

Investing in Ontonagon County Youth with 4-H

According to research completed by the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University-

4-H'ers are **4X** more likely to make contributions to their communities, **2x** more likely to be civically active, and **2x** more likely to make healthier choices.



The 4-H program in Ontonagon County continues to reach youth and offer them skills and opportunities. In the last few months, 4-H along with the Great Start Collaborative has provided 25 plus backpacks of food to youth at the Ontonagon Area School for the Thanksgiving, Christmas and Spring break. The generosity of community members, church organizations and residents has been exceptional. Food products, monetary donations and backpacks allowed students to have supplemental food for the holiday breaks. This has been a great effort and anyone interested in helping monetarily or with food can call Paula Maloney or stop at the MSUE office in the courthouse.

December brought Hometown Christmas to Ontonagon. 4-H collaborates with the Hometown Christmas Committee and offered a dance for the 6th-8th grade youth. The energetic and enthusiastic students had a wonderful time. They had so much fun that another dance was held on Jan. 26. This dance was a collaborative effort with the Community That Cares Coordinator, Adriana Knack and our MSUE SNAP-Ed Community Nutrition Instructor, Kathy Bauer. Again, the youth had a fantastic time being socially engaged and danced the night away. Kenny Lee, a local DJ, graciously allows 4-H to use his equipment for these events. Socialization is an important factor for this age group. Collaboration efforts with CTC will move forward with plans to bring more activities to the Jr. High group.

Right. Local librarian, Leo Siren, participating in a hands-on science experiment with youth.



Left. Summer Fun Days featuring youth making slime.



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Ontonagon County 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS

100 MSU Extension has served Ontonagon County over 100 years

\$ \$555,554 total economic impact in Ontonagon County

4 460 youth in 4-H and youth development programs

55 Extension professionals providing education, 3 based in the county

352 adults and youth in health and nutrition programs

95% increase in Master Gardener volunteer hours

138 MSU Extension website received 138 visits, 89% first-time visitors

\$80,023 MSU disbursed \$80,023 in financial aid to county students

\$2,817 spending with local businesses

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

I'm delighted to share the results of another successful year of partnership between Ontonagon County and Michigan State University (MSU) Extension. Because of your continued support, we've been able to make a difference in the lives of youth, families, businesses and communities.



MSU Extension offers a broad range of research-based educational services to county residents. Over this past year, we've empowered families and individuals to live healthier lives, supported new and local businesses, created opportunities for youth leadership development and career exploration, helped farmers with business management and mental health, and much more. Our staff live and work alongside county residents, are rooted in community relationships and are responsive to community needs.

This year, we've also welcomed Ontonagon County residents into our online community: we've offered online educational courses, answered questions on topics ranging from gardening to food safety, raised program awareness through social media and provided a library of research-based resources they've browsed on our website.

Our partnership with you makes this all possible. On behalf of the MSU Extension team serving Ontonagon County, thank you for another great year. We look forward to your continued support and hope you'll be able to join us during one of our upcoming programs.

Paul Putnam, District Director

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Program Highlights



Harvest of the Month Taste test of local honey. [222 adult and youth participants reached in 2018 through SNAP-Ed series programming and an additional 130 reached through one-time presentations.]



Cooking Matters participants cooking



Pasture walk, attempts to turn bush into high quality pasture

Supporting Family Health & Nutrition

Supporting Family Health & Nutrition

SMARTER LUNCHROOM: It was an exciting year at the Ontonagon Area School. The SNAP ED Program Instructor Kathy Bauer worked with Debra Syle, Food Service Coordinator, to provide a healthy lunchroom along with a Harvest of the Month Taste test, which is the tasting of Michigan homegrown foods. The school received a grant to provide local foods for this taste test. A few changes were made to the lunchroom. Salad bar is offered twice a week. Over 50% of students take salad bar on most days. Fresh fruit was put in decorative bowls, which has entailed in students taking more fruit. Milk cartons are also displayed for more visibility.

COOKING MATTERS CLASS was held in Ontonagon and 17 people attended. There were six classes held. During this class, participants learned about nutrition and food safety. They had the opportunity to cook different recipes and receive take home groceries. Participants enjoyed the class and commented on how much they now realize how much sugar is added in food. They loved the hands on classroom style and wanted to continue the class.

Agriculture & Agribusiness

In 2017, Michigan State University Extension Educators Frank Wardynski and Jim Isleib met with farmers from the Western UP in Ontonagon to ask for their input of needed educational programming and delivery methods. One popular topic included on farm field days to demonstrate innovative methods farms are feeding hay and managing forages. In response, forage field days were conducted to host 27 farmers in Ontonagon County in both 2017 and 2018 to share management practices farmers are using to improve forage stands, soil health and distribute nutrients. Also in 2018, farmers attended a meeting in a classroom setting to see research data collected on the cooperating farms and to learn about nutrient recycling that occurs as hay is fed to cows on pastures during winter months.

Program Highlights

Ontonagon County 4-H Youth Program

4-H, the Porcupine Mountain State Park and the Great Start Collaborative worked hand in hand to offer the parents and youth an afternoon of snowshoeing on the beautiful Porkies snowshoe trails. More than 25 youth and adults participated in the Snowshoe Book Hike. It was a pleasant and mild day as the youth searched for laminated book pages along the path. The youth really enjoy searching for the pages. This is a great way to add literacy to an outdoor event. The smiling faces and fresh air were the perfect combination for this event. Hot chocolate and cookies were consumed quickly after the hike. This has become a tradition and what better way to get exercise and read. Both literacy and physical fitness are such important skills that promote body and mind. This is the 7th year for this event and it is a favorite in the 4-H year.

Spooky Science is the largest 4-H event in Ontonagon County. Each year youth and family participation increases plus more science experiments and crafts are available to all. This year CTC Coordinator, Adriana Knack provided a photo booth for all to strike a “spooky” pose. It was a fun addition to the activities. The Great Start Collaborative provided preschool crafts and science for the younger children who helped grow the audience and allows families to see firsthand what 4-H can offer to their little ones. Our local librarian, Leo Siren has been willing to share an educational science concoction each year. Families bring healthy treats to share so there are plenty of goodies to go around. It is a wonderful collaboration of people coming together to provide our community a safe and learning environment during Halloween time.



Seventh Annual Snowshoe Book Hike, a favorite event hosted by 4-H, Porcupine Mountain State Park and the Great Start Collaborative



Ontonagon youth at the State Capitol in Lansing during Exploration Days.



Ontonagon County forage field day.