



# 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 experiential learning (“learn by doing”)



## **Who participates?**

- ◆ More than 5,200 youth ages 5-18 are involved in 4-H Center programming annually.
- ◆ 742 4-H teen and adult 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?**

- ◆ Leadership development, environmental/aquatic science, performing arts, shooting education, forestry, outdoor adventure, high/low ropes course, climbing, primitive skills, journalism/broadcasting, wildlife, canoeing, fishing, outdoor sports, leather crafting, 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 recent study of the impacts of Virginia 4-H camping conducted with 11,000 youth campers (ages 9-13) from across the state of Virginia found that 4-H camp participation helped youth to 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 Holiday Lake 4-H Educational Center at (434) 248-5444 or [www.holidaylake4h.ext.vt.edu](http://www.holidaylake4h.ext.vt.edu)**

\* Garst, B. A. & Bruce, F. A. (2002, in press). Identifying 4-H Camping Outcomes Using a Standardized Evaluation Process across Multiple 4-H Educational Centers. *Journal of Extension*.