

OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CHALLENGE



Section:

ORIENTATION



ORIENTATION SECTION CONTENTS

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4-H OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CHALLENGE

Welcome to the 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge (OAC) Program! The following people and your county MSU Extension 4-H staff are also committed to your success.

TRAINING INSTRUCTOR NAMES, SPECIALTIES & CONTACT INFORMATION (as of 11/2011)

STATE COORDINATOR

Judy	Ratkos		Office: 517-432-7613	ratkos@msu.edu
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INSTRUCTORS FOR LEADER TRAINING SERIES

Name	Specialty	Telephone Number	email
Sam	Cornelius	Winter Camp	989-732-6708 srcornel@hughes.net
Brian	Fettig	Climbing	906-334-2786 bkfettig@up.net
Vicki	Habitz	Backpacking Canoeing Kayaking	989-727-2666 habitzv@yahoo.com
Paul	Koehler	All	248-684-9376 efiptk@aol.com or koehlercarpentry@gmail.com
Kelly	Lively	Kayaking Winter Camping	906-233-9257 tybowkites@hotmail.com
Wayne	Mulzer	Trip Plan	906-753-6360 wmulzer@hotmail.com
Boone	Scharp	Canoeing Winter Camping	231-649-0833 boonescharp@gmail.com
Terry	Umlor	Canoeing	231-263-5300 terry@springfieldsmartroof.com or terrijo@springfieldsmartroof.com
Jim	Waters	Backpacking	906-884-4158 jlwaters@chartermi.net
Joe	Whitenight	All & Orientation	586-725-3086 t_whitenight@yahoo.com
Theresa	Whitenight	All & Orientation	586-725-3086 t_whitenight@yahoo.com

INSTRUCTORS IN TRAINING

Nate	Beelen		906-492-3228	nbeelen@gmail.com
Lindsey	LaForte		586-801-3763	lawhitenight@yahoo.com
Russell	LaForte		734-718-0250	rlaforte@gmail.com
Kendra	Pyle		517-243-3224	dreamweaver@buffalodreaming.com
Kelley	Sampeer		810-304-2078	ksampeer@gmail.com
Ashley	Sebastian		586-242-7554	ashleylsebastian@gmail.com
Bryant	Sebastian		810-278-1021	sebast23@msu.edu
Bill	Slater		231-313-6762	bill@sjt.cc
Scott	Wielser		734-652-9977	scottwiesler@gmail.com

Welcome to the 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge (OAC) Program! This training manual will help you become a successful new 4-H OAC leader.

4-H OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CHALLENGE ORIENTATION SCHEDULE

Sample – Subject to change annually

Friday	5:00 – 7:00	Set up camp and fix your own supper. One or two get-acquainted/initiative games.
	7:00 – 9:00	Overview; questions & answers
	9:00 – 10:00	Campfire stories
Saturday	7:00 – 8:00	Fix your own breakfast
	8:00 – 10:00	Rotate between leaders with gear for: Winter Camping (sled, tarp, shovel, stoves and fuel) Backpacking (have some to try on, talk about packing) Caving (lights, helmets and clothing) Climbing and Rappelling (helmets, harness, ropes) Canoeing (paddles, PFD, canoes) Kayaking (needed equipment)
	10:00 – 10:15	Break
	10:15 – 10:30	Game
	10:30 – 11:30	Experiential Learning and Shadow Leadership
	11:30 – 12:00	Processing
	12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
	1:00 – 3:00	Orienteering with a compass
	3:00 – 3:15	Break—Enjoy your own snack
	3:15 – 5:15	Learn how to use a GPS Unit
	5:15 – 6:30	Fix your own supper
	6:30 – 7:30	Leave No Trace
	7:30 – 8:30	Camp kitchen and food
	8:30 – 9:00	Trip Plan
	9:00 – 10:00	Campfire
Sunday	7:00 – 7:45	Breakfast
	8:00 – 9:30	Team Building/Initiative Games
	9:45 – 11:00	Revisit Trip Plan, check out ones in notebook for coming weekends.
	11:00 – 12:00	Next Steps, Action Plans, Final Processing and closing

PROGRAM GOALS

The Michigan 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge program is intended to help participants see themselves from a whole new perspective. As our society becomes further removed from the natural environment, personal alienation becomes more prevalent. The inability to cope with related stresses is becoming a rapidly growing social problem.

