

Bicycle Adventures

Supporting School-Age Accreditation and Quality Programming

Bicycling is a long-term project where children can experience mastery fairly quickly. Learning the parts of a bicycle, bike safety, how to ride a bike, and finally planning a bike trip show progressive steps in learning. Documenting this progression allows endorsers and inspection teams to see what happens beyond the period of time children are at the center.

Essential Elements of 4-H Youth Development

Youth involved in 4-H know they are cared about and feel a sense of **BELONGING**; they exercise **INDEPENDENCE** by using decision-making and action to influence people and events; they develop a sense of **MASTERY** by learning skills needed in making positive career and life choices; and they experience **GENEROSITY** by helping others through community service. These elements support the Army Youth Development Components of Belonging, Success, Service and Independence.

Ideas! Ideas! Ideas!

- Take a field trip to a local bicycle shop to learn about the different types and purposes of bicycles.
- Participate as a group in a local charity ride.
- Invite cycling enthusiasts or those who have participated in recognized bicycle events, or a fitness expert to talk about the health benefits of cycling.



Providing Quality Middle School and Teen Programming

While designed for children and younger youth, teens will particularly enjoy *Bicycle Adventures* if they have input to how the project is taught. If the end goal is a bike trip, start with short rides to get the youth into condition for the long ride. Before each ride take some time to cover the *Bicycle Adventures* topics: bicycle safety, riding safely, bike repair etc. Provide some ideas for the long bike trip, and get the youth's input. They can help plan the route as well.



Summary

It's not necessary to be an expert cyclist to teach *4-H Bicycle Adventures*. All that's needed is an interest in the subject! Read through the materials, try out the activities and talk with children and youth to see what they would like to do. Encourage members to share what they learn with others. By talking about what they have learned, 4-H members will extend their cycling skills and develop their ability to think critically about their experiences.

THE Army 4-H EXPRESS GUIDE TO Bicycle Adventures



See the world's colors whiz by and feel the wind in your face! *Bicycle Adventures* helps children and youth learn the joy of riding a bike while being safe.



Project Goals

4-H Bicycle Adventures helps children and youth of all skill levels learn safe cycling practices, how to repair and maintain bicycles, and how to plan and participate in cycling activities and events. The **Youth** and **Helper's Guides** provide information on topics and then give activity ideas to practice specific skills.

Four Fun Activities

- 1 Football players, firefighters, scientists and ballet dancers all wear some type of protective gear to help prevent injuries. Using an egg and bubble wrap, **Bicycling for Fun, Body Protection, pages 6-7**, explores how protective clothing works and why it should be worn.
- 2 Signs are everywhere. But are they really noticed? In **Bicycling for Fun, Sign Language, pages 26-27**, children and youth learn about traffic signs and what they mean. Then they participate in a scavenger hunt to see how many signs can be found in the neighborhood.
- 3 Oh no, a flat tire! Knowing how to repair one gives a new level of confidence and independence. **Wheels in Motion, Patch It, pages 10-11**, provides step-by-step directions on how to patch a tire tube and fix a flat.
- 4 Riding at night and in inclement weather creates special circumstances for bikers. **Wheels in Motion, Dark and Stormy Riding, pages 28-29**, provides tips and ideas to ride safer in less than ideal conditions.

Experiential Learning

Experiential Learning engages children and youth while they learn, share, and grow through their 4-H experiences. With an adult as the coach, the first step is “doing” or exploring. Next, youth share what they did and discuss the experience with their peers. After they’ve identified the skills and knowledge gained, help them determine how to apply these to other situations in their lives. Questions to enhance Experiential Learning might include:

What might happen if the appropriate safety equipment is not worn?

How will knowing the names and functions of bike parts help when buying or maintaining a bike?

What causes a tire to go flat?

Why is it hard to stop quickly when going fast?

What are some reasons why the shortest route may not be the best route?



Project Activity Guides and Target Age Groups

Bicycling For Fun – Bicycle 1 is for grades 3-5. Youth discover the joy of riding a bicycle; why helmets are worn; how to check tires, brakes and chains; and ways to control a bike when starting and stopping.

Wheels in Motion – Bicycle 2 is designed for youth in grades 6-8. Youth gather information on purchasing, learn how to maintain and keep a bicycle in good working condition, discover safe riding practices, read maps; and plan bike routes.

Bicycle Helper's Guide includes activities for group learning that may be used at any time during the series. Groups will organize group rides, practice bicycle skills, and play fun games.

Don't Get Stuck: Fix It DVD demonstrates how to properly fit a helmet; adjust a seat, handlebars, and brake levers; and perform preventative maintenance.



Life Skills

“Skills that help an individual to be successful in living a productive and satisfying life” are identified as Life Skills (Hendricks, 1996). Every activity in *Bicycle Adventures* focuses on a particular life skills such as communication, leading, learning critical thinking, record keeping and planning.

Related 4-H Projects



Integrate biking into a number of 4-H projects for added fun and excitement. Combine *Exploring Spaces*,

Going Place Geospatial Geographic with bicycling to complete a geocaching project or bicycle to snap pictures for the photography project. Biking can also be part of *Exploring Your Environment* where children or youth ride to areas they want to study.

Integrating Technology

Looking for a new bicycle? Visit manufacture's websites to compare brands and models. Use the Internet to identify day trip destinations, determine the best routes, and check out the terrain by viewing webcams available on some websites.

Character Connection

Think of all the ways character connects with *Bicycle Adventures*! Show Respect and Citizenship by following community rules for bicycles – using bike paths, wearing helmets, following traffic laws, and using designated bike lanes and paths rather than riding on the grass or taking up all of the sidewalk leaving no place for others to walk. Show Responsibility by taking good care of the equipment and making repairs as needed. Show Caring by teaching others how to be a safe and responsible riders.

Linking to the Army's Four Service Areas and Baseline Programming

Sports, Fitness and Health Options

Cycling is a great way for children and youth to be active while having fun. They can participate in a bike rodeo, bike trip or a triathlon. **Wheels in Motion, Fueling the Engine, pages 30-31**, includes planning foods and drinks to take on a bike trip and incorporates the importance of healthy food and drinks to fuel the body.

Arts, Recreation and Leisure Activities

There are many activities in *4-H Bicycle Adventures* that are related to this Service Area. While out on a bike ride children and youth can look for animal tracks, flowers and plants or take pictures of or draw the landscape. It's always a good idea to keep a journal to record what's been done and adventures shared with others. **Bicycle Helper's Guide, Journaling Your Adventure, pages 6-7**, provide journaling tips.

Life Skills, Citizenship, and Leadership Opportunities

Launching a campaign to make the community bicycle friendly or planning events to thank them for their support of cyclists requires skills in this Service Area. **Wheels in Motion, Making a Difference, pages 34-35**, provides suggestions for working for community support.

Academic Support, Mentoring, and Intervention Services

Helping others learn more about bicycle safety, care and maintenance provides an important service. Using the suggestions in the **Bicycle Helper's Guide**, the project group can plan a bicycle rodeo, **It's Bike Rodeo Time, pages 28-29**, and include fun stations like **Bicycle Skillathon Fun, pages 24-27** or **Playing Bicycle Pyramid, pages 30-31**.



Community Service/Service Learning Opportunities

- Work with local law enforcement to map existing bicycle routes and identify locations for additional lanes and paths.
- Research local safety guidelines for bicycles and create awareness of these guidelines through posters or banners.
- Organize a CYS Services family bicycle trip to a local park or other point of interest.