



Oneida Extension Educators and Staff made 725 Programming Contacts in the months of November and December; with 229 Adult Contacts and 496 Youth Contacts.

2024 Cumulative Total: 8,535

Contacts 229 Adults and 496 Youth

November & December 2024

Positive Youth Development Oneida County 4-H

Anne Williams, 4-H Educator

- Facilitated a gathering of the Northwoods Explorers 4-H Club, where youth led club business, recreation, and education. The Northwoods Explorers 4-H Club places heavy emphasis on citizenship and leadership development, and helping youth explore sparks (interests). The goal of this effort was for youth to develop strong and supportive relationships with peers and caring adults in a safe, supported, and welcoming environment, and to be actively engaged in making group decisions while practicing life skills.
- Provided support and planning assistance to the adult 4-H volunteer leader of the Oneida County 4-H Junior Leaders group. An important role of the Oneida County 4-H Educator is to offer resources to assist 4-H volunteers to find success in their volunteer roles through offering quality Positive Youth Development programs. The Oneida County 4-H Educator provided support to the 4-H adult volunteer by arranging for facility space and offering additional information about the 4-H structure and essential elements. The goal of this group is for youth and teens to learn how to plan, organize, and lead various activities and projects. Doing so enhances their leadership abilities, engages them in community service projects (which helps them understand the importance of giving back and fosters a sense of civic responsibility), develops skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, and public speaking, and creates well-rounded individuals who are prepared to take on leadership roles in their communities and beyond.

“They are loving this group! It is so fun to listen to them describe the activities and how they relate to leadership and teamwork.”

~Facebook Post from a parent of two Oneida County 4-H Junior Leader Members

- Connected with UW-Madison Division of Extension's Community Development Institute to attain best practices and latest research on community needs assessments and wrote a project proposal on behalf of the Rhinelander Performing Arts Center Planning Group. The goal of this effort was to satisfy a request from the planning group to write a project proposal and present it to Leadership Oneida County, so the planning group can receive the additional research it needs to make informed decisions on its vision to create a performing arts center in Rhinelander.

“Many many thanks!! We appreciate having you by our sides!” ~Co-Leader of the Rhinelander Performing Arts Planning Group

- Provided training and support for an adult 4-H volunteer to lead the Oneida County 4-H Lego Robotics Explore team in Rhinelander and Three Lakes, where youth in grades 2-4 participated in hands-on education, team building, and inquiry-based science learning with a positive youth development framework. The goal of this effort was for youth



to build positive relationships with each other, gain a sense of belonging, and learn concepts in science, technology, engineering, and math through fun, exciting hands-on learning.

- Facilitated a gathering of the Oneida County 4-H LEGO Robotics Challenge Club, where youth in grades 4-8 participated in hands-on education, team building, and inquiry-based science learning with a positive youth development framework. The goals of this effort were for youth to build positive relationships with each other, gain a sense of belonging, and learn concepts in science, technology, engineering, and math through fun, exciting hands-on learning
- Coordinated and supported the Oneida County 4-H Lego Robotics Challenge team to participate in a FIRST Lego League regional competition for youth in grades 4-8. The goal of this effort was to provide youth from Oneida County an opportunity to meet other teams from across the state while participating in friendly competition, increase STEM interest and confidence, enhance their teamwork and problem solving skills, provide hands-on experience with programming and coding, which are essential skills in today's technology-driven world, and support the development of social-emotional skills such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and responsibility. This event also presented youth with a chance to communicate to, and receive feedback from, professionals in reputable industries throughout Wisconsin.

“Thank you for all the time and effort you put into the 4-H Lego Robotics Challenge team. My daughter has learned so much and has had a ton of fun. Thank you! We greatly appreciate all you have done.”

~Parent of a 4-H member

- Planned for, and supported, a new Oneida County 4-H adult volunteer as they prepared to chaperone two Oneida County 4-H members at the Wisconsin 4-H Fall Forum, a statewide 4-H event for youth in grades 7 and up and adult volunteers. The goal was for the volunteer and youth 4-H members to have a successful, positive experience and feel confident to bring back what they learned to their community.
- Facilitated planning efforts to bring the UW-Madison Wonders of Physics program to schools throughout Forest and Oneida counties. The goals of this effort were to expand access for students to view a UW-Madison-based STEM program and enhance science literacy by making physics accessible and fun, thereby promoting a better understanding of science in the community.
- Provided leadership at a 4-H Club Officer Training for the Northwoods Explorers 4-H Club, where youth leaders participated in hands-on leadership activities. The goal of this effort was to empower youth in the 4-H Club setting to take active leadership roles in their elected position, while enhancing life skill development such as leadership, decision making, problem solving and communication, as well as be better prepared to successfully navigate their officer position.