The 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge program seeks to help the participant renew the bond with self, others, and the natural environment. Through trained leadership, the natural environment and stressful outdoor activities become classroom and curriculum, to further learning by experiencing.

The specific goals of the Michigan 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge program are that the participant:

- Is instilled with self-confidence in all aspects of life
- Better understands the needs of others
- Learns cooperative participation and the value of effective communication
- Deepens and diversifies his or her outdoor experiences far beyond the ordinary
- Gains a greater sensitivity, understanding and appreciation of the natural environment with a sense of stewardship.
- Achieves personal growth and heightened self-awareness, physically, mentally, and emotionally, through a variety of outdoor experiences
- Is CHALLENGED, by purposeful physically and mentally stressful outdoor experiences
- Learns the means for coping with stress
- Develops qualities of leadership

PROGRAM POLICIES

Use of Name - Use of the name “4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge” attached to any group requires participation of a Certified 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge Leader.

Trips and Outings - A certified adult (21 years or older) Outdoor Adventure Challenge Leader is *required* to be on all Outdoor Adventure Challenge outings for the *entire duration* of the outing. A Outdoor Adventure Challenge outing is defined as any activity conducted by a 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge club and its certified leader away from its normal meeting location and can be a one day’s duration or longer.

Private Property - All Outdoor Adventure Challenge leaders must obtain permission when using private property.

Parent Release Forms - Parental release forms for program participants for all Outdoor Adventure Challenge outings are *required*. Participants *without* signed forms *can not be allowed* to go on the outing.

Life Jackets/PDFs - Life jackets *must be worn* by all Outdoor Adventure Challenge participants (youth and adults) during canoeing, boating, or other water-related activities.

Helmets - Helmets *must be worn* by all Outdoor Adventure Challenge participants (youth and adults) during caving, climbing, rappelling, and swift-water canoeing activities. You must have an approved helmet.

Sale of Outdoor Adventure Challenge Novelties - Outdoor Adventure Challenge groups may sell items such as T-shirts, decals, etc., following approval by the State 4-H OAC Coordinator and Environmental & Outdoor Education Program Leader.

Michigan 4-H Youth Development Conduct Policy – All 4-H OAC program activities (leader training, youth group trips, etc.) must follow the Michigan 4-H Conduct Policy:

- Positive behavior is a key expectation for youth and adults participating in state-sponsored 4-H activities – behavior that reflects trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. Participants are expected to fully participate, follow all workshop or event guidelines and behave appropriately to ensure a high-quality learning experience and ensure the safety of all participants.
- Theft, vandalism, the use of illegal drugs and alcohol, leaving the program premises or boundaries (except for trips arranged as part of the program) and other such offenses are strictly prohibited. Anyone involved with these offenses will immediately be sent home at his or her own expense and may be dismissed from MSU Extension 4-H Youth Development. Those engaged in illegal activities will be turned over to the proper authorities. Repair costs for damages incurred to property will be billed to those responsible.
- You may be sent home for inappropriate sexual behavior and behavior that violates the rights of others, particularly when the behavior is disrespectful as regards a person’s gender, race, age, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability or appearance. You may not tease, hurt or bully anyone, or use language, gestures or actions that will hurt others. Disciplinary action will vary based on the degree of the offense and will be determined by the 4-H staff in charge of the program.
- Housing/sleeping areas are set up as all female and all male. Participants are not permitted in the housing/sleeping areas assigned to members of the opposite sex.
- Participants are responsible for their own belongings. Valuables, such as expensive jewelry and electronic devices, should be left at home. 4-H Youth Development will not be responsible for any lost or missing items.
- Dress casually, but neatly and appropriately, for the occasion.

Transportation – MSU prohibits the use of 12- and 15-passenger vans for 4-H programming; these vehicles have been determined to have a greater risk of flipping during turns. You are covered by MSU Liability traveling to and from 4-H events as long as you abide by this policy and drive in a safe manner.

