

Take a hike with 4-H's Outdoor Adventures project



School's out and summer is right around the corner. Many families enjoy overnight camping trips throughout summer vacation.

4-H recognizes the importance of this enjoyable tradition and created a 4-H project specifically for members who like hiking, camping and backpacking. The Outdoor Adventures project introduces 4-H members to the exciting world awaiting them right outside their door.

The Outdoor Adventures project is divided into three units: Hiking Trails, Camping Adventures and Backpacking Expeditions. These three units have been designed for grades 3-5, 6-8 and 9-12, respectively, but may be used by youth in any grade based on their skills, experience and interest.

Unit 1, Hiking Trails, gives members the opportunity to explore during a day hike. Members in this unit will learn how to pack a backpack for a day hike and what to put in the pack for a safe and enjoyable trip.

Activities in the Unit 1 project book will allow participants to experience new things and learn important information such as hiking essentials, planning a healthy hike, ethics of hiking and finding shelter.

Unit 2, Camping Adventures, expands on what was learned in Unit 1. This unit walks members through eating, sleeping and living in the outdoors on a camping adventure.

Members will need to consider various types of shelter and tents used for camping, how to pack and plan meals and how to keep a campsite beautiful for future campers. Various activities found in this unit encourage decision making, problem solving and communication.

Extension Corner

Written by Kindra Plumb

The final unit, Backpacking Expeditions, uses hiking and camping skills acquired in Units 1 and 2. The activities in Unit 3 prepare members to go on challenging backpacking trips. Project members will learn how to pack a backpack for a multi-day trip, including a discussion about what's needed for shelter, clothing and cooking.

Backpacking teaches the participant new things about oneself as well as the natural world all around the member. Participants are encouraged to use skills gained in the final unit of Outdoor Adventures in their daily lives.

Upon completion of the activities found in the unit books, members will complete a display board showing what he/she learned during their time in the project. Members will also complete their record book and participate in Interview Judging to demonstrate project completion.

For more information about the 4-H Outdoor Adventures project, or 4-H in general, please contact the Phillips County Extension Office. Extension programs are available to all without discrimination.

Holyoke Enterprise June 6, 2013