“It was fun being a fly on the wall at the leadership training – you do a great job with the kids! It’s a night and day experience for us coming from [a different youth-based club]. So much more involved and really gives the kids a chance to lead. Thank you for all you do for them!” ~Parent of a 4-H Club Officer



Eight 4-H members on the Oneida County 4-H Lego Robotics Challenge team competed at a regional FIRST Lego League competition held in Appleton. The team placed in the top 5 out of 16 teams and will advance to sectionals to be held Dec. 14 in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. The team also received the Core Values Award for displaying enthusiasm and spirit, working well together, and showing each other and other teams respect, and were nominated for awards for their innovation project and robot design.



Oneida County 4-H members Claire Ably and Quinn Williams attended the 2024 Wisconsin 4-H Fall Forum event held in Stevens Point. The purpose of Fall Forum is to inspire youth and adults to explore new ideas to bring back to their communities; develop youth and adult partnership; facilitate connections; promote strategies for youth and adults to reach underserved and underrepresented groups; and inspire youth and adults in their 4-H experience.



4-H Robotics isn't just about designing a robot. It's so much more than that! 4-Hers spend time setting goals, thinking strategically about how to improve what they are doing, and taking brain breaks when needed! Every time they meet, these future leaders are practicing essential skills such as time management, goal setting, cooperation, and how to have positive interactions with peers - and they may not even realize it!



4-H members on the Oneida County 4-H Lego Robotics Explore team in Rhinelander showcase their creativity and innovation at one of their team's sessions. The team is led by Oneida County 4-H volunteer Nate Sheppard.



Oneida County 4-H Junior Leaders wait their turn to mark their areas of interest in how they want to be actively engaged in service, leadership, and partnership in their community. The group is led by Oneida County 4-H volunteer leader Emily Ably.



These Oneida County 4-H members participated in 4-H Club Officer Training, designed to help new and returning officers understand their roles and responsibilities within the club. The training offered practice in building leadership skills and understanding the qualities of a good leader, fostering teamwork and trust, learning the basics of running a meeting effectively using parliamentary procedure, and practicing what they've learned in a simulated club meeting environment.



The Northwoods Explorers 4-H Club continues to grow - both in numbers and in youth practicing leadership skills! Here the youth club vice president introduces a guest speaker to the club.



Students at Nativity School in Rhinelander were delighted when they saw air rings shoot out from a vortex cannon, as part of the Wonders of Physics Show led by Haddie McLean with UW-Madison's Department of Physics. Extension 4-H Educators from Florence, Forest, and Oneida County worked together to bring this show from Madison to schools in Florence, Forest, and Oneida Counties.



- Created a proposal information packet, which was distributed to Leadership Oneida County participants during the program’s “Community Project Presentation Day,” on behalf of the Rhinelander Performing Arts Center Planning Group. The goal of this effort was to satisfy a request from the planning group to write a project proposal and present it to Leadership Oneida County, so its participants can receive the additional research it needs to make better informed decisions on its vision to create a performing arts center in Rhinelander.
- Facilitated an event where 4-H members participating in the Oneida County 4-H Pen Pal program got to meet their senior citizen pen pals in person for the first time at a holiday gathering at Grace Lodge in Rhinelander. The program was a collaboration with the Oneida County Aging and Disability Resource Center and Grace Lodge. The goal of this effort was for 4-H youth to increase their compassion and understanding, develop their communication skills, and learn from a person of a different generation.



Oneida County 4-H member Landon (right) with his Pen Pal at a December Holiday Gathering at Grace Lodge in Rhinelander. The 4-H Pen Pal Gathering was the culmination of a three-month 4-H Pen Pal Program offered by Oneida County 4-H, in partnership with the ADRC and Grace Lodge.

“I got to learn from and get to know someone with similar interests who is older than me.”

~Oneida County 4-H Member, Pen Pal Program



4-H members on the Oneida County 4-H Lego Robotics “High Tech Hodags” team competed at a FIRST Lego League Sectional Competition in Milwaukee in December.

