

Overview of the 4-H Health Project



The 4-H Health Project teaches 4-H members how to improve their physical, intellectual, emotional, and social health. It also focuses on community health resources and largely focuses on healthy lifestyles, illness and injury prevention, and wellness. Also addressed are safety concerns related to health issues, such as first aid and emergency preparedness.

Health projects usually occur throughout the 4-H year, based on the availability of leaders. Members interested in participating in a health project should be willing to commit the appropriate amount of time to it, depending on the level of involvement.

Because competition is limited to the 4-H educational presentation, Healthy Lifestyles Invitational, and record-book competitions, the members can focus more on the learning process and the multiple opportunities for community service.

This project may overlap with other projects, such as food and nutrition and safety, which offers many opportunities for the members.

Questions to ask

- What are your goals?
- Do you want to compete in any health project contests?
- If so, would you like to compete with a team or individually?
- What other projects are you involved in that you can incorporate into your health project?

Learning experiences

Workshops

- Assembling a first aid kit
- Balance of nutrition and physical activity
- Basic first aid/CPR
- Benefits of water
- Dangers of alcohol/drugs
- Dental health
- Eating disorders
- Healthy lifestyles
- Healthy snacking
- Importance of immunizations
- Importance of sleep
- Increasing physical activity
- Preventing colds and flu
- Proper hygiene
- Sun safety
- Tobacco prevention

Tours

- Clinics
- Exercise facilities
- Grocery stores
- Health department
- Health food stores
- Hospitals
- Local health organizations
- Nursing homes
- (American Heart Association, American Cancer Society)

Community service

- Assemble and distribute first aid kits
- Conduct a presentation on a health topic
- Help with a diabetes workshop
- Help with a health fair
- Offer a basic first aid course
- Organize a team for a health walk
- Volunteer with a hospital or health department
- Volunteer with Walk Across Texas

Contests

These contests are summarized on individual Essentials pages:

- Educational presentation: Health
- Healthy Lifestyles Invitational
- Recordbook: Health

Careers

- Dental hygienist
- Dietitian
- Doctor
- Emergency medical technician
- Extension agent
- Health care administrator
- Health educator
- Health inspector
- Health specialist
- Human services counselor
- Lab technician
- Nurse
- Nursing home administrator
- Pharmacist
- Physician's assistant
- Radiologist
- Therapist (physical, speech, occupational, etc.)
- Wellness coach

Leadership

The 4-H Healthy Lifestyles Ambassador Program offers senior 4-H members an opportunity to empower youth to lead and promote the purpose and goals of the healthy lifestyles program.

The group leads and oversees the healthy lifestyles program by helping develop activities, project materials, and special events, and by recommending program direction. The Ambassadors serve a 2-year term. Applications are due in April each year.

Resources

- AgriLife Extension resources (fcs.tamu.edu)
 - ❏ Cancer
 - ❏ Diabetes
 - ❏ Family health
 - ❏ Health fair planning sheet
 - ❏ *Health Hints* newsletter
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/handwashing
- Color Me Healthy (North Carolina State University Cooperative Extension): www.ces.ncsu.edu
- Journal of American Medical Association (JAMA)
- Journal of School Health
- National 4-H Curriculum: www.4-hcurriculum.org
- *Texas 4-H Club Health/Safety Officer Handbook*: <http://texas4-h.tamu.edu>
- Texas Department of Health: www.dshs.state.tx.us/
- Walk Across Texas: <http://walkacrosstexas.tamu.edu/>

Specialists

- **Health educational presentation:** Alice Kirk, Extension Program Specialist, akirk@ag.tamu.edu, 979-458-2098
- **Recordbooks**
 - ❏ **First point of contact:** Your district 4-H specialist
 - ❏ **Coordinator of the state judging process:** Darlene Locke, Extension 4-H and Youth Development Specialist, dlocke@ag.tamu.edu, 979-845-6533
- **4-H Healthy Lifestyles Invitational:** Courtney Dodd, Extension 4-H Youth Development Specialist, efdodd@ag.tamu.edu, 979-845-6533