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THE Power of YOUTH

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Message from National 4-H Leadership Trust



Dear Friends:
 Many have heard the fable of the blind men and the elephant. Each man approaches the elephant and becomes convinced that its qualities are the part that each experiences. One grabs the ear and is sure the elephant is like a fan. Another grabs the tail and thinks it is a rope, and so on.

I refer to this fable because it epitomizes a central issue within 4-H Youth Development. It is impossible to see the whole thing. We may have a keen understanding of 4-H as we experience it, but we will never master all its complexity, never understand everything that makes it live and move as a dynamic, national youth development program.

This is why we need to understand our guiding principles. What are the elements that should be embedded in everything we do? What does it mean to have the 4-H Emblem on a program? Our National Strategic Directions Team and the National Conversation gave us a good start on glimpsing the elephant by providing a variety of perspectives that leave us better able to comprehend our complexities and ambiguities. Only by comparing different views of our program can we arrive at a conception of what we really look like.

That is why we're hearing about the 4-H brand these days. It is not about an ad campaign or our next brochure—although these efforts will strengthen our communications—it is about understanding the essential elements that are common to the 4-H Youth Development Program in all its many forms, locations, and facets. Perhaps we should remember something from this fable: We all have a piece of a truth that is much bigger than any of us.

Sincerely,

Dr. Cathann A. Kress
 Director, Youth Development
 National 4-H Headquarters, CSREES, USDA

4-H Battles Youth Obesity Healthy Choices Are Secret Weapon



Making healthy choices always has been part of 4-H. After all, health is in our name and in our pledge. So, it's not surprising that fostering skills that help youth make healthy lifestyle decisions is among 4-H's top priorities.

With the continued rise in obesity among youth, 4-H is confronting this epidemic through a variety of programs that promote healthy eating, increased physical activity, and other healthy lifestyle choices. (See some examples in "In the Field," Pages 2 and 5.) The Healthy Lifestyles Grants Program, administered through National 4-H Council, also offers communities grants to develop or expand innovative and fun programs that partner youth ages 5-12 with adults to create original, fun, and innovative programming that reverses this trend. The grants program will expand to \$200,000 in 2004 with current sponsor, Kraft Foods, Inc., doubling its support and Cargill matching it.

Obesity and sedentary lifestyles among youth are part of a serious, complex, and growing health concern in the United States. Thirteen percent of children ages 6-11 were overweight in 1999, and the number of overweight adolescents ages 12-19 has tripled to 14 percent since the 1980s, according to the Surgeon General. Overweight youth are at risk for diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, low self-esteem, and depression. They have a 70 percent chance of becoming overweight adults who also are at risk of heart disease and cancer.

"4-H's connection to the land-grant universities, our presence in every county in the nation, our network of committed volunteers, and our relationships with youth and their families means 4-H can take the latest research available and turn it into programs that will help battle youth obesity and its real life implications,"

(continued on page 5)

In the FIELD

West Virginia 4-H Solution Goes Straight to the Heart

4-H camps in 11 West Virginia Counties are not only fun but also heart healthy as 1,500 4-H members who attended them during Summer 2003 participated in 4-H CARDIAC, a West Virginia University Extension Service initiative aimed at reducing cardiovascular disease in youth ages 9-12.

4-H CARDIAC is one component of Coronary Artery Risk Detection in Appalachian Communities (CARDIAC), a WVU College of Medicine pilot program that identifies fifth graders at risk for cardiovascular disease as adults and promotes healthy lifestyle changes for these children and their families. Screenings for the overall CARDIAC program found that 43 percent of West Virginia fifth graders are overweight and 17 percent suffer from high cholesterol—early indicators of heart disease. Initial program research found that young people who participate in healthy lifestyle intervention programming with their families realize their role in creating a healthy life for themselves.

As part of 4-H CARDIAC, adult and teen 4-H camp leaders incorporated interactive games and other activities into camp that teach campers the importance of good nutrition and exercise and increase their daily activity

levels. Every 4-H camper participated in at least 90 minutes of organized physical activity each day in addition to other traditional camp activities.

Youth visited each of 10 CARDIAC exercise stations, jumped rope, used hula hoops, learned healthy lessons from a fictional character called the CARDIAC man, and joined in Build-A-Meal relays. Campers danced the bunny hop, alley cat, chicken dance, and electric slide. They learned how to use pedometers that count their steps as they walk throughout the day, and they took brisk walks while they discussed a health topic. They drank lots of water and learned why this habit is important to their health. Teen camp leaders also talked to the younger youth about making healthy choices as they relate to everyday situations.

