

Info for 4-H Leaders

What is the Youth Protection Process?

- This is a process which all volunteers who wish to become 4-H leaders must go through to become a volunteer 4-H leader

Who needs to take Youth Protection Training?

General Leaders - Judging Coaches - Project Leaders - Special Events Leaders - Activity Leaders - Key or Resource Leaders – parents of 4-H members; anyone working with 4-H youth.

Why is 4-H doing this?

- Society has changed; our world places our children in situations where they are in more danger. Society is becoming more aware of child abuse (the types and frequency) and parents are very concerned about the safety of their children. We are in a more mobile society; adults move into our county often and our current leaders or the 4-H Office may not know these adults very well.
- Legal reasoning plays a role in this: from the perspective of liability our organization has to provide a system that addresses protection of the child.
- To protect every child who is involved with 4-H, and to make a solid effort in training our leaders so a safe environment is maintained.

Additional Volunteer and Background Check Policies:

- Background checks and attendance at Youth Protection Training is required for host parents/guardians who aren't a certified 4-H volunteer.
- Background checks are required for all adults (18+) living with host families. County discretion will be used in required Youth Protection Training for these adults.
- Returning volunteers who have been absent one to four years need to have a background check and sign a behavior expectation form, but do not need to attend another Youth Protection Training.
- Returning volunteers who have been absent for five or more years need to repeat the Youth Protection process.
- Volunteers must sign a Behavior Agreement annually (included on the enrollment form)

Background Check Details

- Information submitted on the volunteer application form will be sent electronically to the Department of Justice located in Madison.
- Local staff works with state staff to identify any convictions against a volunteer which may make him/her questionable in working with children.
- If a questionable conviction is found, then the volunteer will be contacted for verification and further information.
- Volunteers who have lived in Wisconsin for less than three years will fill out the volunteer application form and provide three references.
- Each volunteer's background will be checked every four years.

Youth Protection Training

- Trainings will be held several times each year. Individual or club sessions can be arranged by calling the 4-H Office.
- This training will run approximately two hours in length.
- Trainings will be taught by the 4-H Youth Development Program Advisor.

Insurance:

Dane County has purchased a liability policy that covers all 4-H leaders who are officially enrolled. The policy covers leaders during the times they are functioning as a 4-H leader (in project meetings, field trips, etc.) where they might be held liable for injuries. These policies are for your protection when and if you may need it.