerbread house or scene to the Iowa County Extension Office between Monday, December 1st and Friday, December 12th during office hours (8:00 AM - 4:30 PM). Please contact Dan before bringing in your entry so he is aware.
- Each participant or team may submit one entry.
- Entries must fit on a board no larger than 12 inches by 12 inches.
- All decorations must be edible.
- All construction and decorating must be completed prior to submission.
- All entries become the responsibility of the participant until the end of the contest. The Extension Office is not responsible for damage or loss.
- All entries will be disposed of at the office unless arrangements are made to pick them up before Friday, December 19th at 4:30 PM.



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4-H Junior Leaders

Meet our 2025–2026 Iowa County 4-H Junior Leaders! We're so proud of these youth who are stepping up to take on leadership roles and help shape the future of 4-H.

Iowa County 4-H

**JUNIOR
LEADERS**



BELLA ORTIZ

Country Cardinals 4-H Club



How long have you been a 4-H member?

3 years

What is your favorite 4-H activity and why?

I enjoy helping at our clubs activities and volunteer events.

What is a hobby/interest you have outside of 4-H?

I like to paint and go shopping

Why did you want to become a Junior Leader?

I can be more involved in the organization and learn more about 4-H.

What projects do you show at the fair?

Child development and craft projects



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4-H Camp

Do you love camp, working with younger youth, and making summer memories that last a lifetime? Here's your chance to be part of the 2025 4-H Summer Camp team!

✦ Camp Counselors: Open to youth in grades 9–12

✦ Counselor-in-Training (CIT) Program: New this year! Open to 8th grade students only

Gain leadership experience, build teamwork skills, and help create an unforgettable camp experience for others!

 Applications are due February 16th, 2025.

📱 To apply, scan the QR code or copy and paste the link below:

<https://forms.gle/kHixyYYTh34zbf727>



The poster features a yellow background with a green 4-H clover logo at the top right. On the left, there is a line drawing of a campsite with tents and trees. The text 'IOWA, PORTAGE, & WAUPACA' is written in a green, outlined font. Below this, 'SUMMER' is in large white letters, '4-H' is in large green letters, and 'CAMP' is in large white letters. To the right of 'CAMP', 'COUNSELOR SEARCH' is written in green. Below this, 'CAMP DATES JUNE 15-17 2026' is written in green. A QR code is located at the bottom center. On the right side, there are three circular photos: the top one shows a group of people in orange shirts sitting on the grass; the middle one shows a group of people in orange shirts standing around a large colorful structure; the bottom one shows a group of people in orange shirts posing for a photo.

IOWA, PORTAGE, & WAUPACA

SUMMER 4-H CAMP

Applications are now open for 4-H Summer Camp Counselors and our new Counselor-in-Training (CIT) program! Youth in grades 9+ are eligible to apply as Camp Counselors, while the CIT program is open to 8th grade students only who are interested in developing leadership skills and learning what it takes to be a future camp counselor. Simply scan the QR code below to access the application. Applications are due February 16th, 2025.

COUNSELOR SEARCH

CAMP DATES
JUNE 15-17
2026



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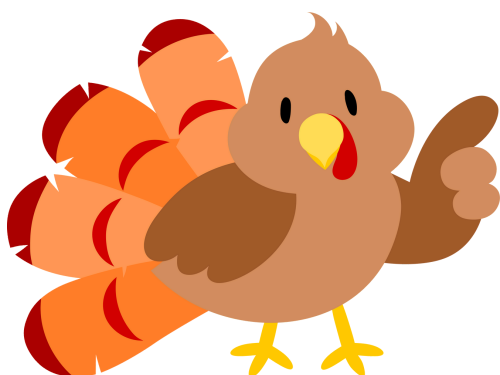


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4-H Cloverbud News

Last month's Cloverbud Thanksgiving craft was a hit! One of our Cloverbud families shared this photo of their finished project, and we couldn't resist sharing. It's wonderful to see our youngest 4-H'ers learning, creating, and celebrating the season.