"Most kids don't exercise or do anything. 4-H CARDIAC gives them the opportunity to let loose and exercise. They really like jumping rope and hula hooping, and they are fascinated by the pedometers," said Nicole Graham, Mercer County, WV, 4-H'er and 4-H CARDIAC Teen Trainer.

4-H CARDIAC moves to five 4-H Clubs this fall and will include 4-H members' families so that healthy lifestyle choices might be reinforced at home.

"4-H CARDIAC offers a diversity of activity for youth. Recreation becomes a time of experiential, fun learning for all youth and not just for those who are good athletes," said Mercer County 4-H Agent Brenda Pruettt.

4-H CARDIAC is funded through the statewide CARDIAC program and WVU Extension Service's Family Nutrition Program. For more information contact Elaine Bowen at epbowen@mail.wvu.edu. ■



West Virginia 4-H'ers with varying degrees of skill with a hula hoop exercise as part of 4-H CARDIAC.

Photos courtesy of Eric DiNovo, Bluefield Daily Telegraph



Ohio 4-H'ers Win With You're the Athlete

There's a lot more to being a successful athlete than winning. The Ohio State University Extension 4-H's *You're the Athlete* curriculum helps young athletes ages 11-14 and the adults who work with them with the basics of being a well-rounded athlete.

OSU Extension 4-H developed *You're the Athlete* because no curriculum existed that applied the principles of positive youth development to athletics. "Our agents who developed the project were getting questions like, 'What should my diet be for my specific sport?' or 'Is the training my child wants to do safe for young people that age?' but there were no good, readily available resources we could put into the hands of kids," said OSU 4-H Youth Development Specialist Kathryn Cox. "So we worked with OSU faculty and experts at other universities to develop materials that answered these and other questions about youth development and athletics."

4-H members who are part of *You're the Athlete* focus not just on the mechanics of their chosen sport, but also on learning information about and experiencing fun learning activities related to the eight fundamentals of being a well-rounded athlete: goal-setting, sportsmanship and character, time management, sports nutrition, strength and conditioning, team dynamics and leadership roles, conflict resolution, and careers in athletics. Young people may complete *You're the Athlete* activities by themselves, with team members, or with other groups, said Fairfield County 4-H Agent Luke Woods, Chair, The OSU Extension 4-H Youth Sports Education Team. They can cover all of the fundamentals or concentrate on the one or two that interest them most, he added.

You're The Athlete can take an entire year to complete for those who are serious about it as these 4-H'ers attend workshops, conduct demonstrations, share exhibits, take field trips, involve themselves in project interviews and judging, attend camp, and complete a variety of leadership and citizenship activities just as they would with any 4-H project, Woods said.

Cox said 2002 was the first year of the program, and it was wildly successful as all 2,000 copies of the curriculum's initial printing sold out within a week. More copies are available. For more information about *You're the Athlete*, contact Cox at cox.5@osu.edu. ■



More In the Field on Page 5

National 4-H Council Seeks Former Program Assistants

Ask former Program Assistants about their memories of working at National 4-H Council, and they will tell you that it was an exciting, productive, and challenging time. The numbers prove it: More than 1,200 Program Assistants have developed workshops, organized field trips, led recreational activities, and brought youth face to face with our nation's capital since 1974.

Many will tell you that the experiences they garnered as Program Assistants helped them become leaders in their chosen professions. Since many Program Assistants remain an integral part of the 4-H family, National 4-H Council would like to take stock of where they are today. If you are or know of a former Program Assistant, go to www.fourhcouncil.edu/getinvolved to let us know what you are doing and how we can keep in touch with you. Hit the "Program Assistant" link under "Alumni" on the gold bar on the left side of the page.

Program Assistants live in Warren Hall at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center (N4-HYCC) near Washington, DC. Their main responsibility continues to be Citizenship Washington Focus (CWF), a summer leadership program for high school

students that brings about 2,000 youth each year to N4-HYCC to learn about government, citizenship, and the nation's capital.

Jerry Kiefer, a former Program Assistant and active former 4-H'er who is President of the Oklahoma 4-H Foundation, is currently a Senior Executive Financial Advisor with BancFirst, Oklahoma's largest state chartered bank. He credits his experience as a Program Assistant with giving him "a tremendous opportunity to be able to give back to the 4-H program just a little of what it had given to me. Serving 4-H as a Program Assistant gave me a chance to influence the leadership and citizenship skills of the participants in 4-H, as well as show the youth I was in direct contact with the difference 4-H can make in their lives."

