

# Benefits of 4-H Youth Camping

## At the Northern Virginia 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 experiential learning; campers “learn by doing.”

### Who participates?

- ✿ More than 5,900 youth ages 5-18 are involved in the Northern Virginia 4-H Educational Center programming annually.
- ✿ 782 4-H teen and adult volunteer leaders support, supervise, and teach those youth.

### How are youth involved?

- ✿ The Northern Virginia 4-H Educational Center provides opportunities for youth in three ways: 4-H residential camping, 4-H specialty/day camping, and 4-H school enrichment based upon the Virginia Standards of Learning.

### What type of educational programming is provided?

- ✿ Leadership development, outdoor adventure, high/low ropes, environmental and aquatic science, outdoor sports, performing arts, shooting education, horsemanship, canoeing, swimming, forestry, climbing, wildlife, arts/crafts, primitive skills, fishing, and rocketry

### 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 recent study of the impacts of Virginia 4-H camping conducted with 11,000 youth campers (ages 9-13) from across Virginia found that 4-H camp participation helped youth learn to:
  - Make new friends
  - Develop new skills
  - Become more independent and able to take care of themselves
- ✿ A recent study of parents/guardians of Virginia 4-H campers 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
  - Sharing



### For more information:

- Contact your local Extension Office
- Contact the Northern Virginia 4-H Center at (540) 635-7171 or [www.ext.vt.edu/resources/4H/northern](http://www.ext.vt.edu/resources/4H/northern)



\* Garst, B.A., and Bruce, F. A. (2003). Identifying 4-H Camping Outcomes Using a Standardized Evaluation Process across Multiple 4-H Educational Centers. *Journal of Extension*.

\*18 U.S.C. 707