



UConn
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE,
HEALTH AND NATURAL
RESOURCES

EXTENSION

INFECTION PREVENTION

Action Steps for a Healthy Camp

OUR GOAL

During any public health emergency, it is important that we all take a little extra time to increase sanitary practices at 4-H gatherings. Not only will this help prevent the spread of illness but is a wonderful opportunity to educate youth and adults about proper healthy hygiene and social responsibility for ourselves and the community around us. Our goal is to provide resources to assist you in reducing the risk of inadvertently spreading disease at your 4-H camps this summer.

ACTION STEPS

This factsheet provides some common sense steps that can be taken to help reduce risks at your camp. Many of the steps listed below are meant to reduce the amount of touching of shared items by multiple individuals. We encourage you to put into practice those steps that make the most sense for your particular situation. It is not our goal to panic 4-Hers but rather to equip them with the resources necessary to be better educated and prepared to practice good hygiene habits. Most of these items are small changes in behavior that can lead to improved health and safety in communal settings.

PROPER HYGIENE HABITS

It cannot be stated enough how important proper handwashing is for preventing the spread of germs and disease. Washing your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds is recommended. Here are some hygiene related tips to keep in mind.

- ◆ Provide time in your schedule for everyone to wash their hands before eating or after coming into contact with any potentially contaminated surfaces.
- ◆ Use paper towels or air dryers for drying hands. Use the paper towel to open bathroom doors or other surfaces that are touched repeatedly. Disinfect sink & toilet handles, bathroom countertops and paper towel dispensers often.
- ◆ Invent new ways for campers/staff to greet one another instead of shaking hands. Allow campers to come up with silly ways to say hello that does not require touching.
- ◆ Scan for barriers into your gathering spaces. Consider if there are doors that can be propped open so they are not being touched by everyone entering. If that is not possible, assign one person to act as the greeter, opening the door for everyone else so only one person is in contact with the surface.
- ◆ At the end of the activity plan to take time after everyone has left the area to wipe down frequently touched surfaces with a disinfectant. All touched surfaces should be treated as if they might be contaminated.
- ◆ Minimize activities that require physical touch between participants as much as possible during highly infectious seasons. Practice proper social distancing.
- ◆ Open air reduces the risk of airborne illness. Make every attempt to move as many of your activities outdoors as possible.
- ◆ Try to limit the number of shared materials used during activities. This could include arts & craft materials, sports equipment, game pieces, etc. If these items must be used, consider having one person be in charge of that item. If that is impractical, try to use some type of disinfectant wipe between uses as much as possible.
- ◆ Provide campers with appropriate personal space in cabins and encourage them to keep personal items limited to their assigned space.

HEALTHY FOOD ETIQUETTE

The majority of camps involve snacks and/or meals being served to those in attendance. Here are some useful tips to keep in mind if you are serving any food or beverages at your camp.

- ◆ If you are using serving utensils to distribute food have one person serve everyone rather than having multiple hands touching the serving utensils.
- ◆ Consider serving snacks in single serve packaging. Another option is to have one staff member put the snack in small cups/containers before it is served so they are being handled by only one person rather than touched by the entire group.
- ◆ This same procedure goes for beverages that are served from a gallon container or large push button cooler. Designate an individual to be in charge of filling cups that can be distributed to everyone else. You may want to also consider serving individual juice boxes, etc.
- ◆ Provide sufficient containers to collect garbage insuring that items which have been touched and licked are properly disposed of.
- ◆ You want to insure the least number of hands are touching food and drink items before they reach someone's mouth.
- ◆ Make sure that anyone who will be touching any food item is practicing proper hand washing and other healthy hygiene techniques prior to being in contact with food or beverage items.

MINIMIZING RISK FACTORS

In order to keep the entire group healthy, it is sometimes necessary to remove sick individuals and other risk factors from the environment. Here are some things to keep in mind when trying to provide the safest environment for campers and their families.

- ◆ Relax attendance policies during times of high infection risk. If a camper is sick, they should be excused from participating. The absence should not count against them in the future. Nobody should feel that they need to participate in an activity if they are sick or at risk for an illness.
- ◆ If someone does come to camp with obvious symptoms, they should be encouraged to return home so as not to infect the rest of the group. Insure that they will be welcomed back without penalty when they are once again healthy.
- ◆ Consider having back-up adult staff in place to assist with camp activities. Oftentimes committed staff will feel that they need to be present even though they should not be due to a health issue. Again they should be encouraged to stay away while they are sick and welcomed back when they return to full health.
- ◆ If there is a sick individual within the home where this camper resides, it might be necessary to have that camper not come to camp since they may be a carrier of contagion or potentially become ill themselves.

With an awareness of proper practices we can insure that we are taking steps to minimize exposure to infectious agents. By making simple changes in our behaviors we can have considerable impacts on the health of all our campers and our 4-H camp environments.

*Adapted by Marc L Cournoyer,
UConn Extension 4-H Program Administrator
UConn 4-H Camp Liaison*

*Adapted from "Coronavirus Update. 3/10/20" by Marcel Horowitz, MS, MCHES
Healthy Youth, Families & Communities Advisor
University of California Cooperative Extension*



INFECTION PREVENTION RESOURCES

Covid-19 (Coronavirus) facts and updates:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/share-facts.html>

American Camp Association Covid-19 resource center for camps:
<https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/coronavirus-information-camps>

UConn Coronavirus public notification website:
<https://uconn.edu/public-notification/coronavirus/>

Connecticut Department of Public Health:
<https://portal.ct.gov/dph>

For information updates on local and state 4-H camp programs and other UConn Extension health related news please contact

Marc Cournoyer
UConn 4-H Camp Liaison

UConn Extension
139 Wolf Den Rd.
Brooklyn, CT 06234
Phone: 860-774-9600 ext. 18
FAX: 860-774-9480

Email: marc.cournoyer@uconn.edu
Web: www.4-h.uconn.edu/program/camp.php

UConn
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE,
HEALTH AND NATURAL
RESOURCES

EXTENSION

