



4-H Focusing on Health

Impact Statement

The Problem/Issue:

The fourth H in 4-H—health—is crucial to the social, physical and emotional well-being of Alabama’s young people. As American culture changes, new health issues move to the forefront.

What’s Been Done:

Alabama 4-H addressed several specific health issues in 2003. The 4-H Sun Safety Education Program focused on early intervention and the reversal of the bias toward tanned skin as well as educating young people on the lifelong impact of sun exposure. Emphasis was given to cancer recognition, sun screen use and action steps for sun protection. More than 2,100 young people took part in this program.

Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in America, and a number of Alabama counties are considered high risk for radon exposure. More than 10,000 young people took part in 4-H programming outlining the risks of radon exposure and how to minimize exposure.

Nationally, more than 2 million poison exposures were documented in 2002. Alabama 4-H’s poison prevention programs reached more than 2,000 youth with vital information such as proper storage of hazardous materials and how to contact a poison control center.

Why We Care:

4-H is a leader in promoting youth health information, education and communications activities and programs that contribute to the improvement of health at the individual and community levels. 4-H efforts are improving the health and lives of Alabama young people and their knowledge has been increased. For example, program evaluations in one county indicated students’ understanding of skin cancer surged to 85 percent after the program—up from 3 percent.

