



## RESOURCE 8: 4-H Camp Program Planning Checklist

### 4-H Camp Program Planning Checklist

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This checklist was designed to assist unit Extension faculty/staff (and others responsible for the unit 4-H program) in planning for Junior 4-H Camp. This list is not meant to be exhaustive. Based upon your own unit 4-H camping program, additional tasks will need to be completed. Contact your 4-H Center Program Director and the 4-H Extension Specialist responsible for 4-H camping if you need assistance.

- Identify camp dates and registration deadlines.
- If you are a new Agent, Program Assistant, volunteer, or other person responsible for 4-H camp, attend the Master 4-H Training event (or recruit an adult volunteer) to prepare you for camp planning, implementation, and evaluation.
- Contact the Program Director to arrange pre-camp planning meetings for your unit or cluster. (Note: For most 4-H centers, two (2) meetings are conducted, one meeting occurs a couple of months prior to camp and a second meeting occurs two weeks prior to camp.)
- Identify the goals and objectives of your camp: what do you hope to accomplish?
- Decide how you will evaluate your camping program's goals and objectives.
- Identify your camp budget based upon the resources you will need in order to meet your goals and objectives.
- Identify whether or not you will need to purchase additional insurance for your camp. (Contact the Virginia Tech Office of Risk Management.)
- Develop training dates, schedules, etc. for 4-H camp teen and adult volunteers and a system for documenting the training that your volunteers receive. (This should happen early in order to meet the 24-hour training requirement.)
- Conduct Counselor-in-Training, teen counselor, and adult volunteer recruitment.
- Develop 4-H camp promotional materials and/or order promotional materials from the State 4-H Office/Virginia Cooperative Extension.
- Promote your 4-H camping program.
- Recruit camp participants using multiple methods in multiple settings (i.e., 4-H clubs, schools, community centers, libraries, home-schoolers).
- Develop a 4-H Camp Planning Committee. Be sure to involve youth/teens in the program planning process.
- Develop age-appropriate programming for each age group represented at camp.
- Develop camper-centered themes and camper centered activities (in addition to those provided by the respective 4-H center).
- Develop a camp schedule.
- Develop an award/incentive system for campers and teen/adult volunteers.
- Determine what your policy will be regarding 4-H camp refunds; be sure to communicate this to parents/guardians prior to camp.
- Conduct camp registration.



- Create pre-camp orientation letters and post-camp follow-up letters to parents/guardians.
- Develop (in writing) safety procedures for all of your programs and activities. *[NOTE: Each 4-H center has safety procedures that you can refer to if needed.]*
- Secure transportation for camp participants to and from camp. (Include in your written information to parents/guardians your transportation plans, policies, and what happens if transportation is changed.)
- Notify parents about the nature of the 4-H camp you will be providing and the types of activities that will be offered.
- Get current versions of the 4-H Health History Report Form, 4-H Camp Medication Forms, 4-H Code of Conduct Form, etc. and send them to parents along with pre-camp registration or orientation packets.
- Notify the 4-H center about requests for specialized classes, programs, and/or activities and send written information (i.e. safety plan) as required. (If you want to conduct a new program that has not been offered in the past, you should review the risk management flowchart in Section 7: Risk Management and 4-H Camping.)
- Decide on how you will document the camp experience (e.g., group picture, digital slide show, video program).
- Identify how you will provide food service and refreshments (if program is not conducted at a 4-H center).
- Contact the 4-H center to ensure proper menu and refreshments. Be sure your office or the 4-H center can provide and maintain cold drinking water at multiple locations throughout the week. Dehydration causes a majority of medical and behavioral problems.
- Contact the 4-H center about teen and adult training and encourage or require your teen and adult volunteers to attend.
- Conduct 4-H camp teen and adult volunteer training. (The basic training outline is included in this Handbook in Section 12: 4-H Camp Human Resources.)
- Plan to enroll 4-H campers who are not currently members of your local 4-H program. *[NOTE: Since 4-H camp provides six or more hours of educational programming, all youth who participate are eligible to become 4-H members.]*
- Identify tasks that need to be completed before camp, during camp, and after camp (and identify who will complete each task).
- Order 4-H camp T-shirts or related items.
- Communicate your parent/guardian visitation policy/procedures and communication policy/procedures to parents/guardians. (Check with your 4-H center regarding their policies.)
- Ensure that you have accommodated campers with special requests and needs (special diets, behavioral issues, persons with disabilities, etc.).
- Create a group management system or other method for organizing campers (ex: teams, animal packets, etc.) and the teens or adults who will serve as group advisors.
- Ensure that all fees have been collected.
- Conduct pre-camp orientation with 4-H youth campers and 4-H camp teen/adult volunteers.
- Contact your Program Director to ensure that all details are in order and that there are no last-minute questions or problems related to camp.
- Review all forms to ensure completion and proper signatures. If forms are not completed or are not signed, return them immediately to parents/guardians with instructions for completion.



- Complete other pre-camp items as identified by your 4-H Camp Planning Committee.
- Evaluate camp (post-camp surveys, interviews with campers/teens/adults, post-camp follow-up meeting).
- Meet with your 4-H Camp Planning Committee to evaluate camp, set meeting dates for next year's camp (or camps), and discuss other strategies for improving and enhancing your camping program.
- Send follow-up letters to parents/guardians, camp donors and sponsors, volunteers, etc.
- Conduct a follow-up thank-you event for your 4-H camp teen and adult volunteers.
- Attend the district level (or service area level) post-camp evaluation and planning meeting.