To learn more about how to apply to become a Program Assistant, go to www.4hcnwf.com/pa.html. For more information about how former Program Assistants can support 4-H, contact Carolyn Fernandez, Director of Development, at cfernandez@fourhcouncil.edu or (301) 961-2983. ■



National 4-H Council is searching for past Program Assistants. Summer 2003 Program Assistants pose for a group photo in front of Warren Hall.

Youth Stay at the Center of It All

The National 4-H Youth Conference Center wants to make sure that its primary customer—youth—is truly its focus. That's the reason for the addition of "youth" to the conference center name, a new logo, and a new slogan, "Where youth stay at the center of it all."

The idea is a conference center for youth designed in function and appearance by youth. Surveys of and suggestions from youth guests lay the groundwork for everything from the future look of the rooms and the interior and exterior common areas to amenities like the size and configuration of the cyber café.



The new stylized logo was created to appeal to youth and convey to them the first-rate Washington, DC, leadership experience they will get at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center. "The logo brings a clear message to all of our guests and our staff that the National 4-H Youth Conference Center's business is young people," said Paul Koehler, National 4-H Youth Conference Center General Manager. "Center is a special place for 4-H members, staff, and volunteers, past and present. We need to understand that the National 4-H Youth Conference Center is all about young people and providing them with a top-notch Washington, DC, experience."

Check out the new National 4-H Youth Conference Center Web site complete with panoramic virtual tours at www.4hcenter.org. Suggestions from youth about how to make the National 4-H Youth Conference Center even more youth friendly are welcome. E-mail those to Koehler at pkoehler@fourhcouncil.edu. ■

Army General Hosts Special Reception for 4-H'ers

4-H members who were part of the National 4-H Youth Conference Center's Citizenship Washington Focus (CWF) program got a special treat on July 16, 2003, when they attended Twilight Tattoo, a special military parade honoring 4-H on the White House Ellipse, followed by a reception at nearby Fort Myer, VA. Major General Galen Jackman, Commanding General, United States Army Military District of Washington, hosted the pageant and reception.

Reviewing officials were Sydney Evans, Executive Director, National 4-H Youth Directions Council (N4-HYDC); Kyle Fogt, National 4-H Council Trustee and Executive Director, N4-HYDC; Joshua Williams, Army 4-H Member, Fort Myer; Dr. Cathann A. Kress, Director of Youth Development, National 4-H Headquarters, CSREES, USDA; Donald T. Floyd, Jr., President and CEO, National 4-H Council; and Jackman.

Twilight Tattoo has become so popular with 4-H members who come to Washington, DC, that plans are to make it a formal part of the CWF experience. For more information about CWF, visit www.4hcnwf.org.

4-H has a special partnership with the Army that brings 4-H Clubs to every Army installation worldwide. National 4-H Headquarters also is working with the other military branches to bring 4-H to their installations. For more information, visit www.national4-headquarters.gov/4h_military.htm. ■



4-H USA, the first search engine devoted to searching the Web for 4-H related Web sites, made its debut in September 2003.

4-H USA Search Engine Debuts

Ever have trouble finding 4-H information on the Internet? Try the new 4-H search engine, 4-H USA, at www.4husa.org.

4-H USA is the first search engine devoted to searching the World Wide Web for 4-H related Web sites. It does not replace any 4-H Web site, but simply brings the myriad of national, state, and local 4-H Web sites into one searchable, dynamic database.

Search the 4-H USA database with a click of the mouse or a few strokes of the keyboard. Access the categories listed at the top or on the left side of the home page. Or, simply type in a word or phrase in the box that says, "Search the Web for 4-H."

4-H USA already has more than 250 4-H links to national and state 4-H Web sites and resources. If your 4-H Web site is not linked to 4-H USA, we want to know! Submit your 4-H Web site using the convenient online submission form. Click on "Submit a Link" at the top right hand corner of the page to access it.

Remember: www.4husa.org is your one-stop shop for 4-H Web sites. Bookmark it today! ■



Thank You for Supporting 4-H

National 4-H Council is a proud participant of the Combined Federal Campaign, more than 20 state workplace government campaigns, and countless private sector and United Way campaigns. The contributions that National 4-H Council receives through these campaigns are integral to the programs we run, the youth we serve, and the innovative practices we foster.

For more than 11 years, individuals across the nation have designated National 4-H Council as a recipient of their workplace giving contributions, and we would like to take this opportunity to recognize their support and thank them for helping National 4-H Council continue to be a leader in the field of youth development. Thank you for your support in 2003, and we look forward to continuing to share our success with you in 2004.

