Benefits of 4-H Youth Camping

At the Holiday Lake 4-H Educational Center

**What is the purpose of 4-H camping?**

- 4-H camping is cooperative group living in a natural environment that focuses on developing life skills, social, spiritual, mental, and physical development, in young people.
- 4-H camping emphasizes “learning by doing.”

**Who participates?**

- More than 5,200 youth ages 5 to 18 are involved in the Holiday Lake 4-H Educational Center programming each year.
- 742 teen and adult 4-H volunteer leaders support, supervise, and teach those youth.

**How are youth involved?**

- The Holiday Lake 4-H Educational Center provides opportunities for youth in four ways: 4-H residential camping, 4-H specialty/day camping, 4-H school enrichment, and environmental education based upon the Virginia Standards of Learning.

**What type of educational programming is provided?**

- The Holiday Lake 4-H Educational Center programs include leadership development, environmental and aquatic science, performing arts, shooting education, forestry, outdoor adventure, high/low ropes course, climbing, primitive skills, journalism and broadcasting, animal science, wildlife, canoeing, fishing, outdoor sports, and swimming.

**How do youth benefit from 4-H camping?**

- Youth have the opportunity to learn and have fun in a safe environment while surrounded by caring adults.
- A study of Virginia 4-H camping conducted in 2002 with 11,000 youth campers ages 9 to 13 from across the state found that 4-H camp participation helped youth to learn to:
  - Make new friends,
  - Develop new skills, and
  - Become more independent and able to take care of themselves.
- A study of 363 parents/guardians of Virginia 4-H campers conducted in 2001 found that 4-H camp participation changed youths’ behaviors in the areas of:
  - Taking care of their own things (self-responsibility),
  - Becoming more independent/taking initiative, and
  - Sharing.

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For more information:
- Contact your local Extension Office.
- Contact the Holiday Lake 4-H Educational Center at (434) 248-5444 or www.ext.vt.edu/resources/4h/holiday.