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4-H Space Camp

Registration for 2026 4-H Space Camp is open in 4HOnline! Registration is open to youth in grades 6-8 who are newcomers to Space Camp. Space Camp will take place from April 23-27, 2026. This educational experience is a wonderful opportunity for youth to learn about aerospace, STEM, explore Space Camp, meet new people, and more! Registration will open on November 15th. You can read more on our website: go.wisc.edu/spacecamp

April 23-27, 2026

Huntsville, Alabama

Wisconsin 4-H SPACE CAMP

OPEN TO YOUTH GRADES 6-8

Get involved in:

- Simulated Space Missions
- Learning and using Space Simulators
- Building and launching your own model rockets
- Real space training simulation
- etc.

Cost is \$1300

Registration open from Nov 15-Dec 15 via 4HOnline

  Positive Youth Development Institute
DIVISION OF EXTENSION
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



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4-H Horse News

4-H Horse Project Members, mark your calendars for these upcoming events brought to you by the WI 4-H Horse Association.

4-H Horse Education Days

May 2 & 3, 2026

State 4-H Hunt and Dressage Show

June 26, 27, & 28, 2026

State 4-H Gymkhana Show

September 12, 2026

State 4-H Horse Expo Show

September 18, 19, & 20, 2026

SAVE THE DATES STATE 4-H HORSE EVENTS

HORSE EDUCATION DAYS

MAY 2 & 3, 2026

STATE HUNT AND DRESSAGE SHOW

JUNE 26, 27, & 28, 2026

STATE GYMKHANA SHOW

SEPTEMBER 12, 2026

STATE HORSE EXPO SHOW

SEPTEMBER 18, 19, & 20, 2026



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



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4-H Thriving Survey

The #4HThriving Model survey is now open to Wisconsin 4-H'ers ages 13-19! This short survey will help staff and volunteers strengthen our local program. Those who complete the survey will be entered to win a \$25 Amazon gift card! Information will be sent out to eligible participants to the email used in 4HOnline. We can't wait to hear your feedback!



WISCONSIN 4-H THRIVING SURVEY

Due: December 5

Parents/Guardians of youth ages 13-19:
Please keep an eye on your email for instructions
and access to the upcoming survey



UW-MADISON EXTENSION

Design by: Jordan Blue, Chippewa County 4-H Program Educator

Want a chance to win a **\$25 gift card**? Complete the survey to enter!



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4-H State Teams

Apply to the Wisconsin 4-H Ambassador Teams!

Ambassadors get unique opportunities to represent Wisconsin 4-H, develop leadership skills, and contribute to statewide programming. Apply to join the Arts, Leadership, or Agriculture Ambassadors depending on what inspires you most.

Youth must be in grades 9-12 to apply!

Applications open now and until Dec. 15th! Learn more and apply here:

<https://4h.extension.wisc.edu/.../wi-4-h-ambassador-team/>

STATE TEAM APPLICATIONS

NOW OPEN!



UW-MADISON EXTENSION

Arts Ambassadors

Learn about leadership, interpersonal skills, and how to promote the 4-H Expressive Arts. Apply to join the Drama, Visual Arts, or Communications/Media team!

Leadership Ambassadors

Advocate for Wisconsin 4-H and engage in opportunities to build personal leadership skills and encourage others to grow their leadership potential.

Agriculture Ambassadors

Youth and adult team members will work together to contribute ideas and shape our statewide programs. Build leadership skills, meet other teens from throughout the state, and engage in opportunities to teach others.

NEW!



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4-H Winter Academy

Registration will be available soon for our NEW Winter Academy. The Winter Academy is open to grades 8-10 and is an opportunity for youth to gain experience in problem solving strategies and to prepare for successful career pathways. Completion of the 2026 Winter Academy grants a coupon code for the 2026 Summer Academy! Keep an eye out for more registration details and program information on our website: <https://4h.extension.wisc.edu/winter-academy/>



NEW
WINTER ACADEMY
VIRTUAL

 Grades 8-10



- January 21, 2026
- January 28, 2026
- February 4, 2026

Free to attend!