If you would like to learn more on how to be active in your workplace giving campaign and donate to National 4-H Council, please contact Supriya Baily, Development Coordinator, at (301) 961-2866 or sbaily@fourhcouncil.edu. ■

The Scoop...

NEWS FROM THE TRUST

4-H Joins Partnership for 21st Century Skills

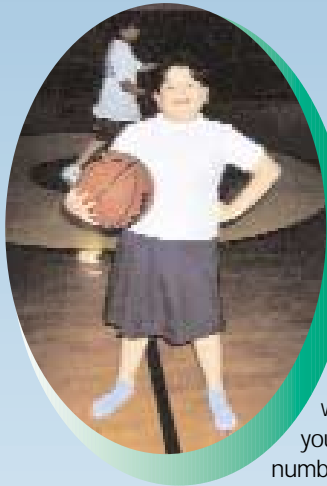
The National 4-H Leadership Trust has allocated \$40,000 for two initiatives that will leverage 4-H's expertise to craft a national leadership role for 4-H in science and technology education.

4-H has been actively engaged in science and technology programs geared towards youth since its inception. These activities are integral to the experiential learning model at 4-H's core.

The Trust will provide \$25,000 for 4-H's participation in the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, a public-private organization formed to create a successful learning model that incorporates 21st Century skills into formal and non-formal elementary and secondary education. 4-H will bring its depth of youth development and after-school knowledge and experience to this partnership with AOL-Time Warner, Apple, Cable in the Classroom, Cisco, Microsoft, National Education Association and SAP. The United States Department of Education supports this endeavor.

Twenty-first century skills integrate technology into learning and include not only technology literacy, but also analytic and critical thinking skills, social responsibility and accountability, communication skills, and information literacy.

The Trust also agreed to set aside \$15,000 for a 4-H working group on science and technology. This group of 4-H and non-4-H professionals will inventory 4-H's science and technology assets and determine how they might best be deployed. Their agenda includes fashioning a major science and technology strategic focus for 4-H and creating professional development opportunities for 4-H staff. ■



4-H Battles Youth Obesity (continued from page 1)

said Dr. Cathann A. Kress, Director of Youth Development, National 4-H Headquarters, CSREES, USDA.

Kress said through its wide variety of youth development programs that reach nearly seven million youth, 4-H is and will continue to promote healthy body weight and positive self-image in young people by engaging them in a number of sequenced experiential learning activities; involve family members so that they can support healthy lifestyle changes through modeling; increase physical activity through 4-H projects like outdoor education and recreation, cycling, gardening, and health and nutrition; and form youth-adult partnerships within communities to create strategies that involve young people as the catalysts for change.

Another way 4-H is trying to involve youth in creating programs that stem the tide of youth obesity is through the Healthy Lifestyles Grants Program. The program awarded grants to eight demonstration sites in seven states in 2003 and involved nearly 10,000 youth and adults. Examples of these programs are:

- Girls on the Move, a program for Latino girls ages 7-12 in Merced County, CA, that focused on the nutritional needs of girls and young women and how culture, family, and friends influence food choices. Each session included 20 minutes of physical activity.
- The Norris Square Neighborhood Project in Philadelphia, PA, which incorporated

elements of Puerto Rican culture into the after-school program including Puerto Rican dance classes and cooking healthy versions of traditional Puerto Rican foods.

- Growing Strong, a program for children ages 6-12 at the Association House in Chicago, IL, included young people's families and conducted community workshops on meditation and stress relief, organic farming techniques, diabetes, and eating a balanced diet.
- A Walk Through Utah for youth ages 12 and younger in Salt Lake County, UT, a program in which teams of youth and adults pledged to walk 1,314 miles in four months "through every county in Utah" while learning the benefits of nutrition and physical activity and stress-reduction techniques. Participating teams amassed 14, 956 miles during the program.

For more information about the Healthy Lifestyles Grants Program, contact Diana Friedman, Program Coordinator, at dfriedman@fourhcouncil.edu. ■



Philadelphia, PA, youth at the Norris Square Neighborhood Project, which was funded by a 4-H Healthy Lifestyles Grant, take dance classes, learn to cook healthy, and play basketball.



Site Motivates Youth to Choose Abstinence

Building Partnerships for Youth is a Web site that supplies program leaders with the successful strategies they need to motivate youth ages 9-13 to choose not to engage in sexual intercourse.

Program leaders can search the Web site for information about their HIV/AIDS, STDs, or early pregnancy prevention programs by activity, program description, or elements of positive youth development. Visit the Web site at www.bpyn4h.org.