Drivers transporting youth on behalf of MSU and MSU Extension programming must be 21 years of age or older. Verification of a valid driver’s license and current liability insurance is required for any adult volunteer authorized to drive for Michigan 4-H Youth Development programs. Teens with a valid driver’s license may drive themselves to 4-H events with parental permission. However, they cannot transport others on behalf of MSU Extension.

Youth-Adult Housing Policy for 4-H Overnight Events – It is the responsibility of Michigan State University Extension 4-H Youth Development to do all it can to ensure that the young people involved with 4-H programs are treated with respect and dignity, and are provided with safe, caring environments in which to learn and have fun. All 4-H staff and volunteers who work closely with young people have the potential to profoundly affect the well-being of children.

To help ensure the safety and well-being of both youth and adults involved with Michigan 4-H, the “Youth-Adult Housing Policy for 4-H Overnight Events” was developed. This mandatory policy, effective beginning January 1, 2008, applies to any Michigan 4-H–sponsored state-, regional-, multi-county-, county- or club-level overnight event where adults are housed with youth. For purposes of this policy, a “Michigan 4-H–sponsored event” is defined as any event that has an affiliation with 4-H through the use of the name or emblem, and that involves a representative of 4-H (either a 4-H staff member or a 4-H volunteer who has been through the Volunteer Selection Process).

The core of the policy relates to housing young people with unrelated adults and reads as follows:

Youth can be housed with unrelated adult chaperones aged 21 and over (age as of date of event) at overnight 4-H events as long as the youth-adult ratio is at least two youth to one adult and the adults have been through the Michigan State University Extension Volunteer Selection Process. Chaperones at 4-H overnight events are responsible for serving as role models for youth and for guiding youth behaviors. Only adult chaperones and youth of the same gender can be housed together. An unrelated youth and adult must never share a bed.

At overnight events, it is recommended that adults be housed with youth whenever possible – in accordance with the policy. When this is not possible, adults must be housed within hearing distance of any lodging housing youth. In all events, 4-H staff and adult volunteers having responsibility for a given activity always retain the authority to exercise their best judgment to ensure the safety of the young people involved.

This policy also addresses other aspects of overnight housing situations such as **youth-adult ratios**: *Any overnight trip must have a 4-H OAC adult leader and one other 4-H adult volunteer chaperone who doesn't have to be an OAC leader, but can be. Michigan 4-H Youth Development also recommends the following adult-to-youth ratios when planning and implementing programs. When involving youth between the ages of 5 and 12 (of the same gender), follow a ratio of one adult to six youth. Supervision of young people aged 13 and up (of the same gender) requires a ratio of one adult to ten youth. Some programs, such as the 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge program, use a higher ratio of adults to youth. 4-H staff and volunteers should always consider the needs of the group (such as age and maturity levels) and use their best judgment to keep the young people safe and not put adult chaperones in unreasonable situations.*

Housing Youth With Related Adults

Youth can be housed one-to-one with related adults (19 and over) who are their parents, legal guardians or other family members (such as step-parents, domestic partners, grandparents, aunts, uncles and adult siblings). Keep in mind that “family members” may be defined in different ways across cultural groups. Note that this portion of the policy refers to related one-on-one youth-adult situations. Adults can be housed with more than one related youth.

4-H Insurance Information – Many times, questions are asked about the insurance coverage for 4-H events, volunteers, and members. It is important that all 4-H volunteers understand the types of insurance coverage that is available and which insurance is appropriate in various situations.

The two basic types of insurance that exist are:

Liability Insurance is provided to volunteers signed up as leaders in the 4-H program who are deemed by Michigan State University to be acting within the scope of their duties of performing services for the University. This insurance protects volunteers in the event they would be sued for claims of negligent acts that result in bodily injury to someone else, personal injury such as libel or slander, or damage to

property of others. Liability insurance coverage is automatic and is provided for all volunteers who are registered as leaders in their local MSU Extension office annually.

When transporting others to and from a 4-H program in privately owned vehicles, MSU liability insurance coverage is provided as a secondary insurance. That means that the insurance maintained by the person who owns the vehicle would provide the first insurance coverage and the MSU insurance be the second coverage. Coverage by the liability policy means that the liability insurance will provide defense in court for a registered leader to cover allegations of a negligent act even through the allegations may be fraudulent or false, and will pay the damages in which the covered insuree is legally liable to pay.

