4-H Food, Fun, and Reading

How do help youth have fun while improving their reading skills? Do it the 4-H way of course! Niki Crawson, 4-H Extension Agent in Holmes County, and Judy Corbus, FCS Agent for Holmes and Washington Counties have partnered with a local elementary school and the health department to implement a program that teaches youth about the major food groups and portion size while exploring the world of reading.

Niki has adapted the Food, Fun, and Reading curriculum for the University of Vermont to reach 1st graders in her county. Each day, a volunteer will introduce a food group and read a book that corresponds with that food group. They end the session by preparing a healthy snack.

All books are approved for AR testing, so the program accomplishes goals that teachers must report on. Niki has found that after just 2 sessions, participants have demonstrated a 68% increase in knowledge gained about nutrition. Niki has also developed take home packets that include recipes and information for parents on good nutrition.

Youth Development Trend: Quality versus Quantity

During a recent Youth Development Webinar, Dale Blyth, Associate Dean for Youth Development at the University of Minnesota, and the Director of the Extension Center for Youth Development presented on top trends in youth development.

One trend is that we continue to add more and more programs, but more is not necessarily better. Instead, we need to focus on QUALITY. He argued that the only way we will survive the next hundred years is to develop and focus on programs of high quality, not necessarily quantity.

Stakeholders don’t just want to know how many youth participated, but what was the real result? What was the impact? This is something to consider, especially as we face tough budget times.

A synopsis of how Florida 4-H Measures up to other quality youth development programs can be found at florida.4h.org/news/files/Quality_Youth_Development_Programs.doc
Escambia County was recently announced as the XTreme Cuisine Winner for 2009 by the Florida Department of Agriculture! In order to win this state-wide contest, the 4-H Program conducted five Xtreme Cuisine programs to teach 201 youth about Florida fruits and vegetables, how to plan and prepare nutritious snacks, portion size, how to read a food label, and how to be more physically active.

Sixty-sixteen leaders donated 184 hours and 39 adult volunteers donated 88 hours for a total of 272 hours of service, valued at $47,273.6. Pre-Post test results showed: 81% gained knowledge of types of healthy snacks, the importance of fruits and veggies and exercise in their life. Post reflective surveys showed 71% learned how to read food labels, 90% will share a new nutritious snack with their family, and 82% want to participated in more 4-H Healthy Lifestyles programs.

As a reward, the Florida Department of Ag will sponsor an advanced cooking school for 4-H members with the Department of Ag Xtreme Cuisine Professional Chef. For more information about this program, visit http://www.florida-agriculture.com/education/xtreme.htm.

4-H Online Updates

The first 4-H Online Polycom session got off to a rocky start, but don’t let that hinder you from trying again on February 18th. Those that participated in the Elluminate session gave very positive feedback. Nancy Johnson emailed directions for accessing the recorded Elluminate sessions on January 21st. Sessions will be available via polycom, from 11AM-12PM Eastern Time. Elluminate sessions are from 2-3PM Eastern Time. Once again, here are the dates for 2009:

- February 18th
- March 18th
- April 15th
- May 20th
- June 17th
**Tech Tool of the Month– AWeber**

4-H newsletters are one of the most critical communication tools we have. Unfortunately, physically preparing the newsletter for mailing can be a time consuming task, especially if you don’t have adequate (or any) support staff. Here’s a tool that can help: AWeber.

AWeber is a service that 4-H families (or any other Extension Clientele) subscribe to. Once they subscribe, they can receive newsletters, announcements, and reminders via email sent by you (or a support person). AWeber costs about $120.00 for one year, but pays for itself when you take into account all the time and money spend on paper, toner, and postage.

One of the best features of this service is that it will generate reports to tell you how many people opened your email, how many times they opened it, and whether or not they visited any of the links you may have included in the body of the text.

If one of your New Year’s Resolutions was to “work smarter, not harder,” then you may want to seriously consider this tool. For more info, visit this website: [http://www.aweber.com/pricing.htm](http://www.aweber.com/pricing.htm).

Hillsborough County 4-H has successfully used this tool for over a year, so you may want to contact Holly Jordan to find out how she has used it.

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**Tax Tips for 4-H Accounts**

Don’t forget that the State 4-H Events Office needs the EIN numbers of your 4-H clubs (or county 4-H Account) for their records.

As everyone prepares their personal tax returns, the IRS is expecting some paperwork from 4-H too! 501c3 Incorporated 4-H groups need to file a tax return with Form 1023; 501c3 Unincorporated groups should use Form 1024.

4-H Clubs and Affiliate Groups (under the GEN 2704) should use Form 990EZ (for income less than $25,000) and Form 990 for income over $25,000. All of these forms can be downloaded from the IRS website at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

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**Are You Affirmative Action Audit Ready?**

Every Extension Agent is responsible for Affirmative Action, but because 4-H Works with such a broad audience, we have extra work to do in this area. In preparation for Affirmative Action Reports (which are due in March), a polycom session will be offered on February 24th, from 10AM-12PM Eastern to review 4-H Affirmative Action Basics, and to help 4-H agents and CEDs understand what needs to be documented (and how) in case of a Federal Affirmative Action Audit. You can register for this in-service on the PDEC website. For more information, contact Heather Kent at hckent@ufl.edu.
Greetings Fellow 4-H Faculty! I hope your new year got off to a great start. I am in the process of scheduling meetings with each county to find out how I can be of service to you, as we work together to “Make the Best Better.” In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me if you need assistance. I am always available by email, but my Marianna office does not have a phone line, so you will need to call me on my cell. Please note my contact information on the left side of this page.

Sincerely,

Heather C. Kent
Regional Specialized 4-H Agent, Northwest Extension District
hckent@ufl.edu

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### February 2009

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- **1** Promotion and Tenure Workshop, 10AM-1PM Eastern Time
- **10** 4-H New Faculty Training, Gainesville
- **17** Turning Point Training in Wakulla, 9-11AM Eastern Time
- **18** 4-H Online Update
- **23** Applications due for Hog and Ham
- **24** Are You Affirmative Action Audit ready? Polycom In-service, 10AM Central
- **25** CED Meeting via Polycom
- **26** Camp Counselor Training, Cherry Lake
- **27** Camp Counselor Training, Cherry Lake
- **28** Intermediate State Leadership Adventure Weekend, Camp Ocala
- **29** Wakulla Hog Show

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**Contact Info:**
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