 Completion of the Winter Academy program will earn participants a 30% coupon code off registration for Summer Academy in the same year!

  **Positive Youth Development Institute**
DIVISION OF EXTENSION
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

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4-H State News

SAVE THE DATES

STATE 4-H LIVESTOCK EVENTS

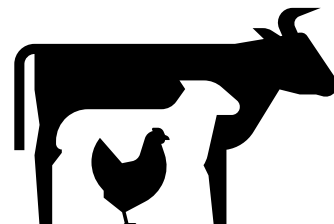
4-H MEATS JUDGING CONTEST
JANUARY 31, 2026

SKILLATHON AND QUIZ BOWL
MARCH 21, 2026

BOTH EVENTS HELD AT THE
UW MADISON CAMPUS



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

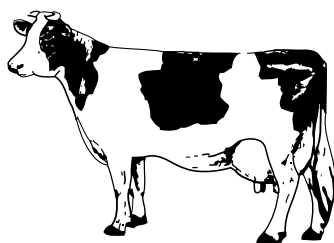


SAVE THE DATE

STATE 4-H DAIRY QUIZ BOWL

FEBRUARY 7, 2026

UW GREEN BAY
STEM INNOVATION BUILDING



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UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



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GROWING YOU, GROWING YOUTH

Experiential Learning And Youth Officers

You've probably heard at least one person associated with 4-H mention, "learn by doing!" This phrase is connected to a research model called the Experiential Learning Model, developed by David Kolb in 1984? It has the following 5 steps:

1. Youth **experience** the activity – perform or do it.
2. Youth **share** the experience and their actions by describing what happened to them. In this step the individual is learning there are different interpretations of reality.
3. Youth **process** the experience to determine what was most important and identify common themes and experiences.
4. Youth **generalize** from the experience and connect the discussion and experience to the larger world. Asking the question, *So what?*
5. Youth **apply** what is learned to a new situation and other parts of life. Asking the question, *Now what?*

When we think about youth officers, the Experiential Learning Model gives us a perfect framework for their leadership development. Officers don't just hold titles –

they have the chance to experience leadership by planning agendas, sharing their ideas with peers, processing what works and what doesn't in meetings, generalizing those lessons to other parts of life, and applying them in new roles and responsibilities. As volunteers, you play a key role in opening the door for these experiences. Involving youth officers may take more time up front, but it pays off in stronger meetings, more confident youth, and less pressure on you to carry the whole load. Think of it as an investment: when youth are engaged in decision-making, they learn responsibility, communication, and problem-solving skills that last far beyond 4-H. Here are a few practical ways to start:

- Invite officers to co-create the agenda with you.
- Encourage them to reflect after meetings: What went well? What could improve?
- Celebrate their growth – remind them that leadership is learned by doing, not by being perfect.

By applying the Experiential Learning Model to youth officer roles, you're not only strengthening your club's operations, you're empowering the next generation of leaders.



Policy Spotlight

Are you up to date on the steps you need to follow if someone gets injured or has an accident under your supervision? Follow the link below to bookmark the website page that contains the report forms and procedures to follow. <https://4h.extension.wisc.edu/resources/wisconsin-4-h-policies/health-and-safety/>



Popcorn Balls

Ingredients:



Preparation

- Place popped popcorn in a large bowl with room for mixing.
- In a heavy saucepan, combine sugar, corn syrup and salt.
- Cook over medium heat until a candy thermometer reads 235 degrees (soft-ball stage).
- Remove from heat and add food color (optional) and vanilla.
- Immediately pour in a thin stream over popcorn, stirring constantly until evenly coated.
- Rub thin layer of butter onto clean hands.
- When mixture is cool enough to handle but still warm, work quickly to shape handfuls of coated popcorn into a ball shape the size of an adult fist.
- Cool completely and wrap individually in plastic wrap.

Makes 12 to 15 balls.

Optional decorations: Wrap each popcorn ball in clear plastic wrap and decorate outside with cutout construction paper shapes. Easy and fun designs: jack-o-lantern faces, snowman, bunny, baby chick, holiday ornaments, clowns.