Report any incident that involves bodily injury or property damage which may give rise to a claim immediately to your county 4-H staff or county extension director in a written report. You should cover as much information as possible about the incident. This will then be sent to Michigan State University. Follow up contact will then come from MSU directly to the parties named in the incident report.

Accident and Illness Insurance is not provided by Michigan State University to volunteers and is not mandatory. However, ***it is strongly recommended*** that all 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge groups take out a special policy available through the insurance company listed below. This insurance covers medical expenses, dental expenses from injury, as well as payment for loss of life, depending upon the coverage selected. Rates for the group insurance for clubs is \$1 per year, per youth and leader enrolled, or 15 to 23 cents per day for special coverage for groups who do not wish to obtain coverage on an annual basis. Specially arranged insurance coverage should include travel days to and from the activity as well as time of the activities.

Low cost accident insurance for 4-H groups is available from:
American Income Life Insurance
<http://www.americanincomelife.com>
P.O. Box 50158
Indianapolis, IN 46750
1-800-849-4820

4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge leaders should work with County MSU Extension staff to obtain group health/accident insurance. Groups are not required to insure with American Income Life. If club leaders have access to other low-cost group insurance, they should consult with their county Extension staff to assure proper and adequate coverage is provided before insuring their group.

Incident Report Forms (Injury/Property Damage Report for Non-Employees) – Accidents involving personal bodily injury or property damage that may give rise to a claim should be reported immediately. A copy of the Incident Report Form can be found in the Forms section of the 4-H OAC Training Manual. A copy of the completed form should be given to our county MSU Extension 4-H staff who will send it to the CANR Human Resources Office and the State 4-H Office, as well as the Office of Risk Management and Insurance as soon as possible, with a copy of the local police or investigator's report if available. This form can also be found on the Web at:
<http://ctr.msu.edu/download/forms/ex35a.pdf>.

SAFETY FIRST!

Assurance of participant safety is the supreme goal of the outdoor leader. Period. This must occur simultaneously and inseparably with protection of this environment. This leader attitude must be ever present, not only for the moral responsibility to the participant, but for leader self-protection as well. Our society has reached the point where, in the event of a program (outdoor or otherwise) injury, there is little question that there will be a lawsuit. There is even less question that the leaders will be named as defendants, as well as most every other person or organization even remotely connected to the incident. The question that does remain is who will be found liable in the judgment of the court. The court will determine liability based on three elements:

- Did the leader owe a duty to the participant?
- Did the leader breach that duty?
- Was there actual monetary or other loss incurred as a result of the injury?

The duty owed, also called the standard of care, is interpreted as **the same care exercised by a reasonable and prudent professional under the same circumstances**. Based on this definition, several points of particular relevance to Outdoor Adventure Challenge leaders need to be stressed:

- Volunteers are required to demonstrate the same standard of care as paid professionals.
- Michigan State University provides liability insurance coverage to **certified** 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge leaders (with up-to-date enrollment cards on file in their county Extension offices) while in the course of 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge club activities. **This insurance in no way protects the volunteer leader from incurring personal liability in the event he or she is found negligent (that is, has breached the standard of care). Therefore, it is strongly recommended that each volunteer consult with his or her insurance agent and secure adequate personal coverage.**
- The courts have recognized that young children do not demonstrate mature judgment, and as such require a higher level of supervision and protection.
- The Outdoor Adventure Challenge leader, volunteer or otherwise, is the “expert” at whatever activity he or she is leading, and therefore, has a duty to stay current on the common practice and knowledge in the field.
- In “*Outdoor Pursuits*”, authors Ford and Blanchard identify three criteria on which the standard of care is based:

I. Supervision:

A. General Supervision

1. Supervisory plan based on the number and location of supervisors.
 - a) Awareness of dangerous conditions (environmental conditions, participant signs/symptoms, unsafe practices)
 - b) First aid knowledge

B. Specific Supervision

1. Communicate at the level of the participant
2. Be sure participants both understand and adhere to safety procedures
3. Be alert to changing conditions that **may lead** to dangerous conditions (fatigue, darkness, rain, cold)

II. Conducting the Activity:

A. Adequate Instruction and Progression

This means the leader must know how to perform the skill being taught, as well as, be able to analyze the participant's level and ability and help him or her progress to a higher level safely.