The Web site is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and is a partnership among National 4-H Council and the 4-H programs at the University of Arizona and the University of California, Davis. 4-H is involved with Building Partnerships for Youth because the project takes a leadership role in shaping our understanding of positive youth development and believes it is a developmentally appropriate approach for instilling in youth the motivation to make healthy choices.

For more information, contact Sherry Betts at the University of Arizona at sbetts@ag.arizona.edu. ■



Oklahoma 4-H Teens Teach Kids That Being Fit Is Cool

Oklahoma 4-H teens go into local elementary schools to teach children how to take care of their bodies as part of Kicks4Kids, a 4-H service project developed by the Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service.

"Kicks4Kids teaches children in kindergarten through fourth grade why physical activity will make them feel better mentally and physically while improving their quality of life," said Karla Knoepfli, Volunteer and Leadership Extension 4-H Assistant Specialist, Oklahoma State University.

Children who participate in Kicks4Kids learn about "Being Clean and Cool" (good hygiene); "Feeling Fit" (physical fitness); and "Eating Smart From the Start" (proper nutrition).

"Kicks4Kids recognizes that the earlier young people learn good health habits, the more likely these habits will continue into adulthood," Knoepfli said.

4-H teens who make Kicks4Kids their service project are

responsible for contacting local school officials to gain their consent for the program and implementing and evaluating the Kicks4Kids curriculum in partnership with the class teacher. They also ask local businesses for donations of athletic shoes to ensure every child participating in the program has them for physical education classes.

Knoepfli said the Kicks4Kids curriculum is designed so that it also can be taught in after-school programs or as a workshop during out-of-school time. Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service will train teen and adult volunteers from any youth-serving organization who wishes to implement Kicks4Kids as a service project, she added.

Kicks4Kids is endorsed by the Oklahoma Department of Education. It began in Fall 2002 and will be implemented statewide by Fall 2005.

For more information about Kicks4Kids, contact Knoepfli at kknoepf@okstate.edu. ■



News

you can use

Nominate Your Favorite 4-H Volunteer

Volunteers are the backbone of 4-H, and it's time to recognize an outstanding volunteer in your community. Nomination forms for the third year of the National 4-H Salute to Excellence Awards Program are at www.members.n4h.org.



National Salute to Excellence award recipients are honored with a trip to the National 4-H Youth Conference Center in Washington, DC, a monetary award—a portion of which must go to a community service project of their choice, and engraving of their name on the Salute to Excellence Plaque at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center.

Nomination forms must be sent to State 4-H Offices. Each state office will select one nominee for the "Lifetime Volunteer Award" and one nominee for the "Volunteer of the Year Award." Only the State 4-H Office can officially designate a volunteer as the state

nominee for either of these awards. Please contact your State 4-H Office for internal state deadlines.

The state-designated applications must be received by National 4-H Council by December 5, 2003. One recipient from each category will then be selected by a national review team to represent the spirit of 4-H volunteers for 2004.

Monsanto Company is the premier corporate sponsor for the National 4-H Salute to Excellence Awards Program. Contact your State 4-H Office with any questions about nominations for the Salute to Excellence Awards. For answers to other questions, please contact Diana Friedman, Program Coordinator, at dfriedman@fourhcouncil.edu or (301) 961-2819. ■

4-H Clubs Gear Up for Space Day

4-H Clubs with members in grades 4-8 can participate in Galactic Gear, a Space Day 2004 Design Challenge for clubs.

Galactic Gear is an inquiry-based building challenge in which students develop a multi-purpose tool that can be used to explore and/or survive in our solar system. Teams will use science and math concepts, initiate independent research, and connect directly with experts in the field to develop their design.

Teams that submit solutions by March 5, 2004, will be considered for national recognition at Space Day ceremonies in Washington, DC, on May 6, 2004, and receive a certificate of appreciation signed by Ohio Senator John Glenn, former astronaut and Co-Chair of the Space Day educational initiative.

Online registration has begun. 4-H Educators and Volunteer Leaders can find project resources, criteria, and expectations in the Teachers/Event Planners section of the Space 2004 Web site at www.spaceday.com.

For more information, contact 4-H's Space Day liaison, Dr. Tony Cook, 4-H Aerospace Education, Alabama Cooperative Extension System, at jacook@aces.edu or visit www.aces.edu/dept/4Haero. ■

4-H...The Power of YOUth is a publication of the National 4-H Leadership Trust. Feedback and article suggestions are welcome. Please e-mail them to the Trust in care of Laura Phillips Garner, Editor, at lgarner@fourhcouncil.edu.

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