- Coordinated and provided support for the Oneida County 4-H Lego Robotics Challenge team to participate in a FIRST Lego League sectional competition for youth in grades 5-8. The goal of this effort was to provide youth from Oneida County an opportunity to meet other teams from across the state while participating in friendly competition; increase STEM interest and confidence; enhance teamwork and problem solving skills; provide hands-on experience with programming and coding; and support the development of social-emotional skills such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and responsibility.
- Provided leadership and support to members of the Oneida County 4-H Leaders’ Association as they reflected on 4-H events and activities that have occurred, as well as discussed ways to conduct county-level 4-H programs with youth, raise funds and manage a budget to support 4-H programs, and represent 4-H throughout the county. The goal of this effort was to provide a local forum for youth and adult volunteer leaders to discuss ideas and provide input to enhance 4-H Youth Development programs at the county level.
- Participated in planning with a prospective 4-H volunteer to start a 4-H Cloverbuds club for youth in grades K-2 to occur within the Northwoods Explorers 4-H Club. The goal of this effort was to provide an overview of the 4-H program, its mission, the impact it has on youth and the community, outline the Cloverbud 4-H volunteer leader role, training opportunities, overview of available resources, and answer questions.



4-H members on the Oneida County 4-H Lego Robotics “High Tech Hodags” team practice their presentation in front of a WJFW-12 news reporter during a practice session in November.

Positive Youth Development

Sharon Krause, Community Youth Development Educator

- Leading preparations for a field trip to UW-Madison, where Raise Your Voice Club Members from Rhinelander and Lakeland Union High Schools will attend Badger Talk Lectures to learn more about mental health and to conduct an experiment about Seasonal Affective Disorder. They will also be planning events for Oneida County where their knowledge will be shared in order to increase youth resiliency within their communities.
- Innovated an effort to capture the effectiveness of Oneida County Teen Court by collecting data dating back to 2010 and having it organized into spreadsheets that will make it possible to analyze different outcomes, such as tracking recidivism as adults.

Health and Well Being

Terri Kolb, FoodWise Coordinator

- Provided backbone support for a health-focused coalition on mental health and suicide prevention, where individuals and agencies come together to empower members of the community through education and sharing resources. The goal of this effort was to increase community partnerships, capacity, and collaborative efforts to support healthy choices regarding social and emotional well-being. The coalition is developing an emergency food network of individuals and agencies, with a goal to identify the successes, conditions, and challenges related to emergency food distribution locally. The coalition also identifies appropriate responses that can be used collectively.

Allison Wilson, FoodWise Educator

- Attended the Hodag Food Wagon Wrap-up Meeting. In the summer of 2024, The Hodag Food Wagon provided 1,441 food bags along with fresh vegetables and fruits in an 8-week period. The need increased from 825 food bags in 2023 to an additional 175 bags in 2024. The average value was \$15 per bag. This summer, FoodWise focused efforts to provide samples and recipes for quick, healthy meals that adults and children could prepare together using the food provided in each bag.
- Attended the Oneida County Nutrition Coalition Meeting. The first meeting for the coalition was held in November bringing together many partners within Oneida County. Some of those partners included Social Services, School District of Rhinelander, WIC, Food Pantries, Children's Wisconsin, YMCA of the Northwoods, FoodWise, and Marshfield Clinic. The coalition will be meeting quarterly to continue discussions on the best way to utilize grant funds received from Marshfield Clinic. After the first meeting, a goal to collaborate in order to bring actionable initiatives to address the hunger and nutrition needs of Oneida County children and families was created.
- Renewed partnership with Oneida County WIC. When the pandemic hit there were no in-person services for quite a long time, which made it impossible to partner with WIC during that extended time period. At the beginning of December, FoodWise joined WIC to facilitate an Open House to WIC eligible families in the Minocqua area. A healthy snack formed in the shape of Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer was offered to attendees.
- Completed 5-week programming at Pelican Elementary, where students in grades 1, 3, and 5 were taught a series of nutritional lessons. In total, this programming reached 113 students.



Laurel Parins, Health & Wellbeing Educator

- Significant program planning was done in the months of November & December. As a newer colleague, still working through developing Plan of Work and assessing and prioritizing needs in Oneida County. Articles written for ADRC Newsletter and continued work with MHLT's School Wellness Committee. Plans are underway for both in-service education and ongoing education through e-newsletters in 2025.

Check out previous County Reports on our website: oneida.extension.wisc.edu