B. Understand Participants (to modify plans appropriately)

It must be ingrained that the leader who teaches skills rather than people is not acting as a reasonable and prudent person.

1. Age and size
2. Skill and maturity
3. Special conditions (mental and physical disabilities)

C. Warning of Dangers and Required Use of Protective Devices

1. Indoors, this may include knowing the locations of exits and fire extinguishers.
2. Outdoors, this may mean knowledge of hazardous topography and potential evacuation routes.

III. Concentrate on these elements of risk management until they become second nature:

A. **Continue to concentrate on them during each and every 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge activity.**

As an outdoor leader, the safety of your members is a tremendous responsibility. Only after the prerequisite of participate safety in the context of environmental safety is met should fun be a concern of the reasonable and prudent outdoor leader.

RISK MANAGEMENT

“Risk Management” refers to a range of measures taken to ensure the safety of participants. Careful risk management is an essential part of planning with ANY group; the term isn't specifically tied to “At-Risk” youth. Risk management includes recognizing risks to the safety and health of participants at every step of your activities, planning to minimize the risk to an acceptable level, and taking those steps.

Risk management emphasizes the more serious, unacceptable risks; it does not mean to eliminate all risk of stress or injury. The risk of physical injury in adventure programming is quite real, and it's one of the powerful teaching elements of the program. In 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge programming, scrapes, frustration, bruises, insect bites, fatigue, blisters, etc. are relatively acceptable. We also engage in activities such as climbing, white-water canoeing, etc., with serious potential risks. Injury and safety concerns include obvious dangers in rock climbing, winter camping, or canoeing, plus camp injuries and the possibility of a runaway or lost camper. If participants do not follow the guidelines, the result can be very serious. Dangerous behavior that leads to someone being injured or killed; broken bones, death from a fall, or drowning are, of course, not acceptable.

There is some risk that the stress of the program activities or that the group interaction will be harmful instead of helpful to the participant. This is not likely to happen to a resilient youth, but is more likely with an at-risk youth. This sort of hazard is not as obvious as the risk of physical harm, and is harder to watch out for, but should be kept in mind as well.

Steps in Risk Management

Information gathering – Know your group members and any issues that make them at risk in some way. Learn how they behave in a variety of situations. Learn about health concerns. Ask parents and others who know your members to inform you of anything that puts the members in need of special attention or at risk to misbehave.

Planning to manage risks – This considers many aspects of an activity:

- Preventative plan elements
- Leader training
- Training of participants to develop positive social skills such as group dynamics, leadership, resolve individual and group issues, etc.
- Training of participants in the technical activity skills, including general skills, prerequisite skills for certain activities, etc.
- Having proper safety equipment
- Training of participants in safety equipment and procedures
- Doing thorough safety procedures such as belaying, buddy systems, practice drills, etc.
- Safety rules: no knives; fire rules; conduct with other; gear checks; monitoring; etc. AND the procedures to apply the rules.
- Adequate leader/participant ratio
- Close leader supervision in both “routine” and “high adventure” activities
- Disciplinary procedures to deal with unsafe or inappropriate behavior
- Careful activity planning with advance consideration regarding the potential hazards on a trip and the potential problem behaviors of the members.

Response Plan Elements

- Leader training in skills and safety aspects
- Informed consent of participants and parents for emergency response
- Informed consent of participants and parents for disciplinary actions
- A range of thorough plans to deal with situations that may arise, including a need for disciplining, managing disputes, altering plans, withdrawing from the field, accessing outside help, contacting members families, etc.
- Levels of leader support teams/supervision, etc. to manage an emergency response
- Adequate capacity at each activity to respond to a situation, including:
 - Sufficient number of adults to manage emergencies
 - Access to emergency items
 - Access to emergency assistance services (ambulance, rescue, etc.)
 - Access to backup personnel and equipment aid.

Implementation

Finally, risk management means carrying out actions necessary to ensure the health and safety of members. A good plan is worthless if it isn't carried out when needed. And if something occurs for which you have no plan, you still need to act.

