

MESSENGER-INQUIRER

It's time to celebrate! National 4-H Week is Oct. 6-12, 2024.

This year's theme is "Beyond Ready". For more than 120 years, 4-H has helped youth find and fine-tune their sparks or passions through projects and activities. In the process of self-exploration, youth develop life skills that help them become productive adults and local leaders. Many 4-H alumni credit the program with helping them succeed as adults.

With more than 200,000 youth members, Kentucky 4-H is the largest youth organization in the state known for the educational programs that teach youth valuable life skills through positive youth development. Historically rooted in agriculture, today's 4-H is much more. The program covers core areas of science engineering, technology, health and well-being, family consumer sciences, natural resources, leadership, communication and expressive arts, and agriculture teaching valuable life skills.

4-H focuses on the positive development of youth, adults can volunteer their time and talents with local 4-H groups. Volunteers can serve in many roles. From a one-time, one-hour volunteer (i.e. subject matter experts on projects, judge at local 4-H competitions) to overnight camp counselor to a club leader, 4-H has a wide range of volunteer opportunities to fit everyone. In fact, more than 15,000 Kentuckians donate their time through 4-H.

During the 2023-2024 4-H program year, Daviess County 4-H agents and the Extension Program assistant reached over 4,500 youth. Daviess County made history at 4-H Camp by taking the highest number in our camping history! 96 participants consisting of 83 youth, 12 adult volunteers, and 1 agent spent 4 days and 3 nights at West KY 4-H Camp in Dawson Springs, KY. The 2025 4-H Camp dates will be in the November 4-H newsletter. Paperwork will be available February 2025.

At the Daviess County Lions Club Fair: 20 youth exhibited 140 4-H projects, 18 youth showed market lambs, 19 youth showed dairy goats, 10 youth showed rabbits, 10 youth showed hogs, 5 participated in the feeder calf project and showed their calf, 5 youth showed steers, and 14 youth showed poultry. At the Kentucky State Fair: 14 youth exhibited 74 4-H projects, 3 youth exhibited swine and beef, and 2 youth participated in the 4-H Poultry Showmanship Contest.

The third Youth Livestock Scholarship Auction was held in conjunction with the Daviess County Lions Club Fair raising over \$20,000 in scholarship money directly benefiting the 30 youth who participated.

At the State 4-H Shooting Sports Competition held at the beginning of September, 24 youth participated over two days with 14 individual placements, 5 team placements, and 3 state champions in their respective disciplines.

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The new 4-H program year started on September 1st. To celebrate the start of the new year, Daviess County 4-H hosted a 4-H Kick-Off Night at the Extension Office. Club leaders, returning members, and volunteers helped put this together to make it a successful night! Over 100 people attended this event, learned about the 4-H clubs in Daviess County this year, and completed enrollment forms. Youth can join 4-H at any time throughout the year. Contact the Extension Office to sign up!

Celebrate National 4-H Week with Daviess County 4-H! Follow along on Facebook and post a photo in the comments every day you participate. **Make it Monday** – Choose a recipe from planeatmove.com and make it as a family. **Try It Tuesday** – Pick a 4-H fair baking recipe and give it a try! **Wear Green Wednesday** – Wear Your Green/4-H Gear. **Thankful Thursday** – Write a note thanking someone who has impacted you in 4-H. **Fair Project Friday** – Show us your favorite 4-H fair project.

Kentucky 4-H has created a GooseChase activity for all counties and youth to celebrate National 4-H Week. In this 10-mission activity, youth will give appreciation to their club leaders and agents and spread the word about local 4-H programs by submitting photos to document the completion of each mission. Simply download the app and enter the following code: MX7WD when prompted. The scavenger hunt will go live on Sunday, October 6 to kick off National 4-H Week and run through Saturday, October 12.

For more information about Daviess County 4-H, stop by the Daviess County Extension Office or like us on Facebook and/or Instagram.

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In the heart of every child lies a spark waiting to ignite—a passion for learning, exploring, and growing. Since the mid-1960s, Kentucky 4-H summer camps have been nurturing this curiosity, fostering skills that extend far beyond crafts and campfires. Rooted in the 4-H Thriving Model developed by Oregon State University professor Mary E. Arnold and Clemson University assistant professor Ryan J. Gagnon, these camps are not just about fun in the sun; they are gateways for personal development and community engagement.

At the core of 4-H summer camp is the belief that every young person has the potential to thrive. By blending hands-on activities with mentorship and leadership opportunities, 4-H camp create an environment where youth can discover their strengths and cultivate new passions. Whether through environmental classes, STEM challenges, or outdoor adventures, campers are encouraged to explore diverse interests, building confidence and resilience along the way.

One of the standout benefits of attending a Kentucky 4-H summer camp is its approach to education. Campers engage in experiential learning that emphasizes critical thinking, teamwork, and problem-solving—skills that are crucial for success in today’s world. By participating in activities aligned with their interests, youth develop a deeper understanding of themselves and their place in the community, fostering a sense of belonging and purpose.

The 4-H model thrives on hands-on learning and mentorship, creating a supportive ecosystem where youth can flourish. Volunteer camp counselors, in many cases former campers themselves, serve as role models, inspiring the next generation through their dedication and passion for service. This mentorship extends beyond the summer months, with many campers continuing their involvement in 4-H clubs and programs throughout the year.

Kentucky 4-H summer camps provide a unique opportunity for youth to connect with peers from diverse backgrounds. By fostering friendships and teamwork, camps promote empathy and cultural understanding, preparing youth to become responsible global citizens. These friendships often blossom into lifelong connections, enriching both personal and professional networks as campers grow into adulthood.

The benefits of attending a 4-H summer camp extend far beyond the memories made and the skills learned during a single camp session. They plant seeds of curiosity, nurture the spark of potential, and empower youth to thrive in all aspects of life. As we look to the future, investing in Kentucky 4-H summer camps not only enriches the lives of individual campers but also strengthens our communities.