Emergency Contact Person

The recommendation is to use a single Emergency Contact Person. This is one good procedure; there may be other acceptable ways to manage emergency contact issues specific to a certain trip or situation. The local, primary emergency contact person (ECP) should be someone you know, a parent or other adult back at home or at a fixed location who you have prepared to manage emergency communication, who will be around and has the time to manage anything that might come up, who has an answering machine for brief times they are out, etc. They should also have the skills to help manage communication if an issue arises at home with family, etc. They should also know when a problem is occurring (you're late, you're in the path of a huge storm, etc.) and to contact emergency personnel near your trip location and provide them with the information they need to help you in an emergency.

Give the emergency contact person very detailed information about the trip – youth members on it, adults on it, copies of trip maps, very detailed itinerary including maps of alternative plans and routes and the times/ reasons you might use them, all the emergency info and phone numbers at the trip site, phone numbers of families of each member on the trip, etc. This gives parents someone capable and helpful to call if issues emerge at home and, if issues emerge in the field, everyone at home gets the same message and those in the field get all communication taken care of with just one call to the ECP. Direct parents quite firmly to only call that ECP, if a concern or an emergency arises.

Advantages of this procedure:

- One person who knows all the details about the group (names, medical information, route, plans, etc.) and coordinates any contact with the group in the field, especially anything involving emergency services. Otherwise, in a problem or worry situation at home, parents (maybe even several parents) might be phoning state police, sheriffs, park rangers, others, etc. with different concerns/ requests. The result is confusion and may put emergency service people on alert unnecessarily.
- If everyone at home knows to use the one emergency contact person as a source of information, they can call the ECP for any updates from the group in the field. No rumors or confusion.
- The group leaders in the field can make one call to the emergency contact person for lots of reasons:
 - To check for all messages for members such as changes in a member's pickup person, or (for instance) that a member's grandpa is ill and the member should be prepared for that, or the leader should take the member to the hospital when the group returns home.
 - To have the emergency contact person pass along messages to folks at home, telling parents at home that pickup time will be delayed or that there's been an injury.

Suggested permission forms system

Using the following combination of permission forms is highly recommended:

- An “annual” overall parent permission form specific for your 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge Club, done once for the year that explains the purpose of your group, key points like no-drug policy and other disciplinary things, the inherent risk things, and a statement releasing leaders and 4-H from liability. This is specific to your club and your rules. You should write it up then get it to your county 4-H staff to look it over for approval. Member and parents sign and return it to you.
- General “annual” medical treatment authorization form with a section giving the club leader permission to authorize treatment in an emergency. The county Extension office will have a form your club will be required to use. It will include the MSU media release form. Member's parents or guardians sign and return to you. The original forms need to be on file in the county MSU Extension office. You carry a copy of the medical treatment forms with you in case they're needed.
- The specific “trip permission form” for each trip. This has the trip name, location, and dates on it. The parents fill out:
 - Updated health/ medical information for member
 - Any current information about the member that the leader should know including current prescription medications being taken.
 - List of routine over-the-counter medications you will have along during the trip, and parent's okay or not okay for you to give them to their child.

The parent or guardian's signature indicating their okay for this particular trip and the information they have filled in on the form.

Special Risk Management – Higher Risk Groups

Attention to risk elements created by participants with special needs (high risk youth, etc.) must be part of a risk management effort. This might include:

- additional detail in trip plans

- additional technical safeguards in especially risky activities (back-up belayers, etc.)
- additional communication items may be appropriate (cell phones, walkie-talkies, etc.)
- missing person prevention and search processing
- extra emphasis on group dynamics
- working with parents more closely than usual

Managing Situations with Seriously Disruptive Youth

A member may become not only uncooperative, but also disruptive or unmanageable. Neither the leader nor the group is required to tolerate inappropriate behavior, certainly not if behavior puts safety at risk or threatens the success of the experience for the group as a whole. As leader, you must act to correct the situation. To act appropriately and constructively, you'll need to prepare carefully to deal with potential situations. Consider what may occur. Develop contingency plans for any situation. How will you manage the disruptive member? How will you manage the rest of the group? How will you want other leaders or other adults to assist you? Think through your plans so that you can act clearly, firmly, and effectively in that sort of situation. If faced with serious behavioral problems from a member, be ready to:

- **Supervise More Closely** – Have a leader or adult closely supervise the member posing the problem.
- **Build Strengths** – Give them an opportunity to grow and to prove themselves before taking the trip. Even seriously disruptive youth may respond to efforts to develop their positive skills.
- **Restrict** – Don't allow a disruptive and unsafe member to come on a particular risky trip at all, climbing for example. Or, restrict them from certain activities where they pose a risk, belaying for instance.
- **Send Home** – Before the trip, make very clear to the youth and parents that being sent home is a real possibility. Know of a phone near your destination, the closest bus station, and how to reach the parents during the trip. Get the travel plans made in advance, and make them with the parents so they know what may be needed. Get the bus fare in cash ahead of time. You might require the parents of a problematic member to attend as driver so they can remove the member, if needed.
- **Terminate Trip** – You may bring everyone home if a member's situation or behavior means the trip or activity can't be continued safely.

Be sure that all leaders and adults are aware of your contingency plans. Inform your county Extension office 4-H staff as well.

Put your "policy" for managing inappropriate behavior in writing and get youth and parent/guardians to acknowledge it with their signatures. The club's overview page (which each youth/parent receives each year) should include a statement that reads:

The leaders will restrict the activity of a member whose behavior is potentially dangerous to him or herself or to others. Leaders may send home from a trip at his/her parents' expense any member whose behavior creates risk for him/herself or others, or who has alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.

If you have to do anything out of the ordinary to deal with member's behavior, inform your county Extension office 4-H staff about it.

Runaway Prevention

If a member is likely to run away from or wander from the group, take precautions to keep that from happening. Make an agreement with that member not to do so. Assign a buddy or adult supervisor. Plan activities to minimize opportunities for running away.

Response

Develop contingency plans for handling the rest of the group (and their role as it relates to the issue) if any of the following occur: runaways, search procedures, group leadership changes and involvement of the authorities. This goes beyond the usual plans for dealing with a lost member, which is difficult enough. Finding a wanderer or runaway is even tougher and trained help will almost certainly be needed.

HOW TO ORGANIZE A MICHIGAN 4-H OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CHALLENGE CLUB

- I. Decide if you want to become an Outdoor Adventure Challenge leader and why. Remember, while you as a leader will benefit in many ways, Outdoor Adventure Challenge is first and foremost a youth development program.
- II. Contact your county Extension office to obtain an application and submit it by the deadline. You'll find a close relationship with your county office very helpful.
- III. Receive 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge training. During the training period, complete the following:
 - A. Arrange to attain current certification in CPR and at least Multi-Media Standard First Aid.
 - B. Arrange to join an existing club, or organize your own. Your county office will assist you with contacting other clubs or advertising for membership.
- IV. If forming your own club, you will need to consider the following:
 - A. An organizational meeting to introduce interested kids and parents to Outdoor Adventure Challenge. Some suggestions include:
 1. A brief presentation by an existing Outdoor Adventure Challenge leader and/or club members, followed by a Q/A session.
 2. A slide show of Outdoor Adventure Challenge outings might be available from other Outdoor Adventure Challenge leaders.
 3. A display and explanation of equipment used in the Outdoor Adventure Challenge program (lightweight backpacking equipment, climbing gear if there is a certified leader on hand, etc.). Stress that expensive equipment is not necessary to enjoy basic outdoor activities.
 4. Have everyone complete a questionnaire to obtain personal data and feedback.
 5. Plan an activity such as an initiative game.
 6. Serving refreshments and munchies is always welcome!
 7. Have copies of the Outdoor Adventure Challenge brochure to distribute, and any other handouts you feel might be useful.
 8. Be prepared to answer many questions, especially regarding safety. Stress that the learning of outdoor skills is secondary to the development of life skills.
 9. Have an outing in mind for the near future, and be prepared to give details.
 - B. A consistent meeting schedule. **For example:** Hold a planning meeting the first Monday of each month. Here you might discuss a previous outing, arrange details and/or introduce skills for a future outing, and so forth. The monthly outing would then follow at some prearranged time.
 - C. A consistent meeting place. Check county facilities first (such as a room at the Extension Office, a fairgrounds building, etc.) as these may be free of charge and tend to be centrally located. Arrangements will need to be made for access after hours and the room should be physically suitable for such variables as group size, activities, and possible youth and/or adult disabilities.
 - D. Decide early how money will be generated, such as holding fund-raising activities, or charging a fee for each outing. A consistent means of handling club funds is also important (bookkeeping, allocation, etc.)

- E. Find sources of outdoor equipment. Try your county office or Outdoor Adventure Challenge Instructors, or other Outdoor Adventure Challenge clubs or youth/special interest groups. Check with local merchants for group rental or purchase rates, or even loaners. Put an ad in your county 4-H newsletter asking for gently used equipment.
- F. Insurance needs (insurance is a *must*). Forms are available from your county office with very reasonable group rates on an annual or per activity basis.
- G. Transportation to and from outings. This is usually taken care of through multiple leaders with cars, limiting the group size, or cooperative parents. Incorporate parents into your club whenever possible as volunteer assistants.

SAMPLE LETTER TO PROSPECTIVE 4-H OAC MEMBERS AND PARENTS

Michigan 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge is a wilderness activity program for youth and their adult leaders. Wilderness survival, climbing and mountaineering, orienteering, ropes courses, outdoor skills, backpacking, camping, canoeing, and more are all part of 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge.

The 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge program is designed to extend the participants' reach by purposely providing physically demanding and mentally stressful outdoor experiences. Activities are intended to sometimes be difficult and occasionally uncomfortable. Trips are rarely cancelled due to poor weather, for instance. Participants, thus, gain confidence in their abilities to cope with stresses that they face in other areas of their lives. Members also learn to understand the needs of others, develop a respect for the environment, and learn leadership skills.

Safety is a top priority. Due to the unique nature of the program, leader training is extensive to ensure the safety of members and give the necessary skills for the high adventure activities that make up 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge. Since skills are built up from trip to trip, participation on some trips may be limited to those who have completed certain prerequisite activities.

The club will hold general meetings to enroll in the 4-H club, trip preparation meetings, and trips themselves. We hope to take a trip every six weeks. Participants of a trip must attend the preparation meeting and must also return a written trip permission slip and reservation form. Since each trip is a total learning unit, members are expected to participate in each trip from beginning to end.

The leaders retain the option of sending home from a trip at his/her parents' expense, any member who has violated the club's code of conduct, including possession of alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, or whose behavior is considered by the leader to be detrimental to club activity or potentially dangerous to other club members. Club members may also be suspended from the club for these same reasons.

Certain equipment is eventually necessary, but we encourage you to wait to purchase equipment until it is needed. We will discuss gear needs with club members before each trip, and will offer tips about the most appropriate equipment for club members. We will borrow and lend group equipment when possible to keep club members' expenses as low as possible.

Member cost on trips is limited to their own food, plus a share of the gas, ferry or campsite fees as applicable. The club may depend on parents to help drive the group to trip sites. Parents are also welcome to participate on trips; an additional adult sometimes allow us to take a larger group on a trip.

4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge is exciting, demanding, and fun. If you have any questions, please call.

4-H OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CHALLENGE LEADER RENEWAL PROCESS

4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge Leaders are certified for a period of three years (from date of certification until December 31, of the third year following certification). Recertification efforts can start approximately 18 months before your certification expires. Each leader must complete the following re-certification requirements:

- Be currently working with an *active* 4-H Outdoor Adventure Challenge Club.
- Have up-to-date cards in First Aid and CPR preferably Wilderness First Aid/CPR.
- Select and attend at least one training weekend of your choice in the Specialty Leader area of interest or a training on youth development.

The State Coordinator will be responsible for notifying leaders what their recertification date is (one year prior to expiration date) and reminding them of the above recertification requirements.

If a certified 4-H OAC leader doesn't get recertified in three years and at a later date wishes to become active again as an OAC leader, the rule of thumb will be that the leader will have to start the 4-H OAC certification process all over again. Some exceptions may be made to this as follows:

- The leader seeking to re-enter the program may request an exception to waive some of the training (with support from his or her county staff person) and provide information regarding how their expertise and experience warrants an exception.
- The State 4-H OAC Coordinator and instructors will review the request and determine if any and which portions of